

# BURTON CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

## SUMMARY OF TASKS 2010

**Date.** 2-1-10

**Place.** Coton in the Elms

**Task.** 10 mile walk (Easy Peasy Measy walk)

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results** A good start to the New Year and a fascinating walk, much of it along the River Mease, taking in a number of different landscapes showing the rural development of the area since medieval times

**Date.** 9-1-10

**Place.** Branston Water Park

**Task.** Coppice Willow.

**Volunteers.** 7

**Results.** A cold snowy day but stayed fine. Plenty of good coppice found in the area behind the 'reed bed' interpretation board. Used ESBC open trailer to load Willow, and some oak pieces from the Leavesleys container for bench building the next day.

**Date.** 10-1-10

**Place.** Upper Mills Farm

**Task.** Clear areas and create living Willow sculptures.

**Volunteers.** 7

**Results.** Had problems with the trailer going over the level crossing in the snow. This made us so late we placed the Willow in a dike to keep it alive and had a walk around the site to show people what was happening instead of working and then called in the pub for a social drink.

**Date.** 16-1-10

**Place.** Pool House Crown Inn Farm

**Task.** Maintain Willow structures and hedge.

**Volunteers.** 8

**Results.** The Willow screen needed a few bits weaving back in and tidying. We removed some Ash branches from the phone wire but did not fell it altogether. A big Hazel was coppiced but did not produce many binders for future work. The unmanaged trees in the orchard were pruned and crown thinned and the brash burnt.

**Date.** 17-1-10

**Place.** Branston Water Park.

**Task.** Coppice Willow.

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** Area coppiced from between the car park and the new picnic area. A huge amount of re-useable material was produced in the reed beds for use as bindings on the 120m laid hedge done by BCV. We finished early to have an 'Old Twelvey Night' wassail at the orchard by the allotment.

**Date.** 23-1-10

**Place.** Upper Mills Farm.

**Task.** Clear areas and create living Willow sculptures.

**Volunteers.** 8

**Results.** More than expected achieved, the planting and general area was cleared and cut back. A start made to clear and lay the north side of the gate and the old screen to the south side. A first section of the Willow screen was installed, but not enough time to start the seat and the boat.

**Date.** 24-1-10

**Place.** Christian Fields Lichfield.

**Task.** Habitat Restoration.

**Volunteers.** 11+14 local

**Results.** A large amount of rubbish cleared. A medium sized pine was felled, and cut to make bollards to deter ASB. The worst sections of footpath were surfaced with bark chip and the path and scrub around the car park was cut back. A lot of bramble was cut and cleared from border of the archery club on the west side of the site.

**Date.** 29-1-10

**Place.** Fradley Junction

**Task.** Access course

**Volunteers** 4

**Results.** An excellent free course provided by British Waterways on access and DDA lots learned. It was a shame it was a weekday but we shared what we learned with others.

**Date.** 30-1-10

**Place.** Dallow Lock.

**Task.** Lay hedge.

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** A good turn out with some new volunteers wishing to learn hedgelaying. Good progress was made with what was a line of scrub, but took shape into a good hedge as work progressed.

**Date.** 31-1-10

**Place.** Dallow Lock.

**Task.** Lay hedge.

**Volunteers.** 21

**Results.** An excellent turnout, and virtually the whole section from the Shobnall start of the Kingfisher Trail to Dallow Lock was laid or prepared for laying. Extra stakes and binders needed to finish off. Lots of bird life seen and heard giving proof of the value of the work.

**Date.** 7-2-10

**Place.** Chasewater Dam Heathland

**Task.** Scrub control

**Volunteers.** 16

**Results.** Working below the dam to remove scrub, mainly Willow, from a marshy area. Small groups cut back the Willow along the whole face of the area. A fire was lit to burn some off, and ash from previous fires was bagged up, to reduce nutrient enrichment in the fire areas.

**Date.** 13-2-10

**Place.** Dallow Lock

**Task.** Hedgelaying

**Volunteers.** 4 + 1 YOS and supervisor

**Results.** We processed and tidied a lot of brash and made plenty of stakes. 50 M of hedge bound

**Date.** 14-2-10

**Place.** Christian Fields Lichfield

**Task.** Hedgelaying

**Volunteers.** 13+14 local

**Results.** As there was not much litter, we concentrated on laying the area of scrub started last year. One section with a large gap was dead hedged at the bottom of the bank and the top was cleared to create an area for a bench. The hedge was a bit wavy but acceptable looking at the end. A fire was

started early to burn off brash and bramble left previously.

