



Ver Valley Society

NEWSLETTER

Published quarterly for members of the Ver Valley Society

Number 131 - October 2016

www.riverver.co.uk

President: Peter Fox, MBE

VER VALLEY SOCIETY 40th Anniversary Celebration

A brief AGM followed by a presentation on

PANSHANGER PARK COUNTRY PARK AND NATURE RESERVE

By JENNIFER GILBERT
of the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust



TUESDAY 25 OCTOBER 7:30 pm

ST MICHAEL'S PARISH CENTRE

Verulamium Park, St Michaels Street, St Albans, AL3 4SL

*NON MEMBERS WELCOME FREE ENTRY DONATIONS APPRECIATED
ADEQUATE PARKING*

*River Ver Archive: St Albans Central Library (Local History Reference Section)
Over 1,000 pages of information*

Chairman's Report

Jane Gardiner

This is the 40th Anniversary of the formation of the Ver Valley Society, originally formed to create a riverside walk through St Albans. However very soon it had also to focus on the protection of the river itself because abstraction pressures were causing marked reduction in the amount of water in the river, causing associated threats to the valuable ecology.

Of course there have been many changes to the personnel involved with the Society over the years but one person who has been part of it for almost the whole 40 years is John Cadisch! He has written some reminiscences of the early years of VVS elsewhere in this Newsletter and has agreed to again take over booking the venues for Open Meetings from Ernie Leahy. Ernie is stepping down from the Committee at this AGM and as Open Meeting organiser after several years and we thank him very sincerely for his hard work and commitment. I would also like to thank the rest of the Committee for all they have done this year and welcome John Pritchard who has agreed to be co-opted onto Committee. As a small celebration of our 40 years we will be serving wine and cheese as well as soft drinks and biscuits at this AGM.

I was pleased to have the chance to be interviewed on Verulam Radio recently about the switch off of the Bow Bridge pumping station earlier this year. I was pleased to publicly recognise the efforts of Affinity Water to reduce abstraction in our valley and generally stress the importance of using water carefully to protect our precious river and its wildlife. (see also Paul's report).

On other matters, the remedial works to the bridge-access at the Redbournbury fords was due to take place in September, so I hope to be able to report this has happened at the AGM. The work by Tarmac Ltd at Frogmore Pits on paths and tree-felling has required the construction of a new ford. This work has continued through September and is due to be completed by 21st October. (See also Sue's report). In both of these and other areas, the Ver Valley Walks are spoiled by dog-fouling and by other rubbish being dumped. Please report any such problems you come across to the SADC hotline number given in this Newsletter.

Regarding the continuing troubles with pollution of Verulamium Lakes it seems some removal of silt from the south-east corner has taken place. There now appears to be less of an unpleasant smell and fewer dead wildfowl, any of which are seen are being removed more promptly by the Ranger or RSPCA. However further removal of silt in the area between the lakes, which was planned, has been held up because of problems with access to that area for the tankers, which weigh 38 tonnes when taking the polluted silt away to the Veolia treatment works. Apparently access along the footpath beside the river and through Bell Meadow is precluded by main sewers beneath weak paths so it now seems Historic England and English Heritage have to be consulted for access via the Museum area, and this can be a lengthy process. The Environment Agency continues to work on finding a more sustainable, long-term solution to the problems with the Lakes.

Open Meetings

Ernie Leahy

Thursday 26th January 2017 at 7.30 pm: Redbourn Village Hall Centenary Suite – speaker Ian Piggott Ver Valley Farmer who initiated the Open Farms Days which is now a nationwide event.

Tuesday 25th April 2017 at 7.30 pm: St Stephens Parish Centre – speaker Rob Pearson of the EA on Fish Surveying on the Ver

Very Important: All meetings are free entrance to members and non members - If you are coming to one of our meetings please check our newsletter or the web page a few days prior to the meeting in case of any late changes. If you require directions to any of the venues please contact a committee member. (See contacts page). Although our meetings are free entry to members and non members we welcome donations towards the cost of refreshments, hall hire etc. Suggested £2 pp

Membership

Rachel Young

The Ver Valley Society has nearly 200 members, including 35 paying by standing order. As a society that devotes its time and resources to maintaining and protecting the River Ver, we rely almost solely on subscriptions for income. If you know anyone that you think might be interested in supporting the River Ver please pass on our details to them or put them in touch with a committee member.

