

# Dorset Countryside Volunteers



No 189  
August - October 2019  
Reg Charity No 1071723  
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Higher Hyde Heath



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Hartland Moor



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Higher Hyde Heath



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Seacombe



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Tyneham



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Swyre

# Who we are, what we do, where, why and how . . .

## DCV is . . .

- A practical conservation group run by volunteers since 1972 doing practical work in the countryside that would not otherwise be done
- Volunteers are male and female, from all walks of life and from all over the county
- Work is seasonal, e.g. woodlands in winter - hedgelaying, coppicing; in summer dry stone walling, clearing ponds, footpath work
- Organisations we work for include: Dorset Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Natural England, Amphibian Reptile Conservation Trust
- We work at weekends throughout Dorset
- No super-human strength or special skills needed, or attendance on every task or even for the whole weekend - any time is a bonus for us and for you!

## DCV offers . . .

- Practical care for the environment
- Opportunity to learn new skills - training given
- Use of all necessary tools
- Beautiful countryside, social events, fun & companionship

## YOU should bring . . .

- Stout footwear (steel toecaps if possible)
- Old clothes (wear layers) Long trousers and sleeves are best
- Tough gloves (we have some to sell/lend)
- Waterproofs, sun block, sun hat, insect repellent
- Lunch and some water
- Don't forget an up to date tetanus jab

## Reaching a task . . .

- If you need, or can offer, a lift phone Richard Meatyard or Peter Warren 3 days before a task
- Lifts from Wool station (toolstore is nearby)
- Travel links: <http://www.morebus.co.uk/>  
<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/travel-dorset/rail>

## A DCV day lasts . . .

- 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m. approximately including breaks for drinks (which are supplied) and lunch

(please bring your own lunch)

## FINDING DCV . . .

- Maps with the task programme (at the back of this newsletter) show the locations of task sites
- DCV website **[dcv.org.uk](http://dcv.org.uk)**
- Facebook
- Look for DCV's yellow arrows near the worksite or the DCV information board may show an explanatory note
- If unsure of the worksite try to arrive by 10.00 to meet other volunteers. The worksite may be some way off. Lost? give us a call on **07929 961532** (after 10.00 a.m.) ring longer than normal
- If the phone goes to answer phone there is no signal on the work site

## FOOD & DRINK

- Please bring your own lunch
- DCV provides free hot/cold drinks and biscuits during the day - bring your own mug if you wish
- Occasionally DCV may hold a shared lunch or supper (aka bring a dish) when it is usual for people to bring some food to share around

- **Note:** If you have a medical condition or allergies of any sort, please carry a card and bring necessary medicines. If you wish, bring this to the attention of the task leader. Please complete the "in case of emergency" details at the end of the newsletter, and bring on task. "In case of emergency details" can be inserted into a small key fob which can be attached to your rucksack. Key fobs are available from Richard Meatyard.

- All youngsters are welcome, but should be accompanied by a responsible adult.



Late July as we put together the final strands of the latest DCV newsletter, slogging away over the keyboard - at least it's not the Gestetner (Google it). We've finally got all the crucial bits, to'd and fro'd re times, dates, do you mean this . . or that . . ? Dotted the is and crossed the ts (E&OE) . . and it's hot!

In May we received news from Kevin Cook that he would like to step down from his position as DCV President, a role he has fulfilled for 11 years, faithfully attending our AGMs, offering advice and guidance and thought provoking relevant and meaningful talks. In his email Kevin said "*I always thought it a great privilege to be asked to be DCVs President and have enjoyed meeting all the members each year so do pass this on to them. I will miss the annual meetings that are so pleasantly relaxed and old fashioned in such contrast to the changing events of the world around us. . . . Thanks again for asking me to be your President, I think of it as an honour and will remember it with genuine fondness. With best wishes to you all, kind Regards, Kevin*" We are sure everyone in DCV would like to join us in offering our appreciation and sincere thanks to Kevin for giving his time and attention to the group and to wish him all the very best for the future.

Our speaker at this year's AGM was Peter Crabbe of the West Dorset Beekeepers Association who gave us an excellent talk on bees, beekeeping and the perils of a relatively newly arrived insect, the Asian Hornet. An identification sheet appeared in the last newsletter and there is a phone app that will allow you to upload sightings. It is very important that we do this to help protect our honeybees.

Looking at the annual report for 2018/19 we see that Richard is leading more tasks than the previous year as well as running the group, trailer towing, liaising with clients and everything on the website. So it would be nice if task leaders could all lead an extra task a quarter to ease the burden. We're all members of DCV and to get the most out of the group, we all need to put something in. Let's all do a little bit more.

