

Quantock Hills

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



June/July 2021

Spring Newsletter – Issue 13



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Farming in Protected Landscapes

Iain Porter

Quantock Hills AONB Development Officer

New opportunities for farmers.

The Defra-funded Farming in Protected Landscapes programme will be open for applications from July 2021. As a protected Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the Quantock Hills are recognised as a special and unique place and will form part of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.

By supporting the farmers, land managers and people who live and work in them, we can help protect these exceptional places and support local communities. To help do this, Defra is introducing the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which will run from July 2021 to March 2024.

Through the programme, farmers and land managers can be funded to carry out projects that support nature recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change and provide opportunities for people to enjoy and understand the landscape and cultural heritage. It will also support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses. In the Quantock Hills, we will be awarding £130,000 between now and the end of March 2022, with further funding rounds in 2022 and 2023. For more information visit:

<https://www.quantockhills.com/quantock-grants-and-funding>

The programme supports projects on any land within the Quantock Hills. It can also support activity on other land where projects can demonstrate benefit to the Quantocks, or the AONBs objectives or partnership initiatives. Most of the funding will probably be provided to projects within the Quantock Hills AONB boundary.



What the Programme will pay for.

The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme will pay for projects that, in the opinion of the Local Assessment Panel, provide value for money and meet at least one of the outcomes under the four themes of Climate, Nature, People and Place. Your project must also help to deliver at least one of the objectives of the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan. Details of these objectives [or appropriate wording for specific plans] can be found at www.quantockhills.com/qh-aonb-management-plan

For example, the programme might support:

- Re-wiggling a straightened watercourse, for the biodiversity and natural flood management benefits this can bring
- Replacing stiles with gates on public footpaths to promote easier access
- Creating wader scrapes, or creating ponds to support a variety of wildlife
- Promoting connectivity between habitats
- Conserving historic features on a farm, such as lime kilns or lead mining heritage
- Re-wilding an area of land and promoting natural processes
- Action to reduce carbon emissions on a farm

Payment rates.

The payment rates will vary depending on whether an applicant will make a commercial gain and can be based on actual project costs or Countryside Stewardship rates but can be as high as 100% for exceptional projects.



For further information please see our website www.quantockhills.com/quantock-grants-and-funding
You will need to contact us before submitting an application.



Working Well Wallers

Andy Stevenson
Quantock Hills AONB Ranger



The Working Well group that meets once a month have carried on with the repairs of one of the only dry stone walls on the Quantock Hills, adjacent to The Rap; a permissive bridleway between Cothelstone Hill and land belonging to Cothelstone Manor.

Much of the wall has fallen into disrepair due to trees growing up through it, weather conditions and animals such as deer traversing it. This is the third section the group has repaired, doing approximately 20 metres each time.

The hard work starts with dismantling what is left of the wall, clearing the vegetation and digging out the line of the structure.

Once the stones have been arranged in rows of size order and the foundations prepared, the rebuilding can begin.

Working opposite another person the volunteers place the stones back in layers, or courses, ensuring that each one is firm and in line before moving on.

As the technique suggests the wall is dry and without mortar, so the middle part of the wall is packed with filling stones to give it stability and strength.

The restored section will not only retain the landscape feature for at least another generation but provide valuable habitats for a range of species.





Hidden Archaeology of Halswell

Dan Broadbent

Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme, Historic Heritage Officer

A small team of QLPS volunteers have been undertaking archaeological investigations of a 'lost' feature of the landscaped gardens of Halswell House in Goathurst. The feature, which is now on private land at the very south of the estate, was originally spotted by the landowners who found some loose tiles protruding from the ground. Subsequent investigation with a metal detector also revealed a number of old nails.



Volunteers have been helping to gently reveal the full extent of the feature which appears to be a viewing platform commanding spectacular views looking north across the grounds and out towards the coast.

A late eighteenth-century description of the area records a simple bench in this location, close to a single oak tree, from which the grounds, 'sinking from the eye, form a most sweet landscape'.

Our volunteers' investigations, however, have revealed a substantial, hexagonal-shaped platform of brick and tile construction, which appears to date to the latter half of the nineteenth century, demonstrating the evolution of the site as a place from which to appreciate the landscape, over at least a century of use.

The lone oak tree is still standing, helping to frame the view.

Work is continuing, with volunteers receiving training in archaeological techniques to ensure that the platform is properly interpreted and recorded for posterity.





Volunteering Update

Verity Jones

Quantock Hills AONB & Blackdown Hills AONB, Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteering on the Quantocks is well underway and the summer sunshine is making it all the more enjoyable. Wildlife surveying is currently at its peak and this is the busiest time of the year for monitoring the amazing wildlife we have on the Quantocks. The butterfly surveyors are going out weekly from April until September, undertaking transects at Cothelstone Hill and Fyne Court.