Renewal reminders for 2016-17 were sent out in August. Half have already responded and to these the VVS committee would like to give a heartfelt thank you for your invaluable support. If you haven't responded yet there's still plenty of time; there's a form on our website on the membership page: <http://www.riverver.co.uk/pages/membership.html> or email members@riverver.co.uk for other options. In addition, membership leaflets can be picked up at our Open Meetings.

We'd like to thank Paul Hutt from Absolute Accountants for reviewing our annual accounts again. He has done a marvellously thorough and efficient job, fast and professional and always a pleasure to work with.
<http://absolute-accountants.co.uk/en/contact>

You will have seen from John Cadisch's recollections of the start of VVS that a Bailiffing team was set up in 1977. This was a small team who reported on a rather *ad hoc* basis. However from 1979 reports became more organised and I hold all the Bailiff records from that time, although for some years, particularly in the mid 1980's, the reports are few and rather sketchy.

Our excellent present Bailiffs team is now reporting very low flows after the hot, dry summer. There has been much growth of vegetation and the abundance plants beside the river and in the channel itself has made it difficult for some Bailiffs to get any flow measurements at all. The aquifer in September is two meters below the average for the month but this is not quite as far below as it was in August, perhaps due to the rainfall in June having helped a little. However we must expect it to reduce further this autumn.

Month 2016	Groundwater level at Ballingdon Farm in metres [Long-term average] (figures from EA)	Rainfall in millimetres [± average] (figures from Chris Hall at Rothamsted)
June	131.6 [133.6]	84.8 [+31.58]
July	130.75 [133.23]	27.1 [-22.8]
August	129.87 [132.56]	30.1 [-33.5]
September	128.84 [130.87]	Not yet available

The invasive species of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam have unfortunately been flourishing mainly in areas south of St Albans. Our Action group has been attacking the balsam in some areas but it is a war of attrition (see Sue Frearson's notes for details). There are still a few nicer flowering plants about decorating the riversides, such as water mint, purple loosestrife, great and hairy willow-herb, ragwort, teasels and many berries on the bushes are ripening up now.

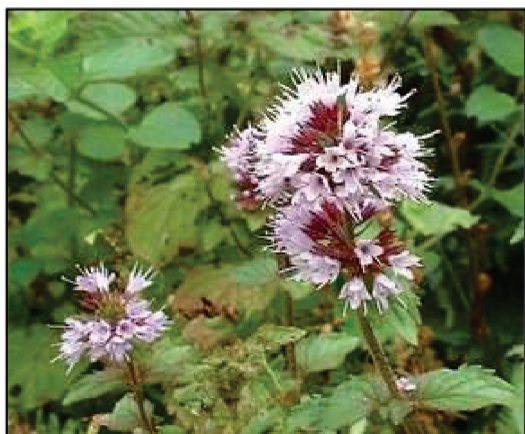


Male southern hawker.
[John Pritchard]

Birds are fairly quiet and retiring at this time of year but recently sightings have included the occasional egret, kingfisher, linnets, and bullfinch as well as goldfinches, herons, parakeets, jackdaws, red kites and buzzards.

Apart from foxes, rabbits, muntjac, a bank vole and signs of moles, there have been few other mammal sightings apart of course from sheep and cattle in farmers' fields. It appears that in a couple of locations long-horned cattle are now being grazed in the valley.

Most of the usual butterfly species have been reported (speckled woods, small tortoiseshells, peacocks, red admirals, holly blues, orange tips, ringlets, gate keepers, brimstones, commas etc) but only whites seem to have been at all abundant this year. Some dragon and damselflies have been recorded recently but also fewer in number than other years. The river-fly monitors are finding a good variety of invertebrate lava in reasonable numbers and the usual fish species seem to be doing well.



Water mint.
[Jane Gardiner]

As in previous years, as a thank-you for all their work on behalf of the Ver, we welcome Bailiffs to join the Committee and the Action Group volunteers, after their working party, at noon on Dec 17th at the Chequers pub, Redbourn for a seasonable drink



Purple loosestrife.
[Jane Gardiner]

In the past barn owls were very common in Hertfordshire with an estimated 200 pairs in the 1930's. By 1985 there were only nine pairs and this may well have gone down even further before the end of the 90's. The main reasons for this disastrous decline were the loss of suitable nest sites and the lack of the rough grassland habitat for voles and mice which are the main prey of barn owls.

Many of the old barns have been converted to houses or commercial premises and since many used tree holes the Dutch Elm epidemic deprived them of many nest holes. Agricultural practices were geared towards maximising arable production and the rough grassland and hedgerows essential for voles were reduced drastically.

Since 2000 farmers have been encouraged to plant hedges and leave field margins uncultivated by means of various stewardship schemes. At the same time barn owl nest boxes have been put up throughout the country and barn owls have made a remarkable recovery. It is estimated that as many as 75% of barn owls now nest in man made boxes. It has even been suggested that they should be renamed the "Box Owl".



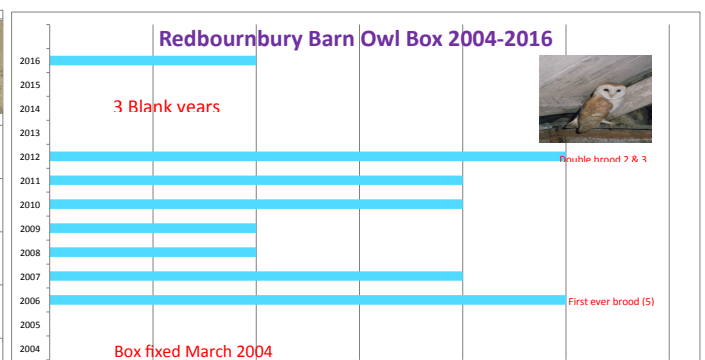
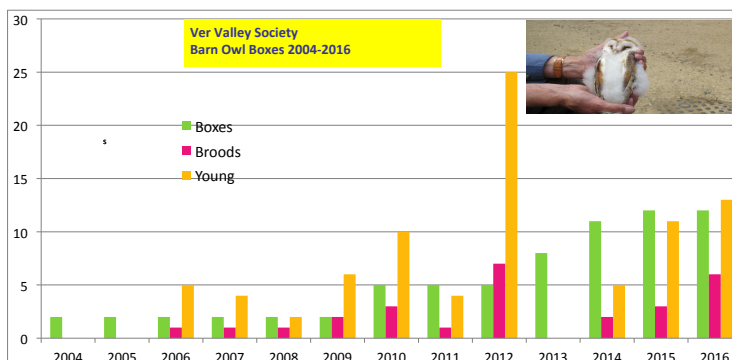
As far as I know there were no barn owls in the Ver Valley in 2000 so it was somewhat speculative when I persuaded the committee to invest in two nest boxes in 2004. We were delighted when in 2006 the box at Redbournbury was used and a brood of five fledged successfully. This box has been our most successful with 28 youngsters raised over the years.

After the initial success we invested in more boxes and we now have 12 boxes and over 80 young barn owls have been raised in the Ver Valley. 2012 was our best year with seven broods and 25 youngsters but annual totals will always vary as barn owls rely so heavily on the abundance of voles and mice. Some years if prey is not adequate they will not breed, which happened in 2013, or they will breed late as they did this year. This year we had five small broods with a total of 11 raised but I have just found a late brood of three in a box that had not been used before. This is probably a second brood of a pair that used another nearby box earlier in the year.

We have also put up several kestrel boxes, a tawny owl box and a little owl box which have been complete failures. However this year a kestrel raised four in one of the barn owl boxes and we have had three broods of little owls in barn owl boxes. Several times stock doves have used the barn owl boxes and even a mallard duck took up residence in one. There are over 100 small bird boxes which are not closely monitored although we do clean them out in the autumn.

The Ver Valley project is a reflection of what has happened throughout the nation and it is very rewarding that our Society has played a small part in the recovery of this most charismatic of birds. The pity is that you have to be out so late to see them!

If you have any interesting bird sightings I would be pleased to hear from you on 01582 792843 or email john.fisher@btclick.com.



VER VALLEY SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 25 October 2016 at 7.30 pm.

AGENDA

Nominations for the Chairman and Committee are invited.
These should reach the Secretary, John Fisher, by Friday 21st October.
All the present committee are willing to stand for a further year apart from Ernie Leahy.
John Pritchard was co-opted to the committee in August 2016.

1. Signing in.
2. Chairman's welcome
3. Apologies for absence.
4. Minutes of the AGM October 2015 as circulated with the newsletter.
5. Matters arising
6. Chairman's Report
7. Treasurer's Report and accounts
8. Bailiff Coordinator's report.
9. Ver Action Group Coordinator's report
10. Election of Chairman
11. Election of Committee – Nominees must be willing to stand with a proposer and seconder. Officers will be appointed at the first committee meeting in November 2016.
12. Next Open Meetings
Thursday 26 January 2016 – Redbourn Village Hall – Ian Pigott – Ver Valley Farmer.
13. Any Other Business

BREAK
CELEBRATION OF 40 years of the Society
With Wine and nibbles.

Followed by:-
A Presentation by Jennifer Gilbert of the Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust.
“Panshanger Park Country Park and Nature Reserve”



VER VALLEY SOCIETY

Web Site: www.riverver.co.uk

VER VALLEY SOCIETY MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING St Michaels – Tuesday 27 October 2015 at 7.30 pm.

1. **Signing in:** 40 members signed in.
2. **Chairman's Welcome** The chairman welcomed all members plus the speaker, Allen Beechey,
3. **Apologies:** -. Six members had sent apologies – list available from the secretary
5. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** - These had been circulated with the October Newsletter. Jane Gardiner proposed and Martin Frearson seconded acceptance and they were unanimously agreed as a true record subject to the following correction:-

7.1 Ring fenced until 2016 not 2015.

5. Matters Arising: - all on the agenda.

6. Chairman's Report:-

- 6.1 The VVS had a stand in Verulamium Park on World Rivers Day on Sunday 27th September with Riverfly demonstrations and litter picking. Hopefully we attracted some new members.
- 6.2 100 people were required for a European Water Efficiency exercise. Leaflets were available from Lydia Dant.
- 6.3 Sustainable St Albans Week would be 21/27 November. As part of this the VVS were setting up a river clearance session at Verulam Golf Club on 23 November.

7. Treasurer's Report: -

- 7.1 The balance was £26,604.60, which included £4,107.62 of Friends of Ver Park monies ring fenced until October 2016.
- 7.2. Paul Hutt ACA had audited the accounts.
- 7.4 Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Jane Gardiner, seconded by Peter Fox and accepted unanimously.

8. Bailiff Coordinator's Report: -

- 8.1 Generally as the October 2015 newsletter.
- 8.2. September rainfall was 20% below average and October was also likely to be dry.
- 8.3 The aquifer level was now 3.7m below average and 10m below the level in early 2014

9 VVS Action Group:-

- 9.1 Sessions were held every month on the third Saturday of the month.
- 9.2. Numbers were required for each session to ensure adequate tools were available.
- 9.3 Twenty members were now involved with about 12 at most sessions.
- 9.4 More sessions planned for Sopwell and dog steps being installed to prevent erosion of the bank.
- 9.5 Verulam Golf Club session – 23rd November at 10.00 am.

10. Election of Chairman: - Jane Gardiner was proposed by John Fisher, seconded by Ernie Leahy and duly elected unanimously.

11. Election of Committee: - All existing committee members, were proposed by Jane Gardiner, seconded by Kate Bretherton and duly elected unanimously. The other posts apart from the chairman would be allocated at the first committee meeting 10th November 2015.

12. Future Open Meetings:-

- Thursday 28th January 2016 – Redbourn Village Hall.- Ken Smith – Herts Birds
- The 2016 AGM would be Tuesday 25th October – subject to confirmation.

After refreshments members were given a Presentation by Allen Beechey of the Chilterns Conservation Board.

Apologies for absence were received from the following:-

Paul Foster, John Bell, Rachel Young and Haydon Bailey

2015 Expenditure	2016	2015 Income	2016
£	£	£	£
231.05 Hall Hire	331.00	Subscriptions	
194.10 Admin/Sec/Travel	177.86	396.00 5 Year	775.00
196.76 Insurance	196.76	224.00 Annual	199.00
40.00 H&M Wildlife Trust	40.00	91.00 SO	207.00
36.00 C P R E	36.00	Donations	
90.00 Printing	225.00	153.45 General	186.95
140.00 Speaker Fees	40.00	420.00 Peggy Pollok	25.00
103.33 Bank Charges	114.90	4.82 Interest	6.01
129.90 Gifts	20.00	100.00 Reimbursement HCC	0.00
386.71 Sundries	0.00		
Membership Admin	92.79		
Bailiff	98.69		
Webhosting	67.00		
<u>1,547.85</u>	<u>1,440.00</u>	<u>1,389.27</u>	<u>1,398.96</u>
		158.58 Excess of Expenditure over Income	41.04
<u>1,547.85</u>	<u>1,440.00</u>	<u>1,547.85</u>	<u>1,440.00</u>

