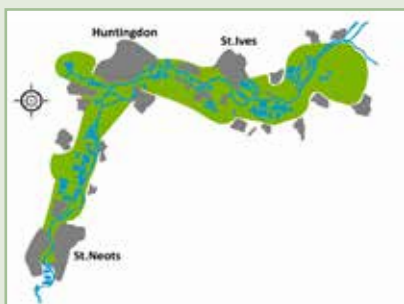


The Great Ouse Valley Trust (GOVT) is a charity with the objective 'To promote for public benefit the conservation, restoration, and enjoyment of the landscape, wildlife and heritage of the Great Ouse Valley and environs in the county of Cambridgeshire.'

The area is nationally recognised and valued for its wildlife, leisure, natural and heritage attractions which contribute to the county's natural green spaces.



Our Partner Members contribute knowledge, expertise, resources and energy so that together we can champion the unique appeal of the Great Ouse Valley.

To become a Supporter or make a donation, please visit our website. Here you will also find news of our current projects, our media coverage, planning issues and much more.

Like and follow us on Facebook and visit us on



www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk

SAVE THE DATE!

NEXT PARTNER MEMBERS' MEETING AND AGM

5 May
10.30 am

Houghton Mill,
Houghton, near
Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire

We are really fortunate that the National Trust, a Partner Member, has offered us the iconic Houghton Mill as the venue for our next event which will include our AGM and a speaker. Don't miss it!

More details to follow



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARION KNIGHT

TOURISM

The good and the not so good

Tourism is a controversial issue. There are issues surrounding both the benefits of tourism to the local economy and the potential risks for the environment. These were debated in November at our first face-to-face Partners' meeting since the start of the pandemic. We have considered the ideas from the speakers and also the feedback from the discussion groups and as a result the Trust is committed to:

- 1 Producing high-quality tourist media in both printed form and online with maps and routes. This is now under development.
- 2 Further explore and develop the concept of a self-designated 'regional park', in addition to continuing to pursue AONB designation with Natural England.

- 3 Ensure that the Ouse Valley Way is promoted and maintained to a high standard.
- 4 To continue the promotion of the Great Ouse Valley as a tourist destination while ensuring that the great assets that attract visitors are properly protected.



PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN JACKSON

COMMUNITY WOOD SUCCESS



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET FLANAGAN

For Queen and country and the Great Ouse Valley!

With 800 native tree whips and 500 native hedgerow whips the one-acre woodland has been planted. This has been a joint project between the Great Ouse Valley Trust, our Partner Member Godmanchester in Bloom, Huntingdonshire District Council - and a vast army of volunteers! The whips came from the Woodland Trust as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project. The wood is adjacent to the Ouse Valley Way just before it goes under the A1307.

Children and teachers from years 5 and 6 at the Godmanchester Community Academy subsequently planted one section. It proved to be a great event. The children's knowledge of the natural world and of climate change was inspiring. HDC are now providing large quantities of mulch on the site in readiness for a Grand Mulching Day in late February. This will be essential for the young trees if we have another very dry spring. Large-scale watering will not be practical except possibly in an emergency drought situation. Since the main planting we have also added Scots Pine and Ash. Elsewhere we have planted 'naturalised' non-native trees such as Walnut and Horse Chestnut.

THE OUSE VALLEY WAY

How can we ensure its future?

The Ouse Valley Way long-distance footpath is undoubtedly one of our greatest assets. But with current constraints on public funds it has proved difficult for the County Council to maintain the path as they, and we, would wish. It has become increasingly clear that the path can only be kept clear of nettles and brambles with volunteer action. Over the last two summers the Trust has attempted to coordinate 'green teams' to do this work, and this will continue.

The new A14 may have provided shorter journey times for motorists but it has had a disastrous impact on the landscape and the tranquillity of one of the finest stretches of the river. One particular concern has been the collapsing riverbank beneath the road on the Ouse Valley Way between Brampton, Buckden and the Offords. Our concerns have been well publicised (see page 4). After much work behind the scenes, and discussions with National Highways, we have brought in the Environment Agency. The EA has now come up with a proposal which appears to solve the issue with minimal engineering intervention. Details for delivery are

now being prepared by National Highways. Thanks are due to all those who have campaigned for action on this including Cllr Stephen Ferguson, the Mayor of St Neots.