**Date.** 20-2-10

**Place.** Alongside 70, Wheatley Lane, Winshill

**Task.** Developing a nature trail

**Volunteers.** 5+7 local

**Results.** With an enthusiastic local team we started by cutting back the overhanging vegetation from the path and preparing planting sites for the afternoon. The plug plants were organised into habitat groups and planted accordingly. 2 drains cutting across the path were cleared out and planted up. A damaged Horse Chestnut that was rocking was felled and logged for removal.

**Date.** 27-2-10

**Place.** Upper Mills Farm

**Task.** Clear site from previous work

**Volunteers.** 2

**Results.** Just Richard and myself, tidy up and burn brash and set out the bench area for next time. We worked up a good appetite for the BCV Christmas meal that evening (29 vols for the meal).

**Date.** 28-2-10

**Place.** Tower Road

**Task.** Woodland Management

**Volunteers.** 15

**Results.** Volunteers were shown how to pick out suitable trees for formative pruning and how to cut back along paths and rides. The whole face of the wood leading down to the play area was crown lifted to 3 trees back and over 100 hedge stakes were made for the Kingfisher Trail. A desire line path through the wood was cleared and 10 trees formatively pruned. 8 Large bags of tree tubes were removed from site.

**Date.** 6-3-10

**Place.** Upper Mills Farm nr. the top of old scrapes.

**Task.** Clear areas and burn off the brash

**Volunteers.** 7 + 1 YOS and supervisor.

**Results.** A fire was started and a lot of the Elder was cut back along the approach path. We then set out for the second Willow screen and started that, although it was thick Willow and hard work. A reasonable second screen was linked into the first one in the end. The area for the bench was cut back and cleared, and one bench was made. A large bag of bottles, cans and broken glass was removed.

**Date.** 7-3-10

**Place.** Yoxall Lodge off Scotch Hills

**Task.** Open up new paths and walks

**Volunteers.** 17

**Results.** A team started by continuing the hazel hurdling alongside the path. When these were in place we matted the sloping path level, using the hurdles to retain the new path, 2 French drains installed. Trip hazard stumps removed and Hazel was coppiced for the hurdles. Other areas were coppiced to get the stools back into good production. 15 steps were prepared ready for surfacing,

**Date.** 13-3-10

**Place.** Dallow Lock

**Task.** Remove Elder and gap up hedge

**Volunteers.** 6

**Results.** We concentrated on getting maximum use out of the winch and over 20 large Elder were removed and disposed of. Mostly cut into small sections and stacked against trees at the top of the

ditch providing habitat. One gap to link the tow/cycle path done and path cleared of broken glass.

**Date.** 14-3-10

**Place.** Dallow Lock

**Task.** Remove elder and gap up hedge.

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** A team was started on the winch asap, and lessons learned the previous day were passed on. Stewards were posted and signs put out to warn the public. The hedgelaying on the fenced section was completed and 2 teams planted up the sections laid and staked, that would require minimal disturbance for binding later. 2 more gaps were opened up on the Dallow to Horninglow Basin section and 1 in the Shobnall to Dallow section making 3 in total. The hedge was later beaten up by a group from National Forest Co.

**Date.** 20-3-10

**Place.** Upper Mills farm

**Task.** Tidy site and beat up hedge.

**Volunteers.** 2

**Results.** Just Wayne and I; Wayne planted whips from the BCV tree nursery to thicken up the hedge that we have laid and I tidied up the site. 2 of the young Herefords had escaped through someone's garden, so a bit of excitement rounding up and then patching fences.

**Date.** 21-3-10

**Place.** Craythorne Wood Rolleston

**Task.** Woodland Management

**Volunteers.** 12+4 local

**Results.** A busy day with good support from Rolleston PC. Everyone worked well and by the end of the day all the paths had been opened up. We attempted to stack the brash in the middle of the wooded area in the dips of the ridge and furrow, but so much meant that inevitably some piles were fairly large. 2 bags of litter and most of the redundant tree guards were removed.