Following last year's AGM, when Litter Free Coast & Sea gave us a talk, we agreed to donate money to buy a 2 minute litter pick station. The idea is to encourage people to just spend a few minutes litter picking whilst out on a walk and get them used to seeing litter pickers in action. Jane Woodcock agreed to oversee the operation, which has now been finalised, so many thanks to Jane for taking this on. Read all about it in her article in this newsletter. If anyone has a suggestion of which charity we might donate to this year let Richard know or discuss on task.

It's always nice to receive positive feedback from the public when we are on task working so please share this with the task leader and other volunteers. This also gives us the chance to engage with the public, tell them about DCV and what we are doing - so this is another good reason to listen to the task leader of the day when they explain the work in hand at the beginning of the task! Recently at Seacombe, replacing the handrail, we received lots of appreciative comments from passers by. Sometimes we get negative feedback as well and this is more difficult to take as we are volunteers giving up our free time to do a job maybe on a nature reserve. It's best not to get in an argument but direct them to the task leader and discuss this at break time with other volunteers as sometimes the doubts that have been sown take a long time to go away. Feedback from the client or ranger on site is something we would like to share in the newsletter so please pass this on to us.

You'll see from the programme there are four tasks to be confirmed. This programme sees the changeover to cutting and burning tasks and clients have not yet decided our winter work. Keep an eye on the website but also make sure you are registered to receive notifications from Richard by email.

Enjoy the rest of this lovely summer and hope to see you on task soon.

# Co-ordinator's report

*Richard Meatyard*

With the improving weather the first of the Summer's quarters has been focused on construction and invasives tasks.

The first of the construction tasks was the last task of the previous quarter. This saw us start a new fencing project for DWT on their Powerstock Common reserve. With modest turnouts both days the focus was on digging holes and installing strainer posts along the line of the fence.

The first task of the quarter was a Sunday only walling task at Swyre. With the over winter damage repaired at our last visit we returned to the ongoing repairs on the wall we started work on last year. One team completed a section of wall left incomplete last year while a larger team started the rebuild of a nearby collapsed section. By the end of the day all was completed apart from a short section of capping, due to a lack of suitable stone.

Then it was a return for a single day on the fence at Powerstock Common. Possibly due to the successful Undercliff walk the previous day numbers were very low, even so we managed to get the remaining 3 strainers dug in along with 2 gate posts and the field gate hung.

The next weekend with many of the regulars in France on the Orchis visit, turnout was better than expected for a single day visit to Upton Wood. After an initial session of bracken

bashing, we moved on to clearing brambles and leggy gorse from amongst the heather on the dry heath alongside the main road. An early finish was called when the heavens opened, and we risked being cut off by the rapidly rising stream.

Over the years we have constructed several boardwalks, but they have always been timber. At Higher Hyde Heath the material was recycled plastic. Following on from the original section, erected by DWT, we built a further 4 sections. Installing a superstructure created from 4" x 2" section plastic wood, bolted to stob driven deep into the soft ground, then decking it with pre-cut 6" x 2" section plastic boards. Unlike wooden board walks where the decking is usually nailed, the plastic decking has to be screwed down, this created a lot of work pre-drilling all the decking. We found the recycled plastic contained large quantities of a metallic shrapnel which made for hard work and resulted in the destruction of all the saws used.

A Sunday at Tyneham followed on from our AGM on the evening of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June. As always in amongst the large variety of tasks at Tyneham, there was a large pile of something to be moved from one location to another. On this occasion it was walling stone for the DSWA. However, there were plenty of lighter tasks, from weeding various locations, including the cobbles around the History Barn

to fence repairs. Plus, an extended lunch for the regular Tyneham bring a dish picnic.

The following weekend we returned to Powerstock to continue work on the fence. Despite a rather small turnout both days we made good progress getting all the strainers strutted. A box strainer built, all the intermediates, apart from those on the last section, beaten in and the first section wired.

The next weekend at Seacombe got off to a damp start initially but as the weekend progressed the weather steadily improved. This year we were renewing the handrail on the opposite side of the steps to the one we did last year. On this occasion we started at the top and worked downwards. On Saturday the digging was good and we installed more posts than expected although the last post dug showed that Sunday's digging was going to be much harder, and it was. Even so we completed half of the total length with posts in and handrail fitted.

With not a single Ragwort plant in sight, the following Sunday, at Loscombe it was a case of thistles and nettles. Dense clumps of Marsh Thistles were cut and Creeping Thistles pulled where possible or cut if they couldn't be pulled. We also cleared a few of the denser nettle clumps. A nice sunny, if rather sticky day, in this beautiful secluded valley in the depths of West Dorset.

