

# CROW NEWS



The Official Publication of CONSERVE READING ON WEDNESDAYS



Issue 19  
WINTER SPRING 97



Conservationists  
at work



*British Trust for Conservation Volunteers*

PRACTICAL MIDWEEK VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION WORK TO  
PROTECT OUR LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE





# CROW Winter-Spring97

This newsletter was assembled by

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JOHN PEARSON

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# TASK DETAILS

## DECEMBER 1996 - MAY 1997

Key:



The date of the task



The type of work we will be doing



The name of the site on which we will be working



Ordnance Survey grid reference



This symbol indicates where the minibus is most likely to be parked, if making your own way, find the bus and follow arrows from there.



This indicates approximately where the task will take place

CROW hold practical conservation tasks in and around Reading (almost) every Wednesday. Anybody is welcome to come along and join in for all or part of the day. We provide transport from the back of Reading railway station (short term car park area) at 9:30am and sometimes do a pickup around midday too. You can also make your own way to the worksite and meet us there. We aim to return people to the station at around 4-5pm. All you need to bring is a packed lunch and wear sensible outdoor clothing and strong footwear. We provide all necessary tools and training and also cups of tea / coffee and biscuits. If you've not been on a CROW task before, please phone (0118) 9477917 to let us know you are coming. You can also contact us during a task by phoning mobile no. 0378 743210.









15th Jan



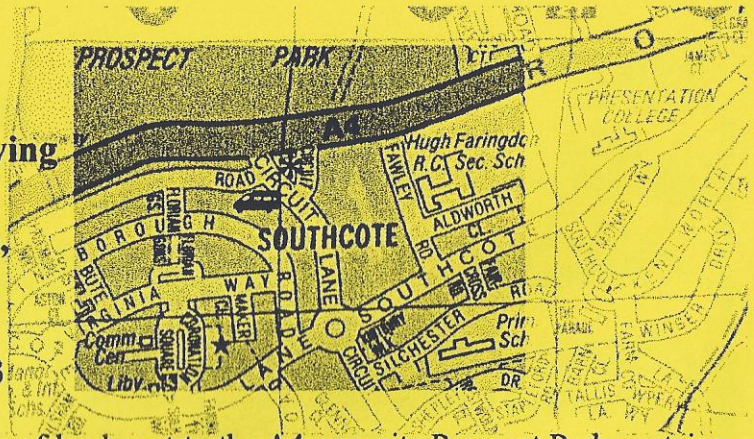
Hedge Laying



Devils Dip,  
Southcote



SU 690723



This small triangle of land next to the A4 opposite Prospect Park contains a pond and a short stretch of hedgerow. We shall be laying the hedge.



22nd Jan



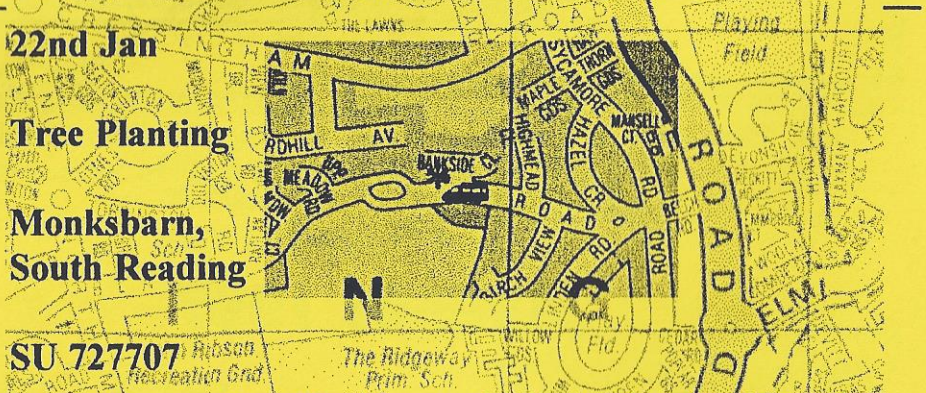
Tree Planting



Monksbarn,  
South Reading



SU 727707



This is a small area of woodland surrounded by housing. Previous tasks here have been to remove invasive sycamore. We will now be replanting with native trees.



