

## Kim Bishop's Walk, a walking survey

The Worthies Conservation Volunteers group was formed recently to help to look after the green places in the villages. Most months we meet at 2.30 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday to undertake conservation tasks, with a meeting on the previous Monday in the King Charles pub to report and plan. We are currently working at Broadview on plant surveys and general tidying.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August we went on a "walking survey" to see what was of interest along the railway line, Kim Bishop's Way, with a view to seeing if there was anything we could to improve it for wildlife and people, with of course the agreement of the council.

Along the way we collected litter and took it away with us

We were fortunate to have David Johnson with us as he pointed out several interesting things along the way. For example in Broadview there is a signal post left from the days when there was a railway there. There is also an old signal box on the left hand side of Kim Bishop's way.

Both sides of Kim Bishop's walk are bordered with quite tall trees and hedges of dogwood, privet, guelder rose, elders with lots of berries and coppiced hazels. The height of the trees made the walk quite dark in places and one suggestion was that it might be possible to open out a few viewpoints so that walkers could see the lovely views.

It was noticeable that where there were brighter areas there were some lovely wild flowers: wild basil, marjoram, hemp agrimony, hedge bedstraw, wild parsnip, hedge parsley, St John's Wort, rose bay willow herb, broomrape, teasel, mullein and scabious. There was one particularly lovely patch of soapwort and some broad-leaved helleborines about forty feet from the Springvale crossing. There was also a wilding apple tree on the right of the path with a good crop of apples.

We saw very few butterflies, probably because it was too dark, but there were a few speckled woods and one white.

We diverted to look at the top field and saw toadflax and red bartsia. Continuing along the path there is a large coppiced ash. At the end we came to King's Worthy substation

On our return, David showed us the site of the Roman Villa and pieces of Roman tile and brick. There was also an Iron Age encampment lower down. He told us we were on a boiling mound and showed us a boiling stone which had been altered by being heated to a high temperature and the plunged into water used to cook food.

On the walk back along the lower path there is a large walnut on its side but still alive.

This was a lovely walk made even more interesting by the contributions of members regarding the history and wild life of the path.