Then it was another weekend of

## Co-ordinator's Report *cont'd . . .*

tackling invasives. Somewhere different for our annual Ragwort session on Studland, instead of Greenlands we were on Hartland Moor NNR, a new location for DCV I think. A stunning elevated heathland location with views of Corfe Castle in the distance. Saturday was probably the hottest day of the year so far although, thankfully, for most of the day we were working in a cooling breeze although the horse flies made their presence felt in one woodland edge area. Sunday was slightly cooler and there was less haze giving better views. Over the 2 days we filled 7 dumpy bags with, mostly rather small, Ragwort.

We usually reserve a weekend for the pond session at Tyneham but this year it was decided a single day would

suffice for half the weed to be cleared but not the silt. The work was completed and there were enough people to carry out various clearance tasks and other jobs around Post Office Row. One of which was to move the font in the church back to its correct location although this proved to be a challenge too far, it proving to be far heavier than had been thought.

Finally, having completed the board walk on Higher Hyde Heath on our initial visit we were planning to start a new fencing project there this week. However, a delay in getting consents saw us return to our fencing project at Powerstock. A low turnout both days limited progress but we managed to install the pedestrian gate alongside the corral and completed the fence as far as

the gap for the Hampshire Gate.

Strangely with the improving weather task attendance seems to have dropped quite sharply this quarter. Perhaps I shouldn't have said anything about record attendances at the AGM or maybe people are taking advantage of the good weather to get away on holiday.

*Richard Meatyard*

## The silent Summer

Have you noticed the silent weeks in summer when the birds stop singing and disappear from our gardens? All birds have to moult when they replace their feathers which can take a few weeks and this is when they stop singing, so they don't attract predators.

Every morning in May, June and early July we have been woken to the squawking of dozens of sparrows living alongside us as they have their first and then second brood of young. Flying back and forth to the fat balls hanging nearby I can only guess they were feeding the young as with the dry weather there don't seem to be any caterpillars and hardly any aphids. Suddenly there was silence in the mornings as all the sparrows left us to find dense cover for the adults to moult, the yearly shedding of feathers.

The new feathers grow from follicles in the skin, just like hair, and the new feather pushes the old one out. The process occurs in sequence across an area of skin to ensure that there are no 'bald' patches.

This means that a full moult may be spread out over a considerable time period, which is fine if there is a plentiful food supply, and if the bird is not a migrant.

The type and speed of moult depend upon species, age and time of year but most birds will moult completely during a year, sometimes split into two or three periods, usually before and after breeding. Small birds take about five weeks to moult and re-grow their flight feathers, migratory birds being the quickest.

This year we have decided to keep 2 feeders going through the summer, one with sunflower seed the other with fat balls. It's been rewarding as we have had sparrows and goldfinch taking the food although not in the amounts taken in the winter.



# DCV walk through the Undercliffs NNR

*Guided by Terry Sweeny*



## *Undercliff memories (undisciplined genre)*

*Through the green lit undercliffs  
with towering rocks and plunging slips  
to the melody of bird song  
Merlin led his happy throng  
leading with his staff of holly  
he and all were very jolly*

*All through this magical world  
up and down and on we hurled  
with anecdotes a plenty  
and diversions - at least twenty  
over the rough and tumble  
of this fantastic jungle*

*Until at last we spotted Lyme  
and there too spent a jolly time  
exploring seafront  
and the food hunt  
spending a convivial evening  
before, very sadly, leaving*

*A memorable and special day  
enjoyed by all in every way  
thank you for your time and care  
a day like this is all too rare  
thank you from your merry band  
for leading us through this amazing  
land*

Val Simcock May 2019



# Cerne Giant



**The Cerne Giant**, a huge, iconic, white chalk figure dominates a westward facing hillside near the pretty village of Cerne Abbas. At 180 feet high, the Giant is the only fully detailed human chalk figure in Britain, the other, the Long Man of Wilmington in Sussex being only a basic outline. Whilst the Giant still wields a huge 36 metre club in his right hand, some features of the figure have been lost, others possibly enlarged. He may once have carried something over his outstretched left arm (possibly a cloak) now lost from view. A navel may once have existed, but now amalgamated into a more prominent feature. Above the Giant, a rectangular earthwork enclosure known as the Trendle, origin unknown but believed Iron Age and still used by local Morris Men in May Day celebrations. Britain's largest chalk figure, the Cerne Giant is best viewed from the car park/lay-by on the A352.