29th Jan



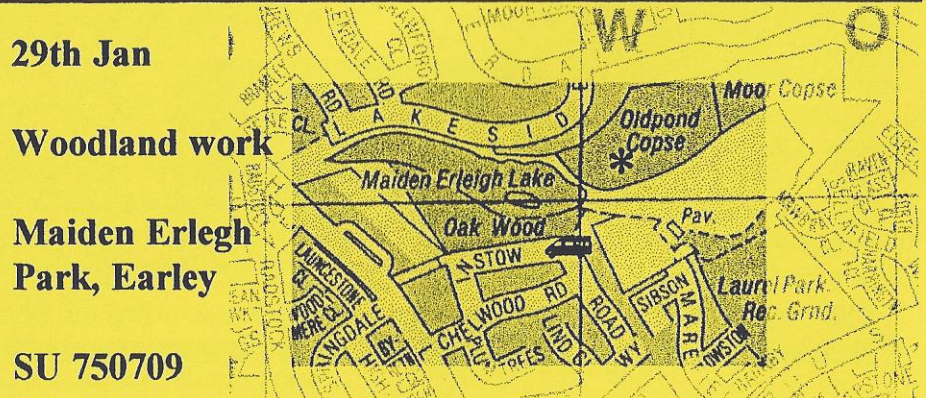
Woodland work



Maiden Erlegh  
Park, Earley



SU 750709



We will be building dead hedges in the woodland.



# FEBRUARY



5th Feb



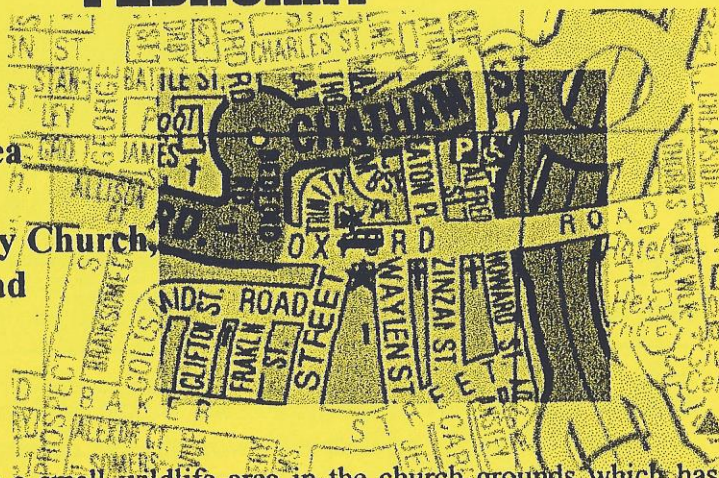
Wildlife area



Holy Trinity Church,  
Oxford Road



SU 709734



We will be restoring a small wildlife area in the church grounds which has become over grown and been invaded by trees which are shading out the ground flora. NB we may not use the minibus on this task due to problems parking along the Oxford Road. It would help if you could make your own way to the site, it's five minutes walk from the town centre.



12th Feb



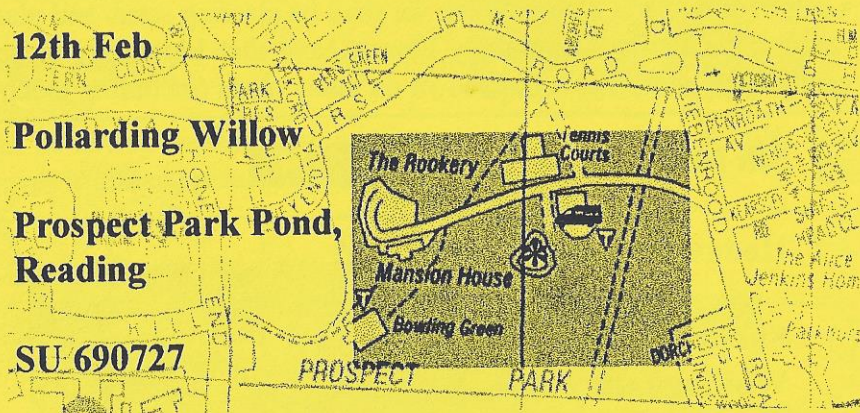
Pollarding Willow



Prospect Park Pond,  
Reading



SU 690727



We shall be pollarding (cutting the shoots and branches that grow from the trunk at a height of about 12 ft) the willow trees that surround the pond. This will be our third year doing this and it's always an entertaining task.





**19th Feb**



**Woodland work**

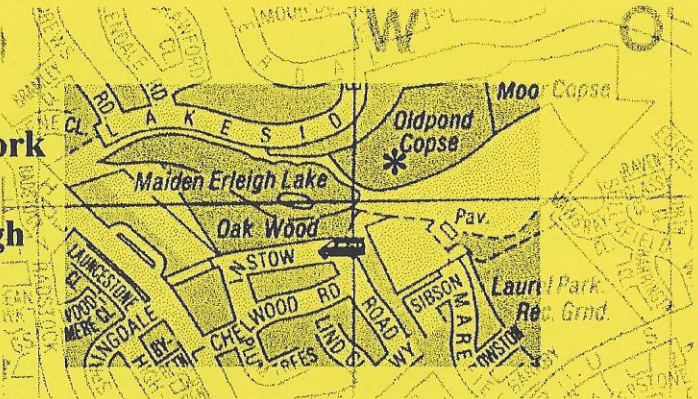


**Maiden Erlegh  
Park, Earley**



**SU 750709**

We will be carrying out woodland management and possibly footpath work.