Ver Valley Society
Balance sheet as at 31 August 2016

Reserves & Liabilities			Assets		
£			£		
31-Aug-15		31-Aug-16	31-Aug-15		31-Aug-16
	Accumulated Fund			Balance at Bank	
229.86	Balance	22248.64	16832.91	Current Ac	16716.15
-158.58	Excess	-41.04	9613.06	Business Ac	9619.07
71.28	Expenditure over Income	22207.6	26,445.97		26,335.22
22177.36	Hammon Legacy*	0.00			
			-89.71	Uncashed cheques adjustment	-20.00
<u>22,248.64</u>	VVS Total	<u>22,207.60</u>			
4197.38	Friends of Ver Park	4107.62			
-89.76	less expenditure	0			
<u>4,107.62</u>		<u>4,107.62</u>			
<u>26,356.26</u>		<u>26,315.22</u>	<u>26,356.26</u>		<u>26,315.22</u>

*Hammon Legacy. From 2015-16 this generous legacy has been incorporated into the main VVS balance and will no longer be shown separately. There were no stipulated restrictions on how to spend the legacy, except to benefit the Ver Valley and River Ver.

We have reviewed the accompanying Balance Sheet of Ver Valley Society at 31 August 2016, and the Income and Expenditure Account for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Society's Management Committee. Our responsibility is to issue a report on these financial statements based on our review.

We conducted our review in accordance with the International Standard on Review Engagements 2400. This Standard requires that we plan and perform the review to obtain moderate assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. A review is limited primarily to inquiries of Society officers and analytical procedures applied to the financial data and thus provide less assurance than an audit. We have not performed an audit and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion.

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe other than that the accompanying financial statements do give a true and fair view of the financial affairs of the Society as at 31 August 2016.



Paul Hutt, ACA

Absolute Accountants Limited

16 SEPTEMBER 2016

Early VVS Days - Some recollections

John Cadisch

With the Society now in its 40th year, a few reminiscences must be in order. We began life as a Council-sponsored organisation in 1976, with a principal objective of establishing a riverside Ver-Colne Walk, this was planned to run from Redbourn down through St Albans and Park Street, and on to Watford. Enthusiastic local businessman Richard Thrale became chairman, and Roger Osborn from the council was nominated as Secretary. It was a year later that I moved into St Albans and having been closely associated with the canal restoration movement the VVS was the obvious local society to join. The year 1977 was in fact when the team of voluntary river bailiffs was established, reporting on both wildlife and water, becoming a vital resource which has continued successfully to this day.

Establishing and marking a riverside path continued until it was completed in 1986, but with a dwindling river due to over-abstraction, and a drought year, it was increasingly seen as a pointless amenity, the River Ver alongside the path was visibly shrinking and the precious Redbournbury water meadows were suffering badly. Consequently in that same year an important meeting was convened in the Old Town Hall, the lively gathering of concerned local people backed Richard Thrale wholeheartedly and vowed to petition for a considerable reduction in abstraction. I well remember the meeting, and am the only current VVS committee member who was privileged to attend. The resulting campaign was given credence in 1987 when our then local MP, Peter Lilley, raised the question of the “vanishing Ver” in a parliamentary adjournment debate.

Various approaches were subsequently made to the National Rivers Authority but suggestions that abstraction should be reduced were largely rebuffed. However a break-through came when technically-qualified VVS member Dr Ted Hollis came to our rescue at this critical time, making out an excellent case for closing a pumping station. These approaches eventually came to a successful conclusion when Friars Wash was ceremonially switched off by the NRA (but left on standby) in May 1993, an outstandingly high point in the Society's history.

Much good work has been done by the Society since 1993 by many dedicated volunteers but that is a story for another day!

John Cadisch (Treasurer: 1980 – 2014; Newsletter Editor: 1984 – 2015)

Frogmore Pits. Hyde Lane Ford

Sue Frearson

For over two years Tarmac have been waiting for permission to reinforce the ford at Hyde Lane so that the tree trunks stored along the path could be removed and further work on the non-native poplars at Frogmore Pits could be carried out. The ford was reinforced in September with large pebbles and bales of barley were staked in place to trap silt. Unfortunately, the bales have been washed out of place after the heavy rain on the 16th September.

Removal of the tree trunks has started across the ford using a specialised eight –wheeled tractor-trailer. This carries about four tonnes at a time, with minimum ground compaction. The wood is being stored temporarily on the Veolia disused land off Moor Mill Lane.



Forestry work started on the 5th September and will finish on the 21st October to remove the mature non-native poplar trees, which are shading out the native trees underneath. We were told by one of the contractors that the felled poplars would be shipped to India to make veneers! Once completed, additional footpaths will be created through the area for the enjoyment and recreation of the local community.