**Date.** 28-3-10

**Place.** Elton Drive Newborough

**Task.** Install bridge and dipping area

**Volunteers.** 15+7 local

**Results.** The tractor with forks made the movement of the bridge into place a lot easier. Team work got the bridge dug into place and fixed and the decking nailed on. Although the fence was delayed most of the posts and rails were in place but only 50% of the pailings were nailed on. 2 or 3 loads of roadstone were brought in so we were able to ramp up the low side of the bridge and construct 2/3rds of the path from the entrance gate to the bridge.

**Date.** 5-4-10

**Place.** Washlands to Walton Walk

**Task.** Risk assessment for National Forest Walking Festival.

**Volunteers.** 10

**Results.** We started at Watson St car park then walked along the river through the golf course to the Riverside Hotel, we then followed the path alongside the railway, clearing 3 stiles of encroaching bramble and thorny hedge. There were a couple of bits of barbed wire to relocate, but generally the going was good. We had lunch at Barton Marina half an hour late and met up with Duncan (who is the headmaster at Saxon Hill School) and his family so they could assess the walk for the venture scouts. On the way back we did a bit of vegetation trimming under the Leicester Line Bridge, and arrived back at 5.30pm.

**Date.** 11-4-10

**Place.** Branston Water Park

**Task.** Coppice Willow in the reed beds and on the point

**Volunteers.** 16

**Results.** All of the remaining section of laid hedge was staked and bound and looked very professional. The spare brash was trimmed up and after the reed had been raked from the cut area of reed bed, the brash and reed was made into compost piles for future grass snake incubators. Unwanted coppice growth on the felled poplars was cut and converted to stakes for hedging. Some Willow was woven into hurdles to block access to desire line paths in the reed beds.

**Date.** 30-4 to 3-5-10

**Place.** Drybrook Forest of Dean

**Task.** Training walk

**Volunteers.** 7 on 1<sup>st</sup> and 12 on 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Results** We had some enjoyable walks and although it rained each night it did not spoil the camping and it was fine for the walks.

**Date.** 2-5-10

**Place.** Elton Drive Newborough

**Task.** Install Dipping Area

**Volunteers.** 9

**Results.** A delay with the stone and sleepers meant we set out the rest of the path and the dipping area first. Using the barrows we transported bark chip to top up some play areas and also the spare soil from digging out the path was barrowed up to backfill the holes left from old play equipment removal. We then set out the sleepers for the platform. Stakes were driven in to hold them, the top sleepers fitted and all nailed to the stakes. Uprights were installed to revet the ends and the path was graded down to the dipping area. The whole area was stoned and packed with tamper bars.

**Date.** 8-5-10

**Place.** Croxall lakes, alongside National Memorial Arboretum nr. Alrewas

**Task.** Reed Planting

**Volunteers.** 9

**Results.** We set out and fenced the areas to be planted, some were easy and quickly planted up others where there was deep water and silt took much longer. An area of 600m<sup>2</sup> was densely planted approx 5 per m<sup>2</sup> and 2 'islands' further out were planted. The spare reed plugs were placed in 2 large wooden trays with netting over and placed in the water for next time.

**Date.** 15-5-10

**Place.** Croxall lakes, alongside National Memorial Arboretum nr. Alrewas

**Task.** Reed Planting

**Volunteers.** 8

**Results.** We topped up the large planting area we did last time, then 3 small areas were planted up half way round the reef area. The fitting of the hazard tape 'scarecrow' was difficult as some of the areas had been reduced to a 'pudding' and standing in one place for long enough to attach the hazard tape could result in getting stuck. We later barrowed the last of the reeds over to the pool near the mouth of the River Mease, and planted them in the designated spot. Over 1000m<sup>2</sup> were estimated to have been planted and protected with fence and tape.

**Date.** 22-5-10

**Place.** Watson St Car park

**Task.** Lead a National Forest Walking Festival Walk

**Volunteers.** 21 Walkers plus 27 of the 19<sup>th</sup> Lichfield Venture Scouts and parents.

**Results** Yet another excellent walk designed by Richard, taking in a number of BCV task areas on a glorious day. Lots of interest on the way and we met up with the scouts from Saxon Hill Special Needs School at Barton Marina, for the leg back to Branston Water Park. Feedback forms from the NFWF were all very positive.

**Date.** 23-5-10

**Place.** Alongside River Mease SAC between Netherseal and Clifton Campville

**Task.** Himalayan Balsam clearance

**Volunteers.** 15

**Results.** Mostly the Balsam was small and concentrated in dense 'stands' rather than a general distribution. The steep sides of the riverbank and relatively deep water will require waders next time to reach areas near the water. We took various tools like hoes, rakes and long handed 'cultivators' in case the very dry weather had baked the soil making it difficult to hand pull but we found that hand pulling was the best way as the balsam is so shallow rooted.