**26th Feb**



**Tree Planting**

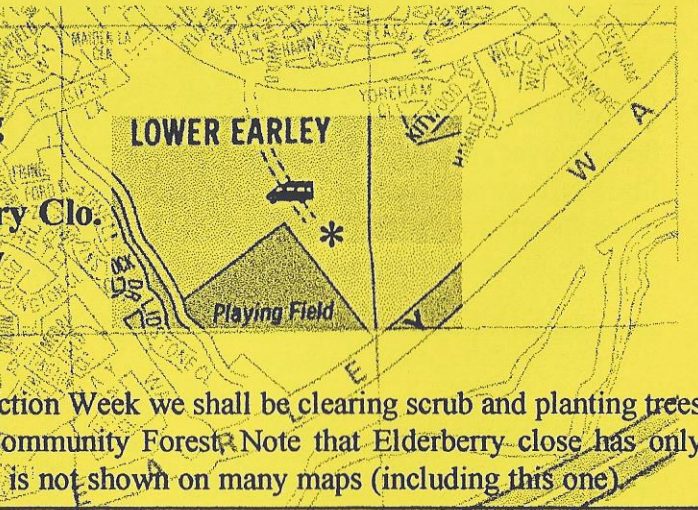


**Off Elderberry Clo.  
Lower Earley**



**SU 760702**

As part of Woodland Action Week we shall be clearing scrub and planting trees to extend the Earley Community Forest. Note that Elderberry close has only recently been built, and is not shown on many maps (including this one)



**5th Mar**

**MARCH**



**Hedge Planting**

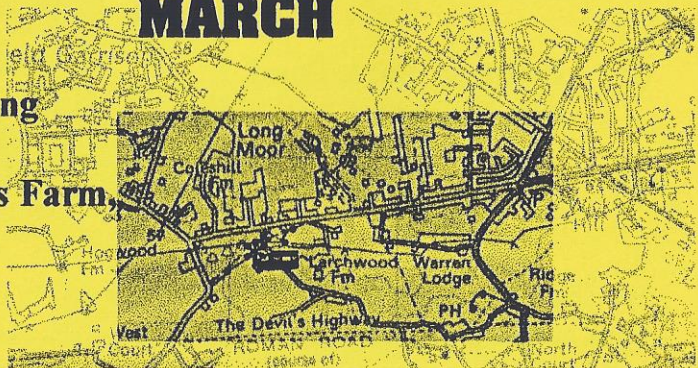


**Shepperlands Farm,  
Wokingham**



**SU 782645**

We will be planting a new hedge along the edge of the woodland.







**12th Mar**



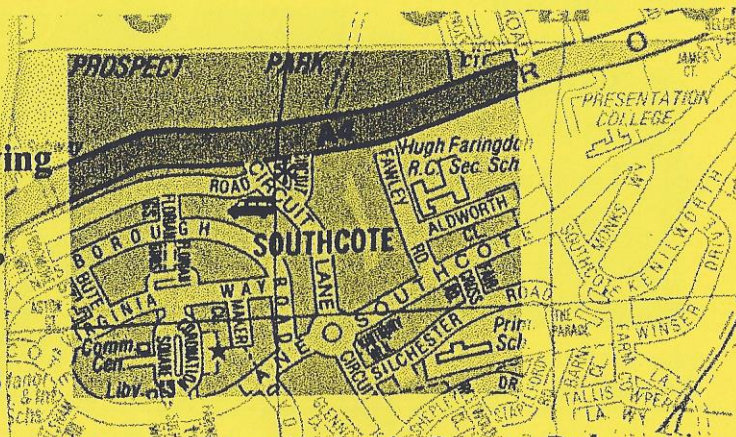
**Hedge Laying**



**Devils Dip,  
Southcote**



**SU 690723**



This small triangle of land next to the A4 opposite Prospect Park contains a pond and a short stretch of hedgerow. We shall be laying the hedge.