Peter Hill Helping to Remove Himalayan Balsam. [Sue Frearson]



Pumping Station Shut Down

Paul Foster

Following an earlier successful campaign by the Society Friars Wash Pumping Station was put on standby in 1993 and this made a huge improvement to flows north of Redbourn. Flows in the Upper Ver are still intermittent but have been a great deal more regular since 1993.

The Ver Valley Society has been working closely with the Environment Agency (EA) and Affinity Water for over 20 years to assess the impact of abstractions on the Ver Valley. Affinity Water has agreed that it will reduce abstractions from its catchment area by 42 million litres per day by 2020 and by 70 million litres per day by 2025.

As part of this commitment to reduce the amount of water it abstracts, in April this year it turned off Bow Bridge pumping station, which will result in a saving of six million litres per day. Bow Bridge pumping station has been used since 1964 and it is expected that halting these abstractions will benefit flows in the Ver chalk stream and surrounding environment. Following the Buncefield Oil Depot disaster in December 2005 possible pollution of the water table meant that Bow Bridge Pumping Station was not used for nearly three years. Bow Bridge remained out of use from 2006 to August 2009 and this certainly helped maintain the flow in the Ver in the next few summers.

Three of The Society's Committee members met with the heads of the Environment Agency and Affinity Water at the end of July to celebrate the closure of the Water Company's Bow Bridge Pumping Station.

Jane Gardiner, our Chairman said: "We are very pleased that the first of several abstraction reductions in the Ver Valley, planned by Affinity Water, has now taken place. We have been campaigning over many years for such reductions to ensure that the River Ver continues to flow and its very special ecology and wildlife are protected."

Simon Cocks, Chief Executive, Affinity Water said: "We believe that leaving more water in the environment and working in partnership with the EA, to deliver improvements to local habitats, will benefit communities by restoring our precious chalk stream habitats and we will be monitoring water flows and the ecology to assess the effectiveness of these changes."



Environment Agency Chair Emma Howard-Boyd commented: "This is a fantastic example of what can be achieved when we work together with companies like Affinity Water. I look forward to seeing the environment around the Ver chalk stream improve as a result of this project."

Affinity Water have also committed to deliver river restoration and habitat enhancement projects on the Ver and six other chalk streams in partnership with the EA, to restore them to a more natural state to encourage more wildlife.

Country Park at Park Street

Martin Frearson

We were concerned to read in the Herts Ad recently that a new company had taken over from Helioslough and were applying to the County Council to buy the old Radlett Aerodrome site and go ahead with the 100 hectare Railfreight terminal development. Not something we would want, but it has planning permission granted on appeal by the former Secretary of State Mr Pickles in 2014. With this go conditions relating to the provision of a country park on some 900 hectares of the surrounding land, much of it along the Ver Valley from Sopwell Mill to Moor Mill. The park would be funded through a Section 106 agreement and maintained in perpetuity (whatever that means in practice) by a levy on the site leaseholders. This concerns us as a society as the impact on the river as a chalk stream could be significant, as well as the local environment more generally.

So we have written urgently to the District and County Councils seeking clarification of what is being proposed, who will be managing this considerable project, and how local amenity groups like us would be consulted and involved in its development. We feel strongly that there should be a management board or trust of stakeholders such as district and parish councillors, landowners like Tarmac, the EA, ColneCAN, Affinity, Thames Water and local amenity groups appointed as soon as possible to oversee what happens, similar to the one which successfully developed and still manages Highfield Park not far away. Perhaps by the AGM we will have had replies and hopefully reassurances.

Recent Projects:

Our volunteers are to be congratulated on being nominated for a Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (Hertfordshire) award for their hard work along the Ver over the past year. The CPRE award ceremony will be at County Hall on 16th October, when I hope that I can obtain some tickets so that some of our volunteers will be able to attend.

Bruce Banfield Taylor led a very successful attack on the Himalayan Balsam growing at Moor Mill in August. We welcome Peter Hill and Peter White, who joined this group of seven volunteers. This is our third year trying to control this introduced plant and at last it looks as though we are making an impact at Moor Mill. However, much more work in removing this weed will need to be done at Frogmore Pits next year, in order to prevent it spreading down the river.

Eight volunteers worked again at Frogmore Pits on a wet Saturday, (our early contribution to World Rivers Day on the 25th September) clearing the upper permissive footpath from near Moor Mill to Frogmore Pits of blockages and brambles. A few tackled some of the Himalayan Balsam, which is growing even up on this path, well away from the river.