**Date.** 28-5-10 to 6-6-10

**Place.** Samaritans Way

**Task.** 100 mile walk

**Volunteers.** 11 + 4

**Results** A smashing walk from the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol to Lynton in Devon. Well organised with lots of interest on the way and we spotted the rare Cheddar Pink (it's a flower) on the way.

**Date.** 13-6-10

**Place.** Alongside River Mease SAC between Netherseal and Clifton Campville

**Task.** Himalayan Balsam clearance

**Volunteers.** 13

**Results.** We made very good progress down the river, having three volunteers in the water with waders helped to spot areas and clear difficult patches. A boat would make checking of the remote meanders possible.

**Date.** 20-6-10

**Place.** Alongside River Mease SAC between Netherseal and Clifton Campville

**Task.** Himalayan Balsam clearance

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** We worked our way down the river, cutting gaps thro' the bank side vegetation at intervals to try and spot balsam areas, and cut accordingly. The boat was useful in reaching some difficult sections of the bank where deep silt made access potentially dangerous, we had to revisit some areas cleared previously and just before we finished we came across a huge area of balsam. We made a start on this area but it would take a lot of clearing.

**Date.** 4-7-10

**Place.** Alongside River Mease SAC between Netherseal and Clifton Campville

**Task.** Himalayan Balsam clearance

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** We cleared a huge area either side of the brook by the farm track, at the end of the houses. We cut then raked to expose rooted stems and then these could be dislodged by side swiping with the rake. A large area near the fence in a field by the brook was scythed, we'll revisit this section

next week when the cut stems have withered and we can see what to rake/hoe to finish the area off.

**Date.** 11-7-10

**Place.** Alongside River Mease SAC between Netherseal and Clifton Campville

**Task.** Himalayan Balsam clearance

**Volunteers.** 20

**Results.** Last of the 5 balsam clearing sessions. One team raked over last weeks area and made sure all the roots were out, another opened access along the ditch to some difficult patches, having some recycled floor boards enabled us to bridge difficult sections of the ditch. The boat was used to clear any areas of regrowth on the opposite bank. A team cleared both sides of the river at the road bridge.

**Date.** 1-8-10

**Place.** Yoxall Lodge off Scotch Hills

**Task.** Open up new paths and install bridges

**Volunteers.** 15

**Results.** The bridges were not ready so we concentrated on clearing and levelling the path and brook (which was dry), installing a hand rail alongside the steps and boxing them in ready for later. A lot of brash was burnt whilst some interesting pieces of wood were placed as 'sculptures' alongside the trail and some longer pieces were laid out as path 'kerbs'.

**Date.** 8-8-10

**Place.** Foxley Wood

**Task.** Clear overgrown pond and tidy woodland

**Volunteers.** 19+9 local

**Results.** A few of us arrived early to clear the path to the pond. One team cleared Typha and rush (we tried to leave the Water plantain and Loosestrife). As we were back to clearing the first area that we did 5 or 6 years ago, the veg was not so well rooted as before and easier to pull despite the dry weather. Two other teams split up and crown lifted 2 areas, notably the dense block of trees near the entrance, opening up the view, so the entrance looked a lot more welcoming for people entering the woodland. We worked around the paths and rides opening them up 2 trees back from the path and stacking the brash within the woods.

**Date.** 21-8-10

**Place.** Temple Close, B-o-T

**Task.** Clear overgrown pond

**Volunteers.** 5

**Results.** We cut back around the edges to give access, and prepared an area in the wood to leave the arisings to compost, but Pete must have disturbed a wasp's nest and got a few stings, so we need to have some sort of bite and sting cream in the welfare kit. The root mat was difficult to break up in the shallow areas, but not too bad in the deeper parts, although the pond is silting up a lot now and dredging could be a problem in a lined pond. Not too much litter which is good to see. Approximately 25% of the pond was cleared and the arisings were stacked in the wood.

**Date.** 22-8-10

**Place.** Christian Fields Lichfield

**Task.** Habitat restoration

**Volunteers.** 16+4 local

**Results.** A good turnout on a lovely day, one team cleared the car park area of brambles etc, and some did a litter pick, not a lot compared with previous times. The main task was to cut the meadow and rake the arisings into windrows. Most of the meadow done and the cuttings left for disposal by others. Another team cut back the paths in the woodland area and removed trip hazard stumps.