**19th Mar**



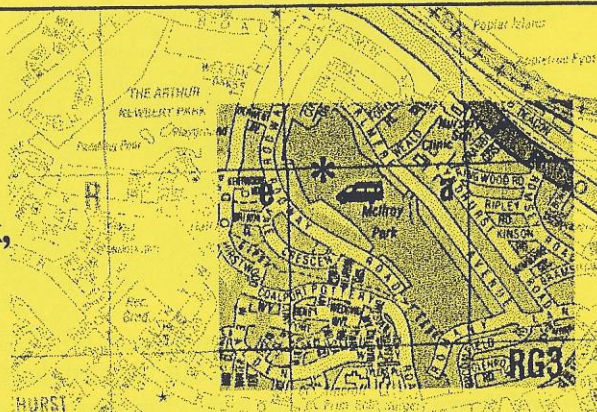
**Tree Felling**



**Mc Ilroys Park,  
Tilehurst**



**SU 676744**



We will be felling diseased elm and invasive sycamore trees in order to open up a small heathland area.



**26th Mar**



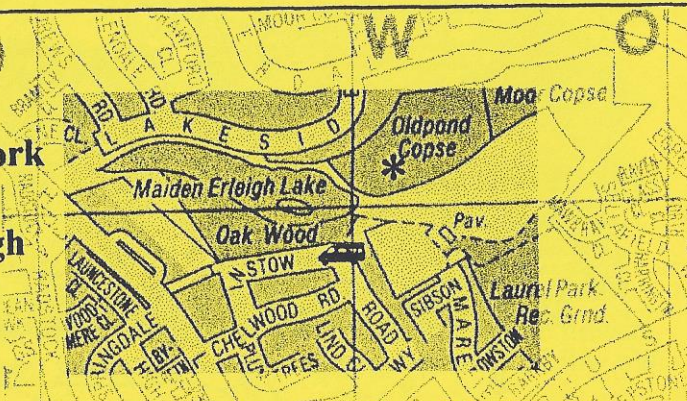
**Woodland work**



**Maiden Erlegh  
Park, Earley**



**SU 750709**



We will be carrying out woodland management and possibly footpath work.



# APRIL



**2nd Apr**



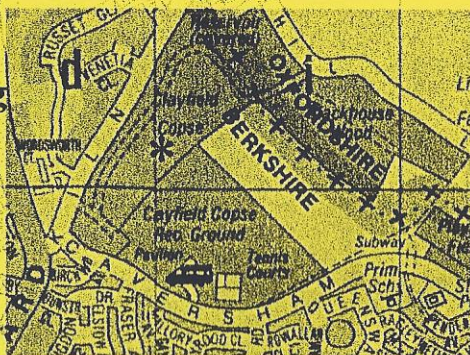
**Sycamore Felling**



**Clayfield Copse,  
Emmer Green**



**SU 725772**



We shall be removing invasive sycamore trees and planting native species



**9th Apr**



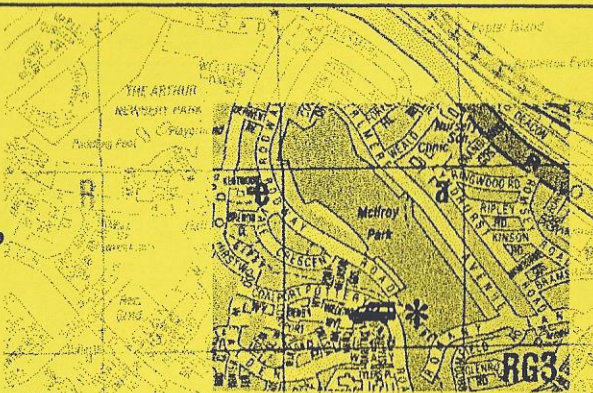
**Step Building**



**Mc Ilroys Park,  
Tilehurst**



**SU 676744**



Using logs from the trees felled on our last task here, we will be building steps which will direct visitors along paths through more sensitive areas of the park



**16th Apr**



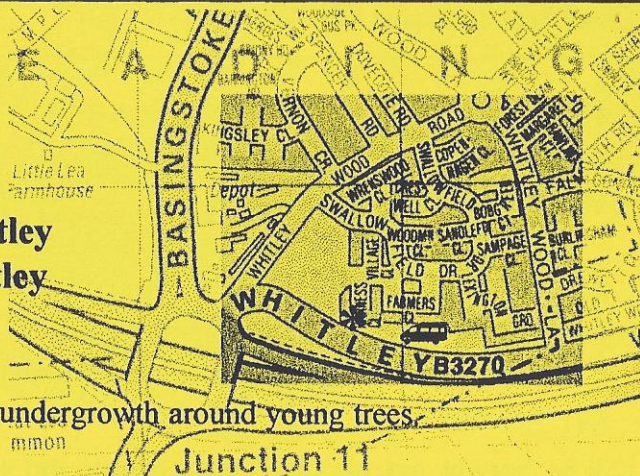
**Tree Care**



**South Whitley  
Park, Whitley**



**SU 718688**



We will be clearing undergrowth around young trees.

