

Tour of the Nature Reserve



Things to look out for during the walk

1. Starting from the Glen Parva Council Office where you can sign up to be a tree warden or volunteer.
2. Walk through the park towards the Glen Rise entrance to the spinney.
3. Aylestone Holt Spinney was created early to mid-1800 probably for hunting by the gentry. It originally extended down to the canal. When you enter the spinney you will see a section of recently planted hedge on the right behind the shed. On the path verges in April you should see native Snakes Head Fritillary planted by the volunteers in 2013 plus a few oaks scattered in the wood planted in 2017. Continue to the T junction and then turn right.
4. Just before the gate on the left you will see the North Ditch an important habitat for various ferns. Look up to see a couple of the Crete Bird Nesting boxes that we sorted out a couple of years back.
5. Holt Acre is a fairly recent bit of woodland being created mid-1990. As you walk through the Acre you can see evidence on the left of hazel coppicing that we did as part of a TCV training course in 2013. Any daffodils

or bluebells that you see in this area are native wild stock given to us by Stepping Stones. Carry on walking and down the steps to the Great Central Way.

6. Turn left and walk towards the Holt Spinney entrance then turn right towards the canal. Walk over the Blue Bank canal bridge to the gate.
7. In front of you is the Soar and this is where Everards plan to build a bridge to join the reserve to Everards Meadows.
8. Walk back over the bridge and turn right into the Chicory field (the flower of which can be seen in summer) continue over Kitty's Brook that runs under the canal and into the River Soar. This is an important habitat for various mosses.
9. Walk across the meadow and toward the hedge which we started laying on a training course with TCV in January 2017. Project to be continued towards the canal.
10. Continue through the next meadow past the two benches to the top left hand corner and there you will see a small stretch of path we created with TCV in November 2013.
11. At the notice boards on the Great Central Way turn right towards the pond. October 2016 I was involved with the TCV group in sorting out this pond area. We removed lots of branches shading the pond plus cleared a lot of bramble around the left and rear. Bramble needs to be kept under control and debris in the pond needs to be removed during late autumn. Walk back to the notice board and turn right at the path and round the bend.
12. If you look carefully on the left and right verges you will see fox tracks. You will then see our wild flower patch near the seat. We developed this area in 2016 by removing a huge bramble bush then scattered Grow Wild flower seed from Kew Garden. An important area for insect, butterflies, bees and damsel flies.
13. Continue down the Great Central Way to the Parsons Drive entrance and on the right is the site of the Badgers sett.
14. Retrace your steps back to the Central Way and turn right toward the Holt Spinney. Walk through the gate on your right into the main wooded area. You will see Bird and Bat boxes in the trees plus flower at various times of the year.
15. Carry on through the spinney to the gate onto the playing field and return to the council offices.