**Date.** 28-8-10

**Place.** Temple Close, B-o-T

**Task.** Clear overgrown pond

**Volunteers.** 3

**Results.** Only 3 of us to see if any of the locals fancied doing a bit as they missed out last week, but they were busy again, we tidied up and turned last weeks arisings in the wood to help them to compost down. It was worth going though as I found out that they are finding a few needles in the area, so I need to record that as ESBC site manager. As there were no locals available again, we decided to sort out some things in the tool store instead, so we had a good tidy up and sort out of the tools.

**Date.** 29-8-10

**Place.** Yoxall Lodge off Scotch Hills

**Task.** Open up new paths and install bridges

**Volunteers.** 24

**Results.** A very busy day with so many people on site. We took the legs and handrails off the two bridges, for ease of transport, slid them down the slopes with rope attached to control them. They were fitted into position and then the holes for the legs were dug in and the legs refitted. One team fitted extra side boards to the steps and infilled them and others cut back along the paths, finished off the bridges and installed a few steps where required etc. 6 new steps had been fitted, the paths were cleared and re-profiled and many of the steps were infilled.

**Date.** 11-9-10

**Place.** Broome Farm Peterstow Herefordshire

**Task.** Lay Hedge

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** An earlyish start after camping Friday night and a bit hectic with 14 volunteers on a new and unfamiliar site. Martin had been down a few days earlier and cut a couple of paths in through the scrub, so we could see the site a bit better. On the first day we concentrated on clearing the overgrown hedge, felled 3 medium sized Alder and an area of scrub Willow. After an excellent lunch we were able to start laying the hedge from the gate, slightly downhill as it was very thin on that side and we could not afford to lose any brush, whilst another team started clearing and laying the hazel uphill but there will still be a gap in the middle that will need post and rail fencing until a new hedge grows up. In the evening we enjoyed some excellent hospitality in the cellar, then headed for Greenways for a superb evening meal. We were given so much cider and perry that we could not drink it all, even back at the camp.

**Date.** 12-9-10

**Place.** Broome Farm Peterstow Herefordshire

**Task.** Lay Hedge

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** . The leaning Willow was taken down in sections, to avoid splitting, some concentrated on preparing stakes and binders. Lou's team made an excellent job of the hedge they were doing (approximately 16m) and the Hazel team swapped about a bit to let others have a go. The bridge and brook at the back of the paddock were cleared and the arisings were deposited well up the track, to avoid them washing back in.

In summary, 16m of rough mixed hedge was laid staked and bound, 14m of Hazel laid staked and bound and 25m of rough hedge cleared, 3 medium Alder and 4 Crack Willow felled, 2 Crack Willow partially pollard and lots of Willow, Alder, Hawthorn and Blackthorn scrub cleared. Bridge and fence over brook cleared and lots of Cider/Perry drunk, food eaten and a good time had by all.



**Date.** 17/18-9-10

**Place.** Craythorne Wood Rolleston

**Task.** Mammal survey

**Volunteers.** 6+1 Rolleston PC

**Results.** We set the traps Friday night, but people got a bit excited and started rushing off and hiding traps, so the mapping was limited and on Saturday we could not find one trap (it did turn up on Monday). I will use the digital camera to record each site in future to make it easier as fortunately nothing was in the trap, but it could have resulted in a small mammal death.

Unfortunately we did not catch anything in any of the traps, despite some promising looking runs, but perhaps they have plenty of food in this 'mast' year. All traps were eventually accounted for and I was able to pick plenty of Sloes for my Sloe gin.

**Date.** 19-9-10

**Place.** Fradley Junction Nature Reserve

**Task.** Build a bog area and general maintenance

**Volunteers.** 8+2 BW staff

**Results.** A large pile of soil was barrowed to fill the old leaking pond. 2 vols. cut back around the paths and when one got a life jacket he was able to cut back close to the water. The Glyceria was removed from the old pond and placed near by to compost down but close enough for any inverts etc to regain the bog. Soft rush etc were kept wet for relocation in the bog. A steady procession of barrows slowly filled the old pond area and the soil was distributed around the liner and raked in. The old pond filling was done by 3pm and raked flat, then the plants were relocated. Some Flag Iris, Water Mint and Gypsywort from peg clearance were also located in the bog. Spare soil was used to refill nearby holes. Stakes were cut from some of the Sycamore clearance and these were used as posts to tape off the bog area.