*Many theories of origin and myths abound -*

*an ancient symbol of spirituality;*

*a Celtic or Romano British representation of Hercules;*

*a Saxon deity;*

*a real Danish giant who terrorised locals, ate sheep in Blackmoor, lay down to sleep on the hillside, was beheaded and an outline cut around his body as a warning to other giants;*

*the Giant sometimes comes to life, drinks from the stream at the foot of the hill or eats a village lass;*

*links to a fertility cult, a belief that couples wishing to conceive should spend the night on the hill;*

*a tribal totem to ward off potential invaders by demonstrating strength and virility;*

*recent investigations suggest the Giant dates from the 17th century. No written record before 1694, an entry in the Churchwardens'*

*Accounts from St Mary's Church, Cerne Abbas, notes "for repairing ye Giant, 3 shillings";*

*perhaps an offensive parody of Oliver Cromwell created by Denzil Holles, a Parliamentarian violently opposed to Cromwell.*

Be that as it may, the current facts are that the Giant is Britain's largest chalk hill figure, it is listed as a scheduled monument of England and has been in the care of the National Trust since 1920.

The chalk outline needs careful maintenance including clipping grass, removal of sheep droppings, replacement of chalk. However the more ground disturbance, the quicker the erosion, so part of conserving the Giant means leaving him alone as much as possible.

The Cerne Giant is an important part of local culture and major visitor attraction. During Victorian times his most prominent feature was removed from academic and tourist depictions, in line with the prevailing views on modesty. However more recently the figure has been used for publicity stunts promoting condoms, jeans, Comic Relief in 2009, the 2012 London Olympics, November 2013 and there have been many and varied replications of the Giant in numerous other locations. DCV's involvement with the Giant, which has proved popular ever since, began with the 1988 Telethon when we participated in the sponsored major rechalking, a week long task with other groups taking a turn too. A special commemorative T shirt was designed showing both the rare rear view of the Giant as well as the more usual view.

Later tasks have found us on hands and knees weeding and clipping,

hauling chalk up or down the hill, depending where it was delivered,



pounding chalk into the outline whilst trying to keep our balance on the steep terrain. The event is always popular and can be something of a reunion with past or lapsed members coming along to enjoy the fun. One year we decided to involve our French friends from Association Orchis on their annual visit to Dorset, especially as they don't appear to have any chalk figures in France. Let's share the fun we thought and they seemed to enjoy it.

2020 marks 100 years of the National Trust's ownership of the Cerne Giant, if indeed such a free spirit can be owned. Plans to spruce him up for the occasion have given DCV the opportunity to participate once more. This should be a memorable occasion, so make sure you come along to be part of it - Saturday August 31st and Sunday 1st September.





# DCV - Association Orchis May 2019 exchange visit



I was probably more excited than most on my first visit to the Orchis group, because I really did not know what to expect when I joined Jane, John, Val and Don, Helen, Terry, Mary, Chris, Carol C and David, once I'd succeeded in finding the ferry terminal in Poole.



We had a good crossing, having a lounge area almost to ourselves and plenty of time to go on deck at each end of the journey, as well as to have lunch in the café.



When we arrived, it was clear that the members of the groups knew each other very well with about ten minutes of very Gallic embraces etc.

When we

two

Helen and I met our host Didier, who is a new member of Orchis, and we were all whisked off to see an airship hangar, the 'Hangar à Dirigeables' at La Bazirerie, but not before tea and cakes in the car park, of course.

to



Helen and I were then taken back to Didier's house, to be welcomed by his mother, sister, neighbour and cleaning lady before setting off again to a generous buffet in the hall at St Vaast, with plenty of local cider etc.

On the Saturday, we worked in an apple orchard, which the other DCV members already knew, and 'cleaned the apple trees' as the French explained but it really consisted of controlling the vegetation surrounding the trees. We had an excellent lunch on trestle tables with proper crockery and chairs, something I may reflect on next time I sit on the ground at the edge of a field and eat my sandwiches with DCV.





## DCV - Association Orchis May 2019 exchange visit



Saturday evening saw us all back at the hall in St Vaast to enjoy a slide show from Anne-Marie about the history of the apple orchard and then another excellent meal, again accompanied by local beverages.

On the Sunday morning, when the weather was less kind to us, Didier took Helen and I to St Vaast again so that I could be initiated into the delights of Maison Gosselin then most of us met up at a market area where Thiery, who was known to our group, was displaying his classic cars. We were then off to Omonville-la-Petite for yet another buffet lunch inside a beautiful circular dovecote (no doves there now) then looked around some displays of artwork on the theme of the Normandy coastline as well as a museum of ancient gardening implements. We were all much amused by a video of a man whom most of the group had met, demonstrating gardening techniques, which was made particularly interesting by our not being party to the soundtrack.

