

CHELMER BLACKWATER RESERVE

SHAREHOLDER NEWSLETTER # 10 - July 2024



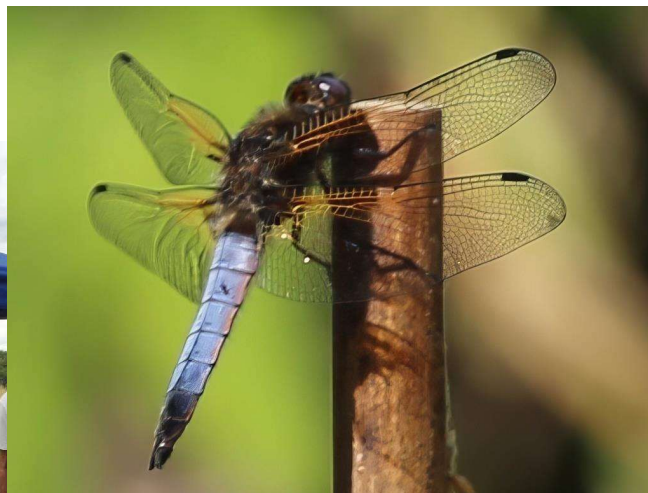
MIDSUMMER SIGNS (AND PORTENTS), ART ON THE RESERVE, FAMILY NATURE DAY, WATERCOURSE IN PERIL, ANYBODY FOR BINS?

The Chelmer Blackwater Reserve Community Interest Company (CIC) was formed by a group of residents concerned as to future plans for the land adjacent to the Tesco Supermarket in Maldon. In Feb 2022, the CIC signed a long-term lease with Tesco Stores Ltd to take control of the land and to develop it as a community nature reserve. All members of the CIC are unpaid volunteers and work is funded by a combination of grants and donations. Members of the public are actively encouraged to become shareholders and to participate in activities to support the management of the reserve.

This newsletter provides updates on what has been going on over the past few months.