Junction 11





**23rd Apr**



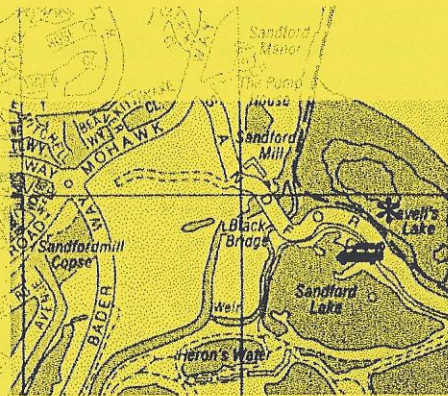
**Wildflower planting**



**Lavell's Lake,  
Wokingham**



**SU 783730**



We will be planting native wildflower plugs in the grassland around the lake.



**30th Apr**



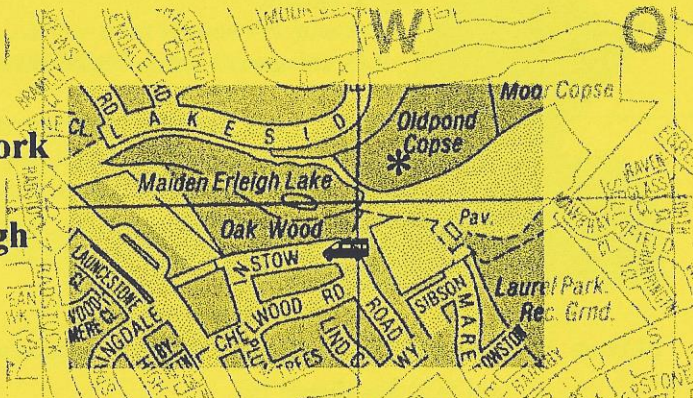
**Woodland work**



**Maiden Erlegh  
Park, Earley**



**SU 750709**



We will be carrying out woodland management and possibly footpath work.



**7th May**



**Wildflower planting**

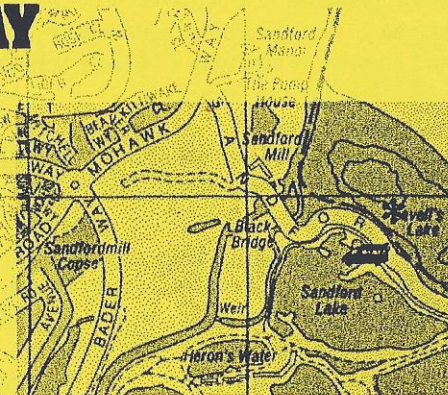


**Lavell's Lake,  
Wokingham**



**SU 783730**

**MAY**



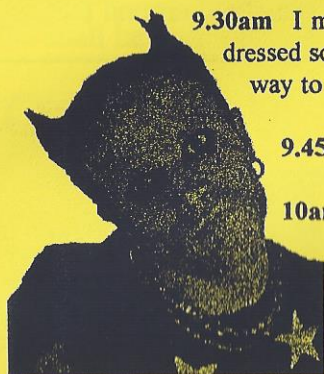
Time to get out your dibber and scallion again and get planting those flowers.



# FIRESTARTER

(a.k.a "CROW's Bonfire Night")

**8.30 am Wednesday November 6.** I jump out of bed with much excitement, for today is the day that CROW celebrates Bonfire night! I dress quickly and grab my contribution to tonight's meal: home made coleslaw, before rushing out of the door.



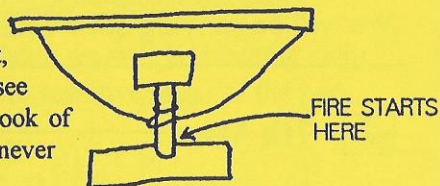
**9.30am** I meet up with Andy and the other volunteers at the Station (I'm dressed so warmly that I feel like the Michelin man!). We are soon on our way to the site.

**9.45 am aprox.** ..erm.. I think we took the scenic route....

**10am.** ..But we soon reach our destination: Padworth Common. Waiting to meet us is Paul Bruce, the Berkshire Heathlands Officer. Paul explains that we'll be cutting down Birch trees which are encroaching onto the heathland and choking the heather. Andy then makes sure that the team is instructed in the use of tools.

**10.10am** With cries of "Save the Heath", the team are soon attacking Birch trees.

**11am** The felled Birch trees have piled up, and the team decides that a fire is needed. At this point, Andy produces the CROW FIRESTARTER! (see diagram). Immediate thoughts are duh?? but my look of utter surprise is met with a "I can't believe you've never used a fire lighting kit before."



"Er.. no."

It turns out that the basic principle of the Firestarter is to spin a pole of wood very quickly on top of a plank of wood until sparks fly at the contact point. Any Questions?