Iain is set to deliver his bat surveyor training at the end of June, with the surveyors turning their detectors to the skies for transects between June and September on several sites around the Quantock Hills.

Nightjar surveyors are steeling themselves for some anti-social surveying hours; going out at dawn and dusk over the coming weeks to look for the nocturnal, churring males around woodland clearings. Not to mention our expert volunteers who check the pied flycatcher nest boxes and dormouse boxes. Long days and warm summer nights certainly mean that everything is at its peak!



Apart from wildlife surveying, the other groups are keeping busy too.

The Working Well Group and the Volunteer Rangers have been busy dismantling and rebuilding a section of drystone wall below Cothelstone Hill which has been an excellent summer project and has been a really nice skill for the groups to learn if they haven't done it before.

We have at least another day of rebuilding the wall before we have completely finished the section we're working on and hopefully it will stay standing for another 100 years.

Don't miss out on this exciting training opportunity for volunteers:

With generous support from Friends of Quantock and AEcol we are running two training sessions for AONB volunteers to learn more about the important acidic mires on Quantock Common, including the habitats and how to identify some of the plants within them.

This training is being provided as part of the Levels Up Project. Funded through Defra's Green Recovery Challenge Fund, the project is a partnership of organisations working across the Mendip Hills, Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in Somerset to deliver nature recovery and engagement activities that enhance habitats and connections for wildlife between the Hills and the Levels.

Spaces are limited so make sure to book a place at:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/acidic-mires-plant-id-training-tickets-156240147487?aff=ebdssbeac>





Lyme Disease

May was Lyme Disease Awareness Month, which means Lyme Disease UK were launching their annual Wake Up To Lyme Campaign. This year, the campaign was entirely online due to the Coronavirus pandemic and LDUK's got a brand new look! Head to wakeuptolyme.com for details.

Lyme Disease UK are an excellent source of the most up to date advice on prevention and treatment so please have a good look at their website and point other people in their direction if tick bites are a concern. Whilst it is important to remove the tick as soon as possible, it is equally as important that the tick is removed correctly.

WATCH OUT! TICKS ABOUT!

www.LymeDiseaseAction.org.uk

RISK ZONES

- Long grass
- Undergrowth
- Woods
- Moors and heaths
- Urban parks & gardens

...across the UK

Walkers, campers, gardeners - beware!

Ticks are larger after feeding.

Before that they can be as small as a full stop on this page.

TICK REMOVAL

- Do it as soon as possible
- DO NOT** squash the tick or apply any creams, oils or heat to the tick (if you put a tick under pressure, you may pump its saliva and stomach contents into you!)
- Use a **tick removal tool** to ensure you remove all the tick
- Dispose of the tick down the sink, avoiding getting any tick fluids on bare skin
- Clean the bite site with soap & water or antiseptic
- If you develop a rash or symptoms, see your doctor and tell them you were bitten

LYME DISEASE

Some ticks carry Lyme disease and they can inject the bacteria into you when they take a meal of blood.

Symptoms may appear between 2 and 30 days after the bite and may include:

- Feeling unwell with 'flu-like symptoms
- Extreme fatigue
- Muscle or joint pain
- Muscle weakness
- Viral-like meningitis
- Headache
- Facial palsy
- Disturbances of sight, hearing, digestive system or sleep
- A slowly spreading rash which may look like a "bull's eye", called an erythema migrans. If you get a rash, photograph it for your record

Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics: the sooner the better.

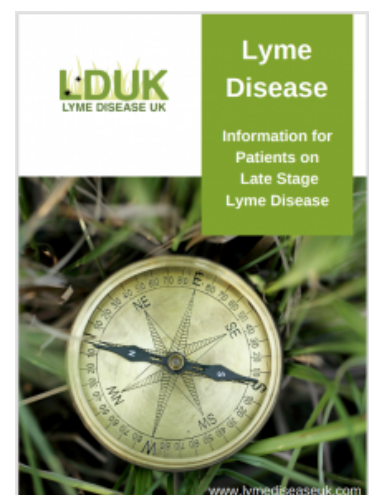
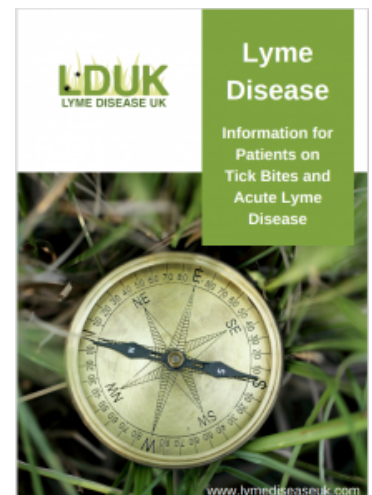
STAY SAFE