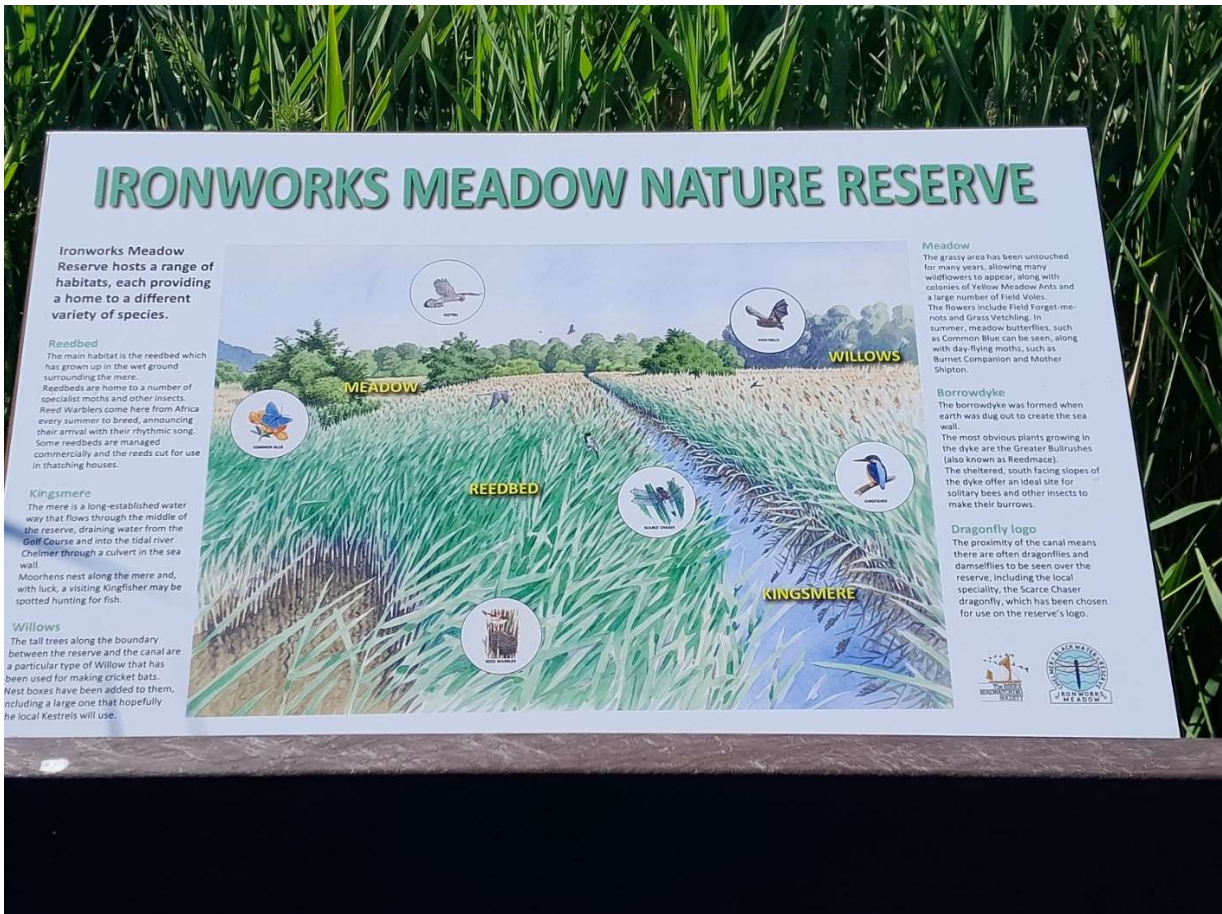
FAMILY NATURE DAY 28th JULY 2024

Last year's Bio Blitz has been re-named the Family Nature Day and will take place on 28th July on the Reserve. It is open to all. Species-spotting nature hunts and pond-dipping in the mere. The event will run from 10am till 2pm- no booking, just turn up on the day. Why not bring your children and/or grandchildren along?



SIGNS ARE UP!

After a very long gestation period, the site interpretation boards – with information about the site and its surrounding features – went up at each entrance to the Reserve on 16th May and the wildlife sign – with more information about the Reserve and its flora and fauna – went up beside the viewing platform on the day of the AGM. If you haven't seen them yet, go and take a look and let us know what you think!



SAVE OUR WATERCOURSE

In the last newsletter we reported on the River Rats' discovery that the culvert under the footpath was more severely-blocked than previously thought. Despite the heavy rainfall prior to June this year, little water was entering the Kingsmere by June. There is a serious risk that, if the water cannot get through, it will go elsewhere permanently. We are therefore setting up a project team to deal with this issue. If you can offer any suggestions or would just like to help on the team please contact Patrick patrick@ellum.co.uk. (We did go back to Essex Highways following our earlier request for them to do something about this issue and also the main culvert under the road (both of which are their responsibility) but we do not think we can rely on anything coming from them.)



ART ON THE RESERVE

We are seeking separate funding for an art competition whose outcome will be a single work of art of a height not exceeding 2 metres on the green meadow section of the Reserve, just above the bridge. The competition is expected to be open to any artists in the county, whether amateur or professional. We are hoping to offer prize money of up to £10,000 from money raised to the artist with the winning proposal, which will be judged by a panel which will include people who are prominent in the world of art and design. The prize needs to be significant so that it can cover the cost of production of the artwork. It is envisaged that the artwork will remain in place for 5 years and then be replaced with another one. Further details of this initiative will be provided as the plans become firmer.

SUMMER WORK PARTIES

Thank you to all those who have put their names on the short list for summer work parties. If anybody else would like to go on the circulation list, without obligation, please let Simon Wood know simon.wood27@gmail.com. Currently the main priority is occasional clearance work along the footpaths. Most of the heavy work can be done by our new bushcutter but there is other clearance and litter picking needed. The work parties normally take place on weekdays, sometimes at fairly short notice. They last no more than two hours.

BIN THERE

Although, with the occasional exception, we have been pleasantly surprised by the small amount of litter left on the Reserve, it has been suggested that a litter bin by the bench would be a good idea. We can afford the bin but that is the easy bit. Somebody needs to empty it on a (at least) weekly basis. So we would like to hear from any members willing to go on a long-term bin-clearance roster to decide whether this is feasible. If we have a good uptake, it may make sense to also have bins or dog bins at either end of the Reserve and to include these in the weekly emptying schedule. In the first instance, please will anyone who might be interested notify Tusi anastasia.fuller62@gmail.com without obligation at this stage.

MIDSUMMER'S EVE AGM

We were blessed with a beautifully sunny (but slightly chilly) midsummer's eve for our AGM on the reserve on 20th June, listening to presentations on recent actions, future plans and wildlife records. A few of the members present took advantage of the good weather and stayed to picnic after the event and some even braved the chairman's Ironworks Meadow Punch!



WILDLIFE NOTES

We are not including wildlife notes in this newsletter (other than to mention that it is always worth looking skywards as we have been having regular sightings of Buzzard and Red Kite) but we look forward to providing a bumper edition next time with photos from the family & Community Nature Day on 28th July.

STANDING ORDERS

More members have now entered into standing orders to make an annual contribution to the reserve. Thank you to them.

Your share purchase makes you a member of The Chelmer Blackwater Reserve Community Interest Company for life and you do not need to make any further payment. However, to help the CIC meet the inevitable expenses which we incur going forward, we are inviting shareholders to enter into standing orders on a voluntary basis. We suggest five pounds a year but if you want to pay more that would be very much appreciated. The bank details are:

The Chelmer Blackwater Reserve CIC Sort Code 60-13-37 Account No. 49715534

It will help if you also e-mail the Treasurer cpryke@clara.co.uk and tell him you have set it up.

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!

This newsletter is published by the Chelmer Blackwater Reserve Community Interest Company
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