**Date.** 25-9-10

**Place.** Paget School

**Task.** Install Duck pond

**Volunteers.** 4

**Results** A good start was made on re-profiling the existing hole and lining it with the underlay and liner supplied

**Date.** 26-9-10

**Place.** Paget School

**Task.** Install Duck Pond

**Volunteers.** 9

**Results** The pond was completed with sleeper revetments, recycled slabs for a dipping area and fencing to stop children falling in accidentally. The Duck house was relocated to the pond side and an area was cleared for stock fencing to be installed at a later date.

**Date.** 10-10-10

**Place.** Pipe Hill Common SSSI

**Task.** Heathland Restoration

**Volunteers.** 14+1 LDC

**Results.** A fine day and interesting to see the site now the road through it has been cut off. A lowish turnout for us, due to holidays etc but a good team to get stuck in. One team had a good cut back on the woodland side and clearing lots of bramble and scrub as well as the ditch. The other team cleared a huge amount of Willow and Birch from the heathland side. Some birch was used to make a bridge over the ditch. The stumps were left high so they could be cut low and treated with herbicide at a later date. All the arisings were brashed and stacked by the ditch for burning by

others at a later date.

**Date.** 17-10-10

**Place.** Horninglow Linear Park/ Kingfisher Trail

**Task.** Weed trees and tidy all areas

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** A cool clear start to a beautiful day, we cleared all the area around Ruth's bench at Horninglow Basin as well as the plantings opposite. The section just under the bridge was cleared ready for bulb planting and a long section of hedge was also cleared as well as the Hazel area. It was good to see how much has survived and is looking healthy. All bramble and general arrisings were stacked around the trees that we cleared to protect them from vandals.

**Date.** 23-10-10

**Place.** Badgers Hollow Nature Reserve at Coton Park

**Task.** Install sleeper bridges

**Volunteers.** 7 + 3 local

**Results.** Our first official job for SDDC. All materials and tools were loaded into the Groundwork trailer and off loaded closer to the site, but it was still a long walk with an advanced team clearing the path and others carrying tools and materials to the site. A gap was opened through the wire fence and the first bridge was set out and installed with a handrail either side. The second bridge was more problematic as the ditch had filled with water and was just over the length of a sleeper wide. 2 x ¼ sleepers were dug and staked in either side one on top of each other, to give a stable base, then the sleepers were bolted on top and a single handrail installed. The high bank was graded down to give an easy slope and the spoil was used to backfill and level the lower side.

**Date.** 24-10-10

**Place.** Appleday, Branston Water Park

**Task.** Assist with Appleday and coppice Willow in the reed beds and on the point.

**Volunteers.** 20

**Results.** I was expecting a quiet day as the Llamas were not available as an added attraction, but we were busy with the apple press all day, lots of interest and we used up all the apples this time! The rest of the team coppiced 'hit and miss' sections of Willow on the point and along the 'approach' bank. A lot of the product was of limited use as due to the tail off of the CPO work, the regular coppice has not taken place so a lot of the material was quite thick. There was a CPO team there that day. So I was able to show them how to split the Willow, to make it more usable for weaving.

**Date.** 31-10-10

**Place.** Upper Mills Nature Area

**Task.** Create Willow structures by new nature area.

**Volunteers.** 20

**Results.** We picked up the Willow at BWP. Victor and Richard continued the prep work on the hedge by the car park and the rest of us walked to Blackpool St entrance where Wayne had done a good job on sorting the Willow and clearing the original screen. A dead section was replaced, people we shown the basics of planting and weaving and a number of sections of the original screen were coppiced and rewoven. The grazier wanted help to transfer the cattle from the meadow into the front pasture, but 9 escaped, so we turned cowboy/girl to round them up back into the corral.

**Date.** 7-11-10

**Place.** Paget School Burton Rd Branston

**Task.** Backfill tree holes with soil and compost

**Volunteers.** 21

**Results.** Another excellent turnout, to backfill the 400+ tree planting holes for the fruit orchard as they had been dug deep to break thro' a hard pan layer, to give the roots a chance. The spade blade height was the optimum for the hole depth to backfill with soil and compost and a bit of bonemeal. A mini skip was

filled with assorted rubbish from the holes and we finished the job and packed all the tools just on 4pm.