After what felt like a very long session of farewells in the car park, five of us were taken to the Hotel Angleterre in Cherbourg, the rest of the group having arranged to stay with their hosts a little longer.

The hotel group enjoyed a meal in Cherbourg that evening then on the Monday morning, after a hearty French breakfast at the hotel we pursued various activities. I joined Jane and Helen on a supermarket trip to stock up on local delicacies; it was so good not to have to worry about liquid or weight restrictions as we were travelling by ferry.

After a walk to the ferry terminal, we met some other members of our group then after even more farewells to their French hosts, we sailed back to England, all having had a wonderful, action-packed weekend and all ready to relax.



The memories I will keep from the long weekend are of the welcome, the food, the companionship and of the need to improve my French!

*Kate Ormerod*



# Association Orchis visit to Dorset - September 2019

Some members of Orchis, our twin conservation group from Normandy, are coming here for the annual exchange visit on the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September. We will be enjoying a task day with them on the Saturday at Rempstone, followed by dinner in a village hall with as many DCV members as would like to come (small charge applicable). Sunday will be a social day for our French guests and hosts. We don't yet know who or how many are coming, but we need to find sufficient of us to host

one or two of them each. This will be for three nights, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, due to the ferry times between Cherbourg and Poole. If you are willing and able to do this, please let us know. We are having a meeting at Jane's house in Portesham on the 15<sup>th</sup> August at 7pm to finalise the events and the host arrangements for that weekend and sort out the all important meal arrangements. Anyone interested is welcome to come to the meeting, hopefully with plenty of good

ideas for the visit.

Please let Jane know if you plan to come along. Contact details in newsletter.

*Jane Faulkner*



At last year's AGM DCV decided to support Litter Free Dorset by purchasing a 2minute Beach Clean board.

These provide litter pickers and used plastic bags for any one to do a litter pick. The board has some guidance, encourages awareness and provides people with an opportunity to make a difference however small. Posting pictures of litter picked is encouraged on Social media.

The difficulty is finding a site for the board, they need to be looked after, filled up and brought under cover at night or in inclement weather so as not to become a hazard or add to the litter problem themselves! There also needs to be somewhere to dispose of the litter so regularly emptied bins are required. As that is not something DCV can do we needed to find a guardian willing and able to take on the task. Gareth had the idea of Abbotsbury Beach where we do our litter pick. Charles Wheeler the Chesil Bank and Fleet reserve Ranger will take on ownership and the café will look after the Board. The board will have our logo on as well as the Fleet Reserve and the café will further publicise our organisation with our leaflets. The board is ordered with 6 litter pickers and we should have pictures in the next newsletter.

*Jane Woodcock*

# Changes to DCV First Aid Kit - emergency blanket

**The first aid kit** did include 2 thin foil blankets and a tough orange survival bag. These were intended to help a casualty suffering shock or to help avoid hypothermia.

On a recent first aid course the trainer had experience of specific training for the Forestry Commission and other outdoor work. She said that the thin foil blankets should not be used if the casualty is soaking wet (e.g. from rain, or immersion in a stream or pond). This is due to

the reflective properties not being sufficient to overcome the conduction of heat by the water. This is especially the case if the casualty is laid on the ground. She recommended a newer type of light insulated blanket.

The DCV first aid kit now has a thermal warming blanket /high protection blanket replacing the foil ones. The orange survival bag is still available for use. The high protection blanket has instructions with it. The tissue

side is to be placed next to the casualty. It is stated to be wind and waterproof. In adverse conditions the orange survival bag might be used over it. The scissors in the kit can be used to cut the survival bag to fit over the casualty if required.

If either the blanket or bag are used or damaged please let Gareth know as he holds our first aid spares.

## Emergency Apps

*As a follow-up to the previous article on using mobile phones in emergencies, this information may be of interest.*

Richard Meatyard recommended the Ordnance Survey OS Locate App. I have tried this several times and found it to be excellent. Provided you have a good GPS signal, that you should have when out in the open, it quickly gives you an accurate OS Grid Reference.

On a recent first aid course the trainer recommended Apps such as "what3words" which gives a unique combination of 3 words tied to your location worldwide. She did admit that not all emergency call centres use it though. She also recommended an SOS App that would automatically send a text for help with your location to an emergency contact list. I looked into this and there are several Apps that provide this sort of function. If you want one, I suggest you check online reviews that compare them. I think some people mistakenly add 999 as a contact for these Apps without realising that a text to 999 only works if pre-registered (typically as a service to deaf people).