I give it a go - nothing happens. Other members of the team also try in vain. Finally Andy admits that he's never used the firelighting kit either, and it was all a bit of an experiment. Then, as if by magic, a box of matches appear. The firestarter is relegated to the back of the minibus, and the team soon have a hearty fire burning.

"I'm a Firestarter"... not! I return to felling Birch.

**12am** Lunchtime. The kettle is put on and much food is consumed.

**1pm** More volunteers arrive, so we move onto bigger Birch trees. Cries of "Timber" echo across the Common. Paul Bruce can also be seen sporting the latest in white plastic jump suits!



(?). It turns out that he's treating the tree stumps (with an ecologically sound substance) in order to prevent the Birch from regenerating. I wonder if this look will hit the catwalk soon?  
**4.30pm** Many trees and a tea break later, it's starting to get dark, so we decide to wind down and prepare for the Bonfire night celebrations. Tools are packed away and potatoes are put onto the fire.

**5.30 approx.** More volunteers arrive. Potatoes are consumed together with yummy vegetable Biryani (made by Ron) and green tomato chutney (Christine). This is followed by the CROW apple pie (Natalie and Bethany). Who'd have thought that a conservation group would have so many chefs in the making?

**6.30 approx.** Let the CROW firework display commence!  
Andy is seen disappearing into the darkness, and seconds later the sky is filled with dazzling colour! There are many Ahhs! and Ooos! from the group assembled.

**7.30pm** The celebrations come to a close and the team are off home. What a tremendous day!

**The moral of the story is.....if you want to conserve your local environment and have fun at the same time, then CROW is the group for you!**

-Yvonne Trchalik

## THE BRUSH HOOK BLUES

*A song designed for singsongs around the CROW*

*by Natalie & Bethany teapot*

(...or something like that)

1.  
I woke up this morning  
I didn't know what to do  
All I needed was my brand new brush hook  
To take away my blues

chorus:  
I want to clear  
Clear the brambles away  
I don't need to be sad  
Oh my brush hook will make me glad

2.  
I'm gonna work all day

Say what I have to say  
Eat biscuits and drink tea  
Brush hook and sned trees

chorus

3.  
If you're feeling down and crappy  
Brush hook and feel happy  
Come to CROW it's green and fun  
It's better than a currant bun.

chorus to fade

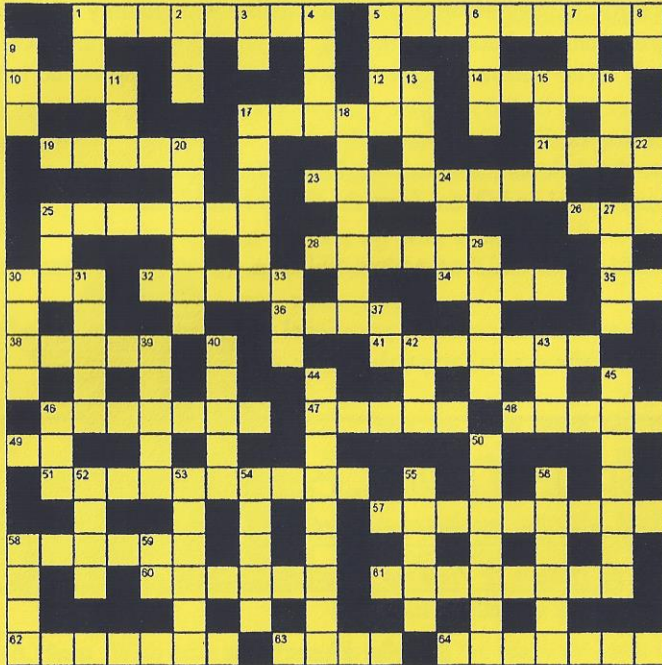




# PRIZE CROWSWORD No.143

Complete the Crappy Crow Crossword and win a romantic weekend for two in Paris\*

Entries must be received by Friday 7th February 1997 (address on back page)



## ACROSS:

1. For baked potatoes at Bishops Acre (8)
5. The Cola Co. reformed to make sweet (9)
10. Blunt tools and crap vans, initially (4)
12. Ford's latest offering (2)
14. Davey's in the house! (5)
17. LP rope upset to cut branch (6)
19. She's good at hurdles, perhaps (5)
21. See 16 down.
23. See 24 down.
25. Kettledrums (7)
26. See 43 down.
28. + 41ac. Young woman sounds premature to make worksite (6,7)
30. It's big, white, it gets you on site (3)
32. + 17d. To create a stockproof barrier (5,6)
34. Immeasurable periods (4)
35. Myalgic encephalomyelitis ( or lazitis?) (1,1)
36. A short day for crows (4)