The Trust is also continuing to work with landowners to achieve our aim of re-routing the path away from the heavily industrialised Meadow Lane in St Ives. It is a frustratingly slow process but well worth the effort if we can divert the path to a far better landscape, away from the HGV traffic.



PHOTOGRAPH BY GRAHAM CAMPBELL

WORKING WITH OUR FARMERS

Enhancing the landscape

The Trust's campaign to plant more trees to help cool the rivers, promote biodiversity and enhance the landscape is continuing. We have received a grant of £2,000 from AstraZeneca to add to our grant from the Looker Foundation and other private donations. Our second phase of native Black Poplar planting on West Meadow, opposite Brampton Mill (seen opposite) will take place this month with the help of farmer Alf Peacock. Alf was introduced to us by the Farmers Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) who are doing great work in promoting wildlife-friendly farming techniques. Farmers such as James Anderson at Needingworth are also doing great work in planting woodland, restoring hedgerows and providing field margins for biodiversity.

Our well-publicised project to plant trees and restore hedgerows on the Godmanchester Commons, as a joint project with the Godmanchester Freeman, has unfortunately been put on hold. The Freeman's agents,



Brown and Co, have concerns that the future cost of tree maintenance would be an unacceptable burden for their clients. We hope we will be able to re-engage with the Freeman in the future, once the new farming subsidy schemes are in place and fully understood by all.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GRAHAM CAMPBELL

THE BIG LANDSCAPE

Working together for the benefit of all

The Trust is acting as the secretariat for this new initiative with other key organisations - Natural Cambridgeshire, RSPB, Wildlife Trust, FWAG, NFU and Natural England. We hope to access funding for the enhancement of the natural environment through 'doubling nature', and we want to work with HDC on specific proposals. A grant application to Natural England for £7,500 has already been successful.

SOLAR PARKS

A threat to our treasured landscape or an essential way to fight climate change?

Our Partner Member, Buckden Parish Council, has been approached with a proposal to build a solar park or 'farm' on a site adjacent to the river. In spite of the benefits in providing natural energy we feel that the loss

to the landscape would be catastrophic, and contrary to the Buckden Neighbourhood Plan. We shall contribute objections once the application goes to consultation.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAS

Could you become a Trustee?

The Trust is searching for new volunteer Trustees to join our friendly team. We need help to develop a wider degree of expertise as we work to ensure the future of our precious landscape. We are looking for potential Trustees with an interest in any aspect of our work in nature conservation and landscape, but particularly those involved in farming or leisure and tourism. If you interested in hearing more about the Trust please call Graham Campbell for a chat.

Our Trustees

- Graham Campbell, Chair, 07952 75463
- Bridget Flanagan 07760 131725
- Helen Boothman 07885 489316
- Ian Jackson 07836 248360
- Phil Rothwell 07587 708486
- Mark Ellis 07967 581786
- Peter Downes 07765 833486



MEDIA NOTICE BOARD

RECENT COVERAGE

We are beginning to raise our profile!

We are pleased to report that our monthly Columnist column in the Hunts Post is continuing into the New Year. We use a range of contributors to ensure the content is varied and lively to cover all aspects of life in the Great Ouse Valley. Once it has appeared in the paper, each column is posted in the Media section of our website in its original form, and so if you missed a topic, you can easily catch up with it there. And if you fancy becoming a contributor for us please be in touch! Here are just three examples published recently.

Jim Stevenson describes how our wildlife copes in winter when the meadows flood. Hunts Post 2 Feb 2022



Bridget Flanagan reveals who visits your garden once you pull the curtains! Hunts Post 1 December 2021



Graham Campbell drew attention to a problem affecting the Ouse Valley Way long-distance footpath. Hunts Post 5 Jan 2022




Great Ouse Valley Trust
Our landscape for life
www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk