



**Tame  
Valley**  
Wetlands

# Summer 2016 Newsletter

Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter. We are now in full swing delivering projects and activities as part of our Landscape Partnership Scheme. This newsletter aims to give a brief glimpse into what we're up to. To find out more or keep regularly updated, please check out our website or follow us on social media.

We've had a busy 2016 so far - restoring 95 metres of hedgerow, creating 6 hectares of wetland habitat, delivering 15 school sessions, and running 46 free events and training sessions with nearly 1,900 attendees!

We have regular volunteer opportunities ranging from habitat management to admin and event support, and so far this year, volunteers have given 2,204 hours of their time towards our scheme. Thank you to all our volunteers, partners and funders for their fantastic support.

## Kingsbury's Community Wetlands



Work on Kingsbury's Community Wetland began in February 2016, funded by Biffa Award, the Environment Agency, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Howard Victor Skan Charitable Trust.

The project will see the creation of reedbed, ponds and a sand martin bank, as well as the restoration of rare floodplain meadow, making a fantastic new home for wildlife on former waterlogged football pitches. It is hoped that priority conservation species will inhabit the site, from amphibians and birds, such as snipe and sand martins, to mammals including otters and bats.



A new raised viewing platform with an outdoor seating area has also been constructed, providing a vantage point for visitors to watch wildlife and acting as an outdoor classroom for local schools. The addition of a pond dipping platform will provide hours of fun for enquiring minds, investigating invertebrate life around the pond margins. The project will be fully completed

## TameFest 2016



TameFest 2016 was a huge success, bringing in almost 1,500 people to Kingsbury Water Park on the bank holiday weekend. The annual festival is a celebration of the Tame Valley Wetlands' heritage, with many local businesses, community groups, charities and attractions holding a stall on the day. The stall holders offered free activities such as stone carving, yoga sessions, crafts, games and much more. There was entertainment from Coleshill Town Band and Ansley Morris Dancers, plus our friendly canines were able to enjoy the day, with some of the stalls offering pet accessories.

Emily Hill, the owner of Hotchpotch Crafts, said "It was a well organised event and we've made some good contacts!". TameFest is an annual event and will be returning in 2017, this time in the heart of Tamworth.

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**LOTTERY FUNDED**

## Bags of help with access improvements

We've secured £8,000 from Tesco's 5p plastic bag charge scheme, to develop two circular footpath routes in the Tame Valley Wetlands, one at Curdworth named Ponds, Pits & Pools (looking at the heritage of the area) and one at Kingsbury Water Park tentatively named Woodland & Wetland Walk (focusing more on wildlife and habitats). Work will start this summer and be completed by the end of the year.

We've also recruited new access survey volunteers and the Tame Way River & Canal routes are being surveyed as we write, with the hope of improvements beginning in the next few months.

If you would like to get involved in our Access Taskforce, to help complete practical works, please contact our Access Improvement Officer, Dafydd Jones.



## Upcoming events...



Check out our website or Facebook page for our full activities programme and to book. Here's a selection of our August events:

### Take a TimeHike through Coleshill, Saturday 13 August

Discover Coleshill and its surroundings in a new light, using innovative tools and techniques to reveal the history hidden in the landscape.

### Family Woodland Day, Thursday 18 August

Enjoy a family-friendly day in the woods with a range of activities such as green woodworking, woodland games, den building and much more!

### Storytelling Workshop, Saturday 20 August

Learn the skills and techniques which can be used to make a story come to life. We will focus on folktales from near and far.

## Did you know?

- The name of the River Tame is thought to be derived from an ancient word meaning 'dark' or 'slowly flowing'.
- The pipistrelle bat is a greedy little beast - it can eat up to 3,000 insects in just one night!
- Hams Hall (pictured right) was demolished brick by brick in 1921. It was reassembled as Bledisloe Lodge, a hall of residence for students at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester at Coates, Gloucestershire.
- Elizabeth I visited Middleton Hall in 1575, when she stayed for a week and knighted the Hall's owner Sir Francis Willoughby in the Great Hall.



## Meet the newest members of our team...

We now have a full team! Our newest members of staff are:

- **Dafydd Jones** - Access Improvements Officer. Dafydd is working on improving pathways and making the Tame Valley Wetlands more accessible to all.  
**access@tamevalleywetlands.co.uk**
- **Nicola Lynes** - Youth Officer. Nicola's focus is engaging with 18-25 year-olds, working with youth groups and leading our own: TameYouth, mixing conservation and with socialising.  
**youth@tamevalleywetlands.co.uk**
- **Ebony Smith** - Marketing Apprentice. Ebony's our most recent addition to the team, she will be spreading the word about all the work that we're doing!  
**marketing@tamevalleywetlands.co.uk**

