



Welcome to our Newsletter

Well Everyone, we are certainly well into Autumn now with the falling temperatures, changing leaves and shortening days making it very clear that we are approaching the winter season.

Traditionally this would be a time of harvest celebrations and feasting and of preparation for the darkness, a time when we would naturally slow down and retreat to the hearth and home. Of course, in our modern lives, this is no longer the case but many of you may be feeling the urge to stillness and if this is the case I hope that you are able to make space for that in the weeks to come.

It's also natural at this time of the year to reflect on the year that was. 2024 will go down as one of our more challenging years in terms of funding, but we are not at all alone in that with many environmental charities also struggling. Times of austerity are always a challenge for those of us working in this sector but we are a resilient and determined bunch and so we keep on going, adjusting our activities and shape to match the resources available.



Newsletter

July - November 2024

For Nene Rivers Trust this period of adjustment has sadly meant the loss of two of our longest serving staff members which has been a terrible blow not only for myself and the team but also for partners. We are working hard to limit the impact of these losses on our selves and others but the sting of their departure will likely remain for a very long time. In so many ways, this period of shape shifting marks a transition from the organisation we have been into the one which is still becoming. I look forward to seeing how that takes shape in the months and years ahead.

In positive news we are poised to develop a new large bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund having been invited to do so following our expression of interest submission in July. Early discussions with all our partners have set the tone for this bid but in the weeks ahead we will be reaching out to all of you as we begin to focus in on the, who, what, where and how much so that we can develop together, our ambitions for this next landscape scale program. With this in mind I invite you to get thinking about your own ambitions around heritage protection, enhancement, climate resilience, capacity building and outreach.

Finally, as this is our last newsletter for the year it falls to me to wish you all the best greetings of the season (yes, I know it's only November). I hope you enjoy some rest during this season and very much look forward to reconnecting as the days lengthen.

-Kat Soares, Chief Executive

Thank you

We would firstly like to extend a huge thank you to Viktor and Mandy, our dear friends and colleagues who we had to bid farewell to this summer, for a decade of hard work and commitment.

This dynamic duo have been instrumental in the success of many of the projects at NRT, and in its former guise as RNRP, including the hugely successful Nenescape.

We are gutted that they will no longer be a part of the team, but we wish them every success in the next chapters in their lives.



LENS and RAIN

Flood resilience success!

Our first noteworthy news as a Rivers Trust, is that despite the devastating effects of the September floods across our county, we received lots of wonderful feedback celebrating the success of some of our flood resilience projects.

The Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures installed at Penvale Park including leaky dams and bunds proved highly successful in directing excess water from heavy rainfall away from residents properties and negated flooding, which has been the case in the last few years.

RAIN Gardens

The RAIN team planted their first RAIN garden, demonstrating how they can work to help reduce flooding for residents. We will soon be sharing promotional material around RAIN Gardens and updating residents in the Wootton and Harper's brook about the initiative and how they can sign up. This will include 'how to' videos, and free packs with all the materials to plant your own RAIN garden, so everyone can learn how they can make their homes more resilient to increasing instances of rainfall.



Upcoming work

Feasibility work has been completed for both RAIN and LENS projects for NFM measures which will have a positive impact on building flood resilience in the county. We will be sharing details about these soon, we are in the process of signing contracts ahead of the work!



The Learning Garden

Just as the students headed off on their summer holidays, we received a kind donation from West Northants Council of various plants to spruce up our Community Garden for our summer of visitors. We spent a couple of afternoons brightening up the beds, which made a real difference to the space.



Unfortunately, our Co-Op funding has now finished. We would like to extend a huge thank you to the Co-Op Community Fund for their financial and moral support, as well as knowledge and contact sharing. We would also like to thank every Co-Op member who chose us as their Community Fund. This means we have received a final payment that should finally allow us to get a digger to finish off making our path accessible. This is in no way the end of the garden, we will be looking to submit a new bid for financial support for the garden, and as you will know from our previous letters, there is a lot that can be done with some upcycling. Never forget, one man's trash, is another man's treasure.



Back into the swing of the new term, students have already planted some seeds and have build a caged topper for the planters to protect them from some of our most popular pests, rabbits and rats! We are hoping these will prove really useful once we begin filling the raised planters with vegetables once again.



For the rest of the term we will be working alongside NACRE and their trainees, who have already shared many wonderful ideas with us as to how we can emphasise the roman heritage of the estate within the garden. Watch this space!

Summer Fun

With the Creating Tomorrow College students on their summer holidays, we worked with Chester House Estate to plan a Summer of Fun on site for young people to spend some time in nature.



We began with a bug hunt in the community garden, followed by a nature walk across site, down to the river and through badger wood where our youngsters made journey sticks, picking up fallen leaves and flowers along the way to make a memento from their visit.

Finally we reconvened for some nature crafts, including make your own watering cans, pebble painting and cress heads.



We would like to offer a huge thanks to the Visitor Experience and events team at Chester House for facilitating this wonderful Summer of Fun. It was fantastic to see so many enthusiastic young people enjoying themselves in nature.

Community Engagement

In August we spent the day at Stanwick Lakes where we had lots of lovely volunteers join us for a day of clearing up the site after a busy summer.



Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)

As you will know from our previous newsletter, we have been busy facilitating the consultation for the development of the local nature recovery strategies in both North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire. We facilitated our last workshop in July, and now the two individual councils will go their separate ways to write their own LNRS strategies.

North Northamptonshire Council now have their strategy open for public consultation, which can be accessed [here](#).

We continue to work with both unitary councils as LNRS engagement work moves forward.



In October we worked with West Northamptonshire Council to organise a bus tour for councillors. We met at Brixworth Country Park where Kev and Gav explained the extensive works that are taking place at Pitsford Reservoir and around their other areas to help protect nature. We then took a walk up the Brampton Valley Way where WNC Ranger Debbie told us all about the works being done along the BVW to support nature.

We then look at flood management measures that had been implemented on land at the Cottesbrooke Estate and Lamport Hall that were showing the huge impacts they can have in holding back water after significant floods. Finally, we stopped at Guilsborough doctors surgery to witness a more urban form of nature recovery. One ex-doctor had made an orchard and wildflower meadow on the surgery's small patch of land and demonstrated the importance of supporting biodiversity by growing to enhance nature.

We will be hosting a series of LNRS farmer engagement workshops throughout November where Anglian Water and the council will attend to speak to farmers about how they can benefit from various incentives as well as LNRS initiatives.

SPA Champions

We had a back to back day of SPA Champion workshops in October. We visited years 3-6 across Titchmarsh, Nassington and Warmington primary schools recruiting nearly 200 SPA Champions across the year groups.

As ever the children loved learning about the important bird species within the SPA with the Top Trumps quiz, and this time we could share extra details about the Nene Valley Woofs, and how they can be responsible dog owners, with many of them having pets themselves.



Nene Valley Woofs

The season is just beginning for our Nene Valley Woofs walks! We will be kicking off at Stanwick Lakes on Sunday 24th November at 10am.

The subsequent walks will be held on the following dates:

- Sunday 8th December
- Sunday 5th January
- Sunday 2nd February
- Sunday 2nd March
- Sunday 6th April

We spent some time this summer preparing some content for our social media which we will also be sharing over the season!



nenevalleywoofs and neneriverstrust
nenevalleywoofs · Original audio



[View Insights](#)

[Boost post](#)



Liked by rowenasimpson5 and others

nenevalleywoofs Ever wondered exactly what Nene Valley Woofs is all about? 🐶 ... more

Education

We have been working with various partners to put together a comprehensive education package.

Much of this work has been done alongside East Mercia Rivers Trust as part of the Rivers Academy. This offers schools and community groups the chance to get out into the river, enjoy kick sampling, identifying river features, and various hands-on activities to better understand rivers, their importance in the environment and the water cycle. These sessions will be held across various sites at Belton House, Meadbourne and Market Harborough.



We have also been working with partners across the Valley to be able to offer river sessions in various locations, these include at The Chester House Estate, Wicksteed Park in Kettering and at Boughton House in Geddington. If you would like to know more about our offering, please get in touch!

Rockingham Forest Vision

As ever the Rockingham Forest Vision team have been busy organising family fun days, tours of tree nurseries and various training workshops. You can see a full scope of activities on their on their own newsletter [here](#).

As the Building the Links for the Rocking Forest project comes to its natural close, a celebration event is being held on November 13th, 3-6pm in Coronation Park.