Personally, I recommend that you use OS Locate if you need to give your location. If this works, you should find Google Maps (or OS Maps if you have them loaded) can also help give your location and could be useful if you can identify any landmarks, roads etc.

If you need to dial 999, as explained in the previous article, many modern phones should automatically help the emergency services locate you.

Gareth

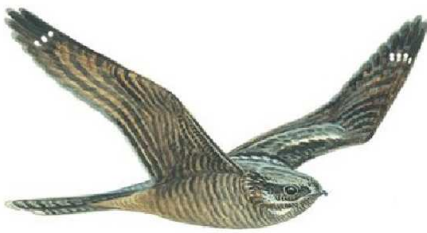
With so much of our winter work on heathland many of us only see the summer colours when we drive past and have little idea of what lives there, so speaking to ARC ranger James last winter he proposed a summer visit for DCV. An evening visit to Great Ovens



and Morden Bog was fixed with a picnic thrown in. James suggested we stay late and make it a Nightjar experience as well. The Dorset heaths are the UK stronghold for Nightjars



(*Caprimulgus europaeus*) with many sightings or more aptly hearings, as they are nocturnal, but with only about 4600 males they have an amber conservation status and are in decline.



The Nightjar is a summer visitor, here to breed and take advantage of its abundant food source of moths and insects, usually May to August and until recently we didn't know where they went in our winter, Southern Africa in fact.

They are ground nesting birds with good camouflage but prone to disturbance especially on urban sites.

We could hear them on still summer evenings from our garden in Moordown in the mid 1980s but

only for a few years.

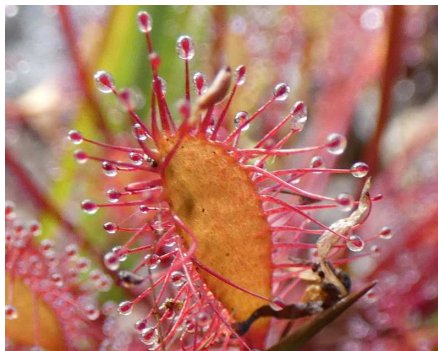
The males arrive early to stake out a territory and call for a female by making a wonderful liquidic purring sound that is called "churring", up to 1900 notes a minute. In fact they make 3 types of noise, the churring whilst stationary, a flight call whistle and a wing clap or smacking sound. Males have white patches at the ends of the wing and can see other males and chase them off. Often you may see birders waving white handkerchiefs to attract the males and we have done this successfully on Holt Heath.

RSPB, ARC & DWT all run evening events to hear Nightjars. Within a few minutes of our walk we came across our first icon of heathland, the Silver Studded Blue butterfly, a little piece of flying sapphire. They are weak flyers and easy to see especially in the early



evening as they find places to rest overnight. We disturbed dozens of them.

A few minutes later we came across the iconic heathland specialist plant, the Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) with its little blobs of sticky nectar to catch insects with. Both the round and



oblong leafed (*Drosera intermedia*) were present.

Asking James about the rare Dorset heather, he went on to show us the difference between all the heathers including the rare Dorset heath (*Erica ciliaris*) which has a small stem of flowers not unlike a foxglove.

As we walked onto one of the scrapes of sand we were told about sand lizard egg laying, rare Tiger beetles and bees that burrow into



the little cliffs of sandstone. Coming back down to the main track we met a group also looking for nightjars and a local who told us about hearing them whilst dog walking over near the ponds. As the veil of night crept over us and with the sky on fire we saw dragonflies making their last flights before night and we started to hear the distinctive churring. As we walked nearer we saw the nightjars take off and a few minutes later start churring again quite near, even my not so sensitive camera



microphone picked it up quite loudly. We must have heard at least 2 males if not 3 churring and one male flying close over our heads. It was getting late when we got back to the cars and James had a surprise for us, tea & biscuits. One last treat was waiting for us, the shout went up "glow worm here" and yes their it was, a little yellow green spark in the grass verge. Thank you James for organising such a wonderful evening.

# Dorset Countryside Volunteers Clothing 2019

Clothing has the DCV logo and "Dorset Countryside Volunteers" embroidered on. The hats have "DORSET COUNTRYSIDE VOLUNTEERS" in gold but not the logo.

Typical examples of colours are: Black, Navy Blue, Bottle Green, Burgundy, Royal Blue, Light Grey, Purple, and Red. Some items are available in other colours so ask if you have a specific requirement.