Ver Valley Action Group Autumn/Winter Programme**Sue Frearson****Saturday 15th October 2016:**

10.00 -12.00 Frogmore Pits (parking at Hyde lane/ Moor Mill Lane) to check permissive footpath 1 and clear permissive footpath 2 of bramble and other blockages. For those with waders, to remove fallen trees from the river near the Hyde Lane Bridge and at the southern end, near the Veolia wasteland.

Saturday 19th November 2016: Sustainable St Albans Week

10.00-13.00 Sopwell Nunnery Green (parking at the allotment carpark, Sopwell Mill Lane, off Cottonmill Lane). Meet in the recently established nature reserve, near the Alban Way Bridge. We will be clearing bramble and saplings between the footpath and the hedge, installing a bench, replacing the footpath sign and litter clearing along the river footpath.

Saturday 17th December 2016: (Thank you drink for Action Group volunteers, Riverfly monitors and Bailiffs)

10.00-13.00 The Ver and Red (parking in the Chequers car park, Redbourn). We will be clearing the rivers of overhanging or fallen trees, plus some litter picking. Please join the committee for a Christmas drink in the Chequers at 12.00.

Saturday 21st January 2017:

10.00-12.00 Meet at the car parks by New Barns Mill, Cotton Mill Lane to work along the river in the Sopwell Manor Meadows. We will be removing overhanging trees and blockages in the river.

Please let me have your email if you would like to join our very active group. This would enable me to inform you of any changes to our published programme.