**Date.** 14-11-10

**Place.** Christian Fields Lichfield

**Task.** Hedgelaying

**Volunteers.** 18+8 local

**Results.** We made a start on the scrub area and after clearing a lot of bramble etc we continued to lay, where we left off before. Due to the sparse nature of the planted area, we decided to do 2 separate lines of hedge and create a 'green lane' in between. As there were so many people on site it was safer to have a group coppice some stakes in the woodland and another team start laying the shrubs in the car park. A litter pick only produced 2 bags of rubbish, so the litter limitation is improving. We coppiced a few bits of Hazel on site so we were able to do a bit of binding on top, to show people how it was done. A couple of dense areas of bramble were opened up, but plenty left for habitat.

**Date.** 15-19-11-10

**Place.** Paget School

**Task.** Assist staff and pupils from Paget schools and local feeder schools with tree planting

**Volunteers.** 80+ hours by BCV members

**Results.** All the 415 trees were planted and tied to the pre-fixed stakes, by pairs of pupils over the course of the week (a few the following week due to rain). They inc. a mix of Apple, Pear, Plum, Damson, Apricot, Quince, Medlar and Cherry and a very positive time was had by all who were involved. All trees were numbered, mapped and the planter's names attached to the tree and map.

**Date.** 21-11-10

**Place.** Branston Water Park

**Task.** Coppice Willow in the reed beds and on the point.

**Volunteers.** 25

**Results.** A splendid turnout on a fine cold day. We sorted the Willow cut last time, into graded piles, whilst we waited for people to arrive, then headed over to the usual 'break in' point on the reed beds. A large amount of useful material for binding and stakes was produced. The non usable material was stacked as habitat piles and grass snake incubators at the bottom of the bank. It was worrying to see water levels so low at this time of year, 300-450 mm below what would be expected. We bundled a lot of the Willow up so it will be easy to pick up when we start the hedge laying.

**Date.** 28-11-10

**Place.** Stapenhill Woodland Walk

**Task.** Woodland Management

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** A good turnout on a bitterly cold day, one team started coppicing an area of mixed Sycamore, Norway Maple and Capadocia Maple seedlings and sorting the product into stakes and binders for the hedgelaying and a couple of other teams moved along the paths cutting back overhanging and encroaching vegetation. The paths looked much better for the clearance and a large amount of stakes and binders were produced. One load was taken to Watson Street ready for the hedgelaying. I would estimate over £400.00 worth of stakes and binders were produced/recycled,

**Date.** 4-12-10

**Place.** Stapenhill Woodland Walk

**Task.** Tidy Site and gather binders

**Volunteers.** 3

**Results.** Due to the bitter cold it was not safe to use the trailer so I called and cancelled the day (we had only arranged for a few to attend and pick up extra stakes and binders from Stapenhill Woodland Walk). As 2 volunteers had turned up we tidied up some of the cuts and had a walk

around Upper Mills site to show them the vision for the area, followed by a pint in the Elms.

**Date.** 11-12-10

**Place.** Watson Street car park, rear of Tesco Burton

**Task.** Lay Hedge

**Volunteers.** 7

**Results.** A low turnout, possibly due to the freezing weather the previous 2 weeks, but fortunately the temperatures had dramatically risen (approx 10-11°C in 2 days), so we were able to lay the hedge. A good start was made, but it was difficult, with having to break in at different sections, but the prepping work that Richard and Victor have been doing saved a lot of time. A lot of brash was dragged to the fire site prepared yesterday by Bladon House School. Most people had some Christmas shopping to do, so we finished about 3.30pm after doing a bit of staking and binding, so people who could not attend on the Sunday would have covered all aspects.

**Date.** 12-12-10

**Place.** Watson Street car park, rear of Tesco Burton

**Task.** Lay Hedge

**Volunteers.** 14

**Results.** A better turnout and the weather was still warm and good to have Geoff (a former champion hedgelayer) and his wife with us again. We were able to press on with both sides of the hedge. With Geoff's expertise it soon began to look like a hedge, but it was very 'gappy' especially on the North side, so we will have to plant it up with whips. Another team dragged the brash to a pre-prepared turf stripped fire area, and it was burned off, providing a warm focal point for people getting cold. The stakes and binders worked very well and everyone was pleased with the progress.