## Adult sizes:

Sweatshirt (crew neck, unisex S to XXL) £16.50,  
Sweatshirt (crew neck, ladies, slightly lighter weight material, sizes 8 to 18) £16.50,  
Hooded Sweatshirt (unisex S to XXL with kangaroo pocket) £17.95,  
Zip sweatshirt - lightweight without hood (unisex S to XXL) £19.80  
Zip Hooded Sweatshirt (unisex S to XXL with side pockets) £21.00,  
Polo Shirt - our traditional poly-cotton type (men S to XXL, ladies size 8 to 24) £12.50,  
Polo Shirt - a lighter all cotton shirt with an additional colour - sand (unisex S to XXL) £11.60,  
T-shirt (unisex S to XXL) £8.50,  
Soft-shell jacket (unisex S to XXL) £45,  
Sleeveless soft-shell jacket (unisex S to XXL) £36.

## Child sizes:

Sweatshirt (crew neck) £10.50,  
Hooded Sweatshirts £13.50,  
Zip Hooded Sweatshirt £15.50,  
Polo Shirt £9.50,  
T-shirt £6.50.  
Child sizes are by age: 2yrs, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9,10, 11/12, 13.

## Hats and caps:

Baseball caps £6.50.  
Bucket Hat (double layer cotton) suitable as a small sun hat or for you to apply a waterproofing £8.  
Fleece ski hat (with turn-up band) £6.95. Note that these are polyester so should be kept away from fire.  
Outback Hat (wide brim sun hat, cotton, chin strap) £10. Available in pebble (light fawn), navy, or olive.  
All hats except the bucket ones are single size. Bucket hats are in two sizes (try samples held by Gareth)

N.B. there may be slight variations in details dependant on the stock that our supplier can obtain at the time.  
Orders take up to 30 days to complete. Payment in advance is by cheque payable to Dorset Countryside Volunteers.  
Either collect the clothing on task, or contact Gareth for alternative arrangements.

Gareth Morgan

[DCVpublicity@gmail.com](mailto:DCVpublicity@gmail.com)

07923 498760 (text or voicemail)

## Snippets

A recent report in the decline of butterflies over a forty year period shows that if you saw 100 butterflies in a meadow or chalk downland in 1979 then today you would only see 24. Of course the numbers go up and down as the weather changes, some summers are wet and some are dry but these results are taken from data collected on butterfly walks which are done in the same location week after week, year after year and have shown a steady decline.

*This year there has been a butterfly migration bonanza as millions of painted ladies have flown in from across the channel.*

*The litter problem isn't going away, in fact it's getting worse. All those years of campaigns, "don't be a litter lout" and "take it home" just don't seem to be working.*  
*UK motorists chuck out a staggering 1.3 million items every weekend.*  
*About 122 tons of cigarette butts are dropped onto our streets every day.*  
*On average 744 items of litter are found for every 100 metres of beach.*  
*70% of dropped litter is food packaging.*  
*Now for the worst fact: 9 billion tons of litter finds its way into our oceans every year.*

After a public outcry and campaign new guidelines have been introduced on tree and hedge netting, used to prevent bird nesting and facilitate the carrying out of building work.



A memorable day in May saw Terry Sweeney guiding us on a magical tour of the Undercliffs National Nature Reserve. Timed to take place before dense tree cover, we were able to enjoy the wonderful views, beautiful birdsong and marvel at the wonders of this magnificent eroded landscape. A convivial evening together over a pub meal in Lyme rounded off the perfect day.



The AGM, held in July this year, was well attended. Members enjoyed an illuminating talk by Peter Crabbe of the West Dorset Beekeeping Association on the subject of bees and beekeeping as well as the threat of the Asian Hornet to our native honeybees. As always, there was time for us all to catch up with each other and enjoy a tasty and varied shared buffet.



In June The Sun Inn at Dorchester was a new venue for DCV, the event was very well attended. Food and conversation as usual were interesting and varied. It was good to see members who don't always find it easy to come on task.



The recent picnic and walk at Mordon Bog provided a fascinating and very enjoyable evening. James Anderson led the group across the Great Ovens Reserve where a range of butterflies, moths, birds were observed. Sadly the metal covers revealed no reptiles. To the background of a spectacular sunset he took us on a walk across the site and we were rewarded by distant churring, the sound by which the nightjars communicate. As we stopped and listened the birds began to fly around us and their distinctive calls followed us for the rest of the walk. Many thanks to James for making the evening so special, he even provided tea and biscuits at the end of the walk.