**Chairman,
Bailiff Co-ordinator**

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Newsletter Group

John Cadisch, John Fisher, Sue Frearson,
Martin Frearson and Jane Gardiner

Committee Members

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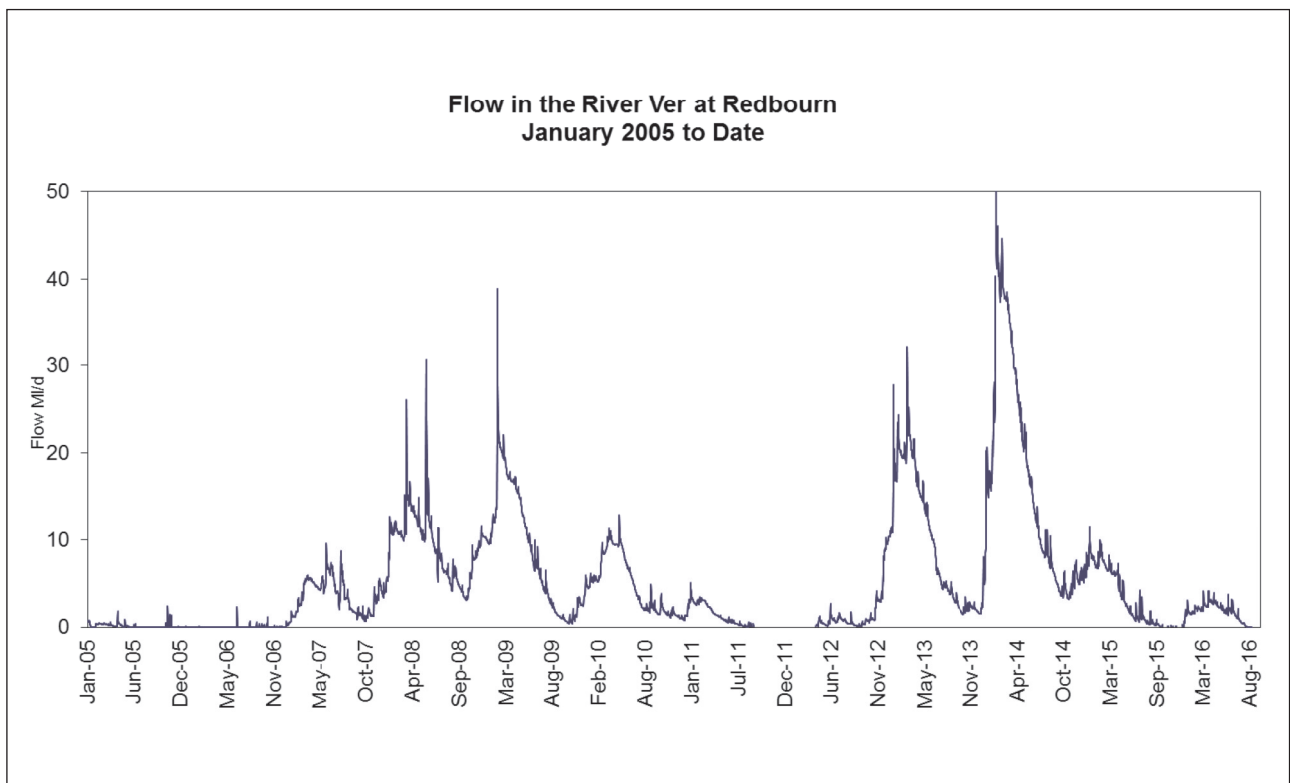
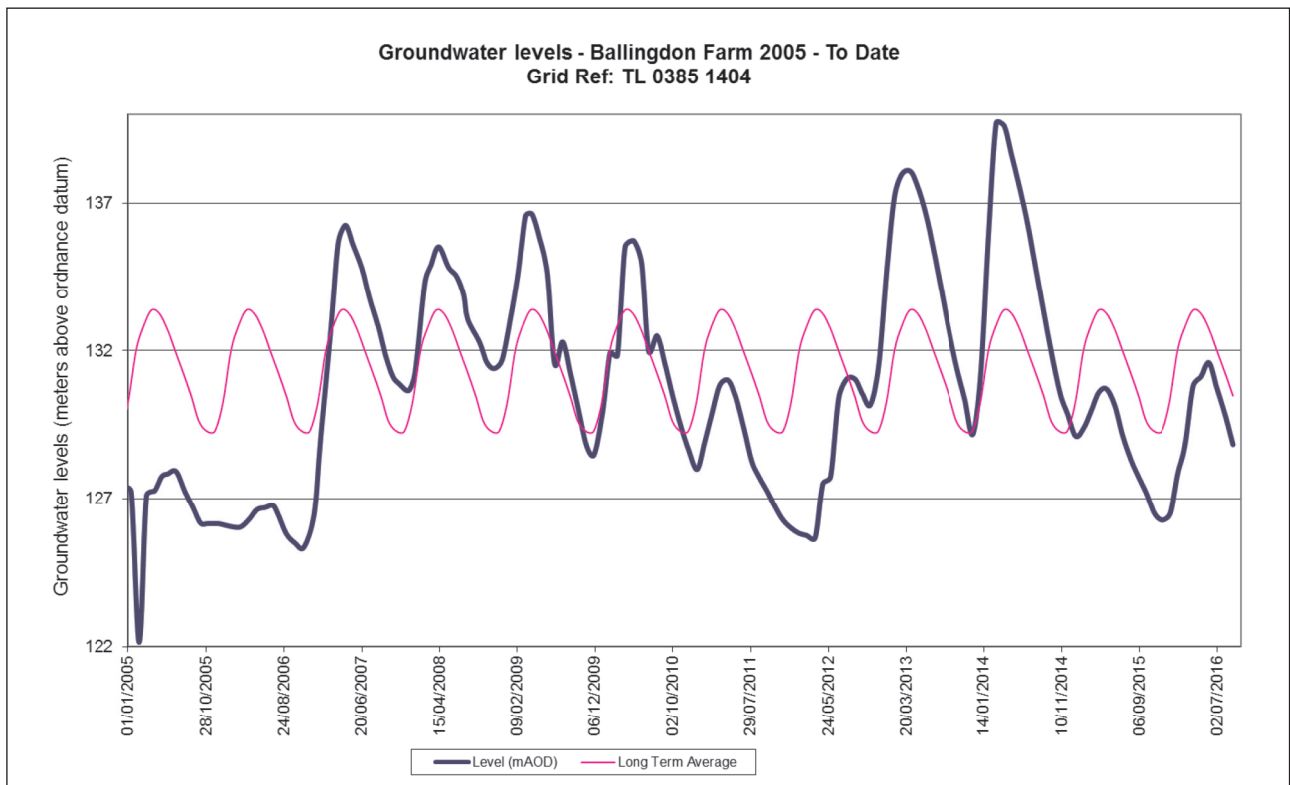
John Pritchard
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Newsletter Layout

John Trew (Verulam Angling Club)

HOTLINES

EA Incident Hotline: 0800 807060
("Report all environmental incidents")
EA Floodline: 0845 988 1188
"Cleaner District" (SADC):
01727 819598
Water Leaks (Affinity):
0800 376 5325



We are grateful to Affinity Water for supplying periodic ground water and flow charts and to Veolia Environmental Services for printing and distributing these Newsletters.