



Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

21st June 2021

PRESS RELEASE

LAVERSTOCK'S HIDDEN WILDLIFE GEM

Tucked away in a corner of Laverstock is Whitebridge Spinney boardwalk, a surprising hidden gem which runs alongside the banks of the River Bourne.

Now that the boardwalk is brimming with life and colour, it's hard to imagine the sharp, brittle features of a hoar frost which sometimes appears in winter, but this is a spot which has a unique beauty all year round and in the last 18 months, it has also been a haven for many of our residents and visitors as well as the plants and creatures that can be found here. People have come together to plant snowdrops and bluebells, friendships have been made with neighbours who have met here for the first time, local clubs and schools use it for field trips and parents with pushchairs and dog walkers are a regular sight. For some who live further afield, it's now an extended part of their daily run. During home schooling, it was a place of education and discovery and for those who were grieving, it has been part of their healing, a place for thought and reflection where nature can be observed and knowledge shared with another generation.

Funded jointly by Laverstock & Ford Parish Council and a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, in 2020 the Parish Council completed the installation of the new 250 metre long boardwalk at Whitebridge Spinney and now new information boards, which showcase the abundant and diverse range of flora and fauna which inhabit the area have also been installed. Thanks to the pupils of Laverstock schools, Duke of Edinburgh Award students and the Devenish Bradshaw Charitable Trust, the boards give visitors the

opportunity to learn more about the ephemeral pond which appears each spring, water voles, egrets, frogs and fish, to name but a few.

As well as appearing along the boardwalk, two more information boards are being installed further along the river. One will be alongside the path leading from the Laverstock schools through to London Road, which details some of the hard work of the Devenish Bradshaw Charitable Trust to restore habitats on the water meadows. Bundy Lane in Bishopdown Farm hosts the last board, looking out over the river as it skirts along the edge of Castle Hill Country Park.

The boardwalk is also Stop 13 on the Salisbury Bee Trail, an award-winning environmental project. You can download the Bee Trail app on your smartphone, or pick up a map from Five Rivers Leisure Centre in Salisbury, which will take you to many of these hidden areas in Salisbury where wildlife thrives. A leaflet with map of the Farm and Spinney Trail is also available from the café at River Bourne Community Farm, just across the road from the entrance to the boardwalk on Laverstock Road, or on their website at www.riverbournecommunityfarm.org.uk/trails

So, take some time to explore this beautiful corner of our Parish, learn about the wonderful plants and creatures which thrive here or just take a moment to sit in the shade and take in the sights and sounds of the beautiful chalk stream waters of the River Bourne as it meanders on its way. What could be better?

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council is the civil Parish Council that covers the communities of Laverstock, Ford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum and Longhedge.

It is a statutory consultee on all planning applications in the Parish, but the final decision on applications is made by Wiltshire Council. Parish Council meetings take place on the third Monday of the month and are open to the press and public. Agendas and full details of all meetings can be found at www.laverstock-ford.co.uk

Information about the Devenish Bradshaw Charitable Trust can be found [here](#) and details of the Salisbury Bee Trail are available [here](#).

For further information, please contact:

Rose Whitfield
Community Engagement & Communications Officer
Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

rosewhitfield@laverstock-ford.co.uk