38. Cuts of meat from big cats (5)
41. see 28 ac.
46. You should be this if you don't join us (7)
47. Disturbed Tansy becomes unpleasant (5)
48. Cut this to grow rods (5)
49. America, in short (1,1)
51. It tops off 32 (10)
57. Do this before each task to ensure safe implement

- use (5,4)
58. Half of US TV cartoon "white trash" duo (6)
60. N. American Arctic Indian (6)
61. This could be your reward (8)
62. Once known for Beer, Biscuits and Bulbs. (7)
63. Employed (4)
64. The cutting action of 17ac. (7)

## DOWN

1. Another local group (3)
2. Eg. lard (3)
3. Egyptian sun god (2)
4. Cut from altered pins (4)
5. Vital sustenance (4)
6. Corvine conservers (4)
7. \_\_\_ Brady (old lady) (3)
8. Our Monarch (1,1)
9. Location of social meetings (1,1,1)
11. It's not as funny as it used to be (3)
13. Island sweater (4)
15. A crow uses this to get about (4)

16. + 21ac. Socialise with biscuits (3,4)
17. See 32ac.
18. Tree management within Interpol lardy cake, perhaps (7)
20. He guides us from a confused reel ad (6)
22. Assume this position at lunchtime (3)
24. + 23ac. Essential to create a new woodland (4,8)
25. Hot drink from inside fast eater (3)
27. Dutch put paid to these trees (4)
29. Leader out of yes, no reversal (5)
30. If it wasn't for you, nothing would get done (4)
31. Mixed up snail takes a hammering - it's tough (5)
33. Ovine mother (3)



- 37. Selenium (2)
- 39. '70's black detective as tool handle (5)
- 40. The focus attached me (5)
- 42. Wood will do this eventually, if not treated right (3)
- 43. + 26ac. You will if you work in the rain (3,3)
- 44. Muddled man on you's no name (9)
- 45. Aspen genus (7)
- 46. Scandinavian tree of life (3)
- 50. Find prudent, when fifty is lost and I get within

- Redpoll ticket (7)
- 52. Short editor with backward degree makes cheese (4)
- 53. Moroccan King (6)
- 54. One in road, changed to receive broadcast (5)
- 55. Relatives of 6d. (5)
- 56. Verbal expression within short steamship makes flower supports (6)
- 58. Red Barrel was one, allegedly! (4)
- 59. That is to say (1,1)

-crossword written by Julian & Mark

\* Subject to availability the editor reserves the right to substitute a prize of substantially lower financial value, but much higher fun rating (ie free entry to the skittles evening)

## CROW on the WWW

CROW now has a page on the World Wide Web which can be accessed from all over the globe. The page provides information about CROW and gives details of forthcoming tasks and events, you can find the site at:

<http://www.crowpage.demon.co.uk>

there is also a link from the BTCV main page at:

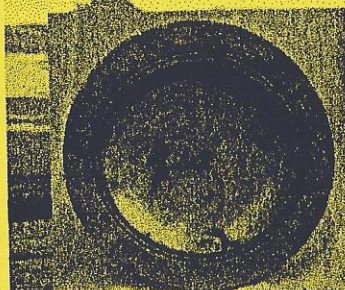
<http://www.btcv.org>



*What happens to all those trees we cut down?*

advertisement

**ANDREW NOYES**  
**WOODTURNER & SIGNMAKER**



✳ Beautiful wooden gift ideas,  
made from all those trees we cut down in  
the name of nature conservation courses

✳ Routed wooden signs.

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✉ [mail@andnoyes.demon.co.uk](mailto:mail@andnoyes.demon.co.uk)

Visit my Virtual Gallery:

<http://www.andnoyes.demon.co.uk>



# THE BORING BITS...

Here are edited highlights from the last few committee meetings.

*Note that these have been computer-scanned using the latest in Optical Character Recognition technology.*

Minutes of CORM meeting held at 3B's Reading, Wednesday 17th July 7:30pm

Present:

Mark Sixsmith	(MS)	Amanda Simpson	(AS)
Dave Cramp	(DC)	Philip Allen	(PA)
Theresa Verney	(TV)	Andrew Noyes	(AN)

**Display Boards** AN relates story of how all display material on boards has become lost, and suggests having a couple of evenings re-doing the boards. DC and TV suggest doing this in time for Early Green Fair, Aug 10th.  
Action: ALL to meet in one week STSP (3' Bs 7:30) and bring Photos of CROW tasks to choose from. MS offers to bring his holiday photos as well.

**Leaflets** These now very out of date and only a few remaining. ALL agree to spend remainder of BCT money on this (+ maybe move if available).  
Action: AN to obtain quote from printers and bring old leaflet ~ artwork to next weeks meeting.