Later in July, Carole very kindly held a summer garden party for members in her beautiful garden, with donations towards Julia's House charity. Carole's generosity was overwhelming and the evening thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Socials for next quarter begin with a bbq at Peter & Lesley's on Thursday 8th August, 7 for 7.30 pm. Address on contacts sheet. Burgers, sausages and rolls provided - please bring a dish to accompany, e.g. salad, desert, etc.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September an after task social with Orchis - details to be confirmed. Please book with Helen.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October there will be a pub meal at the Koa San Thai restaurant in Dorchester at 7.30. Please book with Helen. <http://www.kaosan.co.uk/menu>

## ***Carole's garden party July 2019***

*Thank you to everyone who came to my garden party on Thursday 18 July. It was great to see everyone enjoying the evening, which fortunately remained warm and sunny. We raised £150 for Julia's House, the children's hospice for Dorset and Wiltshire, for which I'm sure we will soon receive a letter of thanks. All best wishes, Carole*



# D C V DIARY August - October 2019

Date	Task Site	Client	Work
3 & 4 August	12 Acre Wood, Studland Heath, Purbeck	National Trust	Boardwalk and bridge construction & painting
8 August, Thursday	<i>BBQ &amp; Peter &amp; Lesley's 7 for 7:30 start</i>	<i>Burgers/sausages/rolls provided - please bring a dish to share</i>	<i>Booking with Helen essential</i>
10 & 11 August	Tyneham, Purbeck	MOD, Tyneham Farm Project	Various - shared lunch both days for those that wish - bring own plate & cutlery
17 & 18 August	Powerstock Common, W Dorset OR Higher Hyde Heath, Purbeck	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Fencing **Check website
25 August, Sunday	Swyre, West Dorset	Private	Drystone walling
31 August 1 September	Cerne Abbas, West Dorset	National Trust	Rechalking the Cerne Giant
8 September, Sunday	DCV Tool Store, Wool, Purbeck	DCV	Maintenance ** Task subject to confirmation
15 September, Sunday	Abbotsbury Beach, West Dorset	Litter Free Coast & Sea	Litter pick ** Task subject to confirmation
21 & 22 September	Wytech Heath, Purbeck	Rempstone Estate	Pine/birch/gorse bash
21 September, Saturday	<i>Evening meal with friends from Association Orchis</i>	<i>In a village hall - to be advised</i>	<i>Booking essential with Helen</i>
28 & 29 September	Tyneham, Purbeck	MOD/Tyneham Farm Project	Various - shared lunch both days for those that wish - bring own plate & cutlery
3 October Thurs	<i>DCV planning meeting</i>	<i>At Rosie's</i>	<i>7:30pm</i>
5 & 6 October	** Task to be arranged		** Check website
12 & 13 October	** Task to be arranged		** look out for emails
17 October, Thursday	<i>Evening meal</i>	<i>Koa San Thai restaurant in Dorchester at 7.30pm</i>	<i>Booking essential with Helen</i>
19 & 20 October	** Task to be arranged		** phone Richard/Doug/Peter
26 & 27 October	** Task to be arranged		

**DCV mobile: 07929 961532 (task hours) ring longer than normal  
Please check DCV web site.**

***Keep a note of the DCV mobile phone number - a task may have to be cancelled last minute or finish early.***

***If coming out later in the day,  
phone to check task still running***

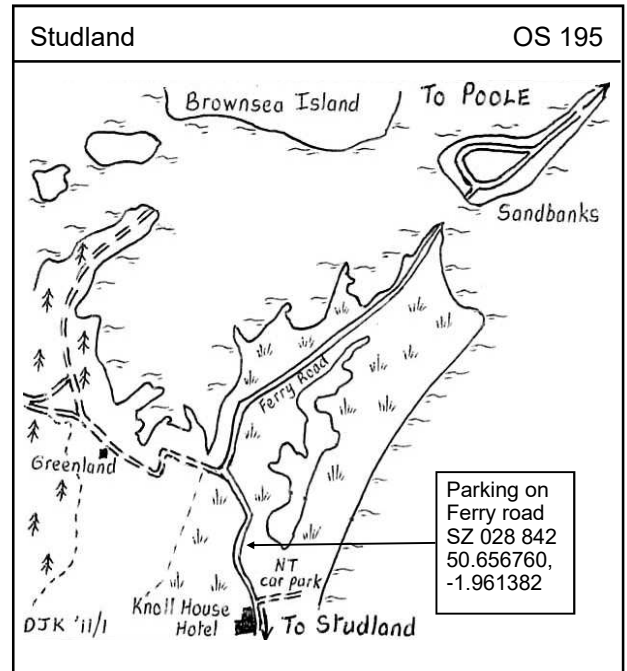
# DCV TASK PROGRAMME : August - October 2019

## 3 & 4 August: 12 Acre Wood, Studland Heath, Purbeck