- Try not to brush against vegetation
- Keep your legs and arms covered
- Brush clothing & pets off before going inside
- Check areas not easily seen: back of leg, back, hairline. Don't rely on sight: tick bites are painless and can go unnoticed
- Buy a tick remover from LDA, vet or pet shop

Lyme Disease Action
www.LymeDiseaseAction.org.uk
Registered in England
Charity Number 1100448, Company Number 4839410

The Information Standard Certified Member

Last reviewed April 2017 Next review April 2020 ldaP2.2



The guides from LDUK are downloadable PDF documents and cover a range of topics such as tick bites, the EM rash, diagnosis and treatment and are available at:

<https://lymediseaseuk.com/patient-information-guides/>

Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS) Update

Bill Jenman

Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme, Manager

Things have got noticeably busier as Covid restrictions have started to ease. The big news is that Jemma Gibson has now started work as the QLPS Wildlife Officer, replacing Simon who left just before Christmas. Jem comes to us fresh from completing her degree at the University of Plymouth, having spent a very productive placement year at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. She's now on a rapid learning curve about the QLPS and the Quantock Hills AONB and will be meeting key partners and volunteers over the coming weeks.



Our education project, “In the Footsteps of the Romantic Poets”, has started delivery at last, and last week I went out with a large group from Eastover primary school in Bridgwater to Triscombe Stone and Will's Neck (great fun but very loud and very full on – I'm so glad someone else does the important job of teaching) and took a much smaller group of older pupils to Alfoxton (very calm and contemplative under a huge old oak tree).



We've also been able to get some long planned practical path improvements to Watery Lane in Over Stowey done at last, repairing a section of bridleway that was crumbling into the adjacent stream.



Jon and Dan have also been busy – see their articles for more details – but we're all looking forward to the Cothelstone archaeological dig at the end of July.



Photo Competition

Win £100 or £50 gift voucher!



Village Life- must be taken within a village or settlement in the Quantock Hills AONB and surrounding LPS area.



People of the Quantocks- an image representing the people of the Quantock Hills AONB and surrounding LPS area



Quantock Working- an image of working life within the Quantock Hills AONB and surrounding LPS area

Go to <https://qlps.org/qlps-photo-competition> for full details

send entries to qlps@somerset.gov.uk with completed entry form
by 31st March 2022





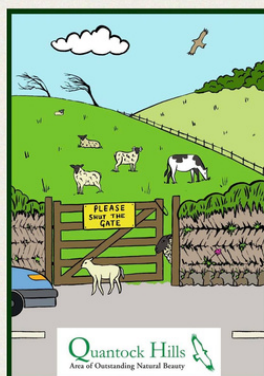
Quantock Word Search

a p e t r n b y a d i l o h b f j
u n d o d e e y g u i q l i q u j
g m p f h c a d n n t i t n l e f
u a i w s i c r m i j h r y s s q
s m c p y t h l a f o b l c s u s
t r n y c s o r e t r j c a g n h
a o i d q l q w r j a e w m b s a
p t c m s o f i c i i y p p l h m
d s j j r s e u n h r b b i j i o
t r c i p n w g u f n t f n y n a
a e a j u c a s s m r a d g y e w
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t t m f n e u l o s a r a p d e m
b a r b e q u e n u d w c h f r p

WILDFLOWERS	THUNDERSTORM	SWIMMING
SUNSHINE	SUNHAT	SUNCREAM
SUMMER	SOLSTICE	SAND
PICNIC	PARASOL	OUTDOORS
JUNE	JULY	HOT
HOLIDAY	CAMPING	BEACH
BARBEQUE	AUGUST	



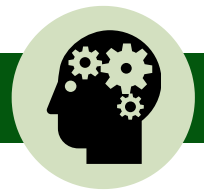
PLEASE
REMEMBER TO
ONLY PARK IN
DESIGNATED
PARKING AREAS
ON THE
QUANTOCKS



PLEASE
REMEMBER TO
CLOSE GATES TO
PROTECT GRAZING
PONIES AND
LIVESTOCK ON
THE QUANTOCKS



PLEASE
REMEMBER
FIRES & BBQ'S
ARE NOT
PERMITTED ON
THE QUANTOCKS



Quantock Brain Teaser

Can you work out the names?



YEOWOVTSER

(Heart of the Quantocks)



TOSGUTRAH

(Home to a stately house currently undergoing renovation)



IVKLE

(Look for the abandoned Lime Kiln)



OLORDFH

(Stop for a drink in the Plough)



MODEFBILOR

(Fyne Court is located here)



XSOTANP

(A bode of love)



NIMTKROSNSYATG

(Home to the famous Black Cider Apples)



GABROBHOUGSTEW

(Home to St Pancras Church)



CCOEOWBRM

(A car park above this village)



ECONTOHTESL

(Home to the Exmoor Ponies)



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