## AOB

DC suggests an article in the Berkshire Conservation News (BeaCon) would be a good way to attract new volunteers.

AN agrees and, pointing out the copydate is in two days time, asks if DC would like to write such an article.

DC declines.

Following this a brief 3-line article is scribbled on the back of a CROW work programme, however its content is considered unsuitable for BeaCon and DC is nominated by ALL to write a proper article.

Meeting drawn to close at 9:30pm.

## CORY lunettes

24/07/96 3Bs sometime between 7.30 and 9-9 OOp(ish),

Present: Dave Cramp, Mark Sixsmith, ~IaKat .Jarvis, Ravey Davey Gravy, Phillip Allen, Andrew ~aves, ..er

- 1 MS showed his holiday snaps (they wert' re crap, large style)
- 2 DC told the bar staff to change the music (preferably to 280 bum)
- 3 AB arrived and ate all the crisps
- 4 Money: AB - we've spent some shrapnel. 1, namely t4~0 on a brushcutter 8r large accessories.
- 5 PU to go on brushcutter curse
- 6 DC (social sec): Fridays BBQ cancelled. Drink at The Snip in Wokingham next Tuesday 8pm (at which DC t~tries to pull but is stood up) W Berks BBQ Wednesday 31 (wait a minute these minutes are completely out of date).
- 7 Leaflet: AB - done some research and Will go ahead with Producing new leaflet in pretty colours. Boo-Ya~ka, J Boo~Yab\*a. DC ~ As chat up bar maid, giving away only remaining CROW eaglet (but all in a good cause)
- 8 AOB: DC to get a bit about CROW in ne . . xt Bec/on/BeaCon/BeKongi VietKong.

Mj promises to come out (?)

We need a new gas stove, someoneie said; AN: "Rad idea, I'll investigate"

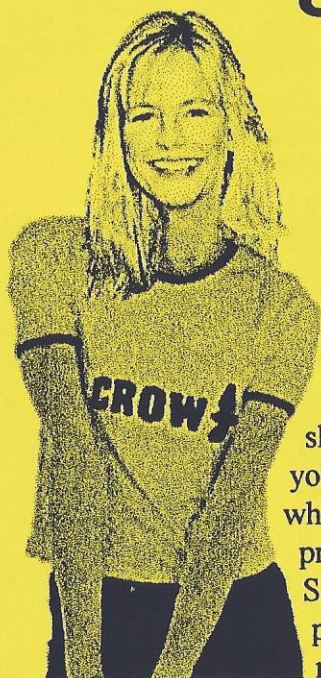
Display board photos: PA got his large ones . . t, MJ went to badminton, DC Sp' ead some (more) gossip is "it's enough to PUT YOU ~ff your beer".

9 Sorted Lets lower some ale.



# THE CROW DESIGN A T-SHIRT COMPETITION!

It's...



Now that it's the middle of winter it's the perfect time to start thinking about the new CROW T-shirt. And here is your chance to have your design emblazoned across the front, or reverse, of the shirt. You can use as many colours as you want and you can make it as simple or complex as you like and when we find out how much it's all going to cost we'll probably just go for an easy black & white one. Simply draw your design on a plain sheet of A4 paper, using crayon or colouring pencils, write your name and address on the back and send to the address below. The winner, picked by an independent team of judges, will win an **all expenses spared trip to California\***. NB. do not forget to enclose the £27.50 entry fee or a large bowl of fruit, whichever is the cheapest to post.

CROW T-SHIRT COMP.  
CAVERSHAM COURT  
CHURCH ROAD  
CAVERSHAM  
READING RG4 7AD





## **CROW** *Social Events*

- 15<sup>th</sup> Jan** Pub visit to the Black Horse, Checkendon. Minibus leaves Station at 7:30pm
- 12<sup>th</sup> Feb** Skittles Evening at the Seven Stars (on the A4 at Knowl Hill). Cost approx £3 per head. Meet us there or catch the minibus from the station (7:30pm)
- 12<sup>th</sup> March** Meal at the Standard Tandoori in Caversham Road. Meet there at 7:30pm
- 16<sup>th</sup> April** Laserquest... Details to be finalised. Cost approx £4 each.

NB needless to say these are all Wednesdays.

Uhhh...  
Like,  
that was cool.



Uhuhuh... huhu  
huhuhuhuhu...  
yeah, cool.

Conserve Reading On Wednesdays, Caversham Court Environment Centre, Church Road,  
Caversham, Reading RG4 7AD.  
0118 947 7917  
[www.crowpage.demon.co.uk](http://www.crowpage.demon.co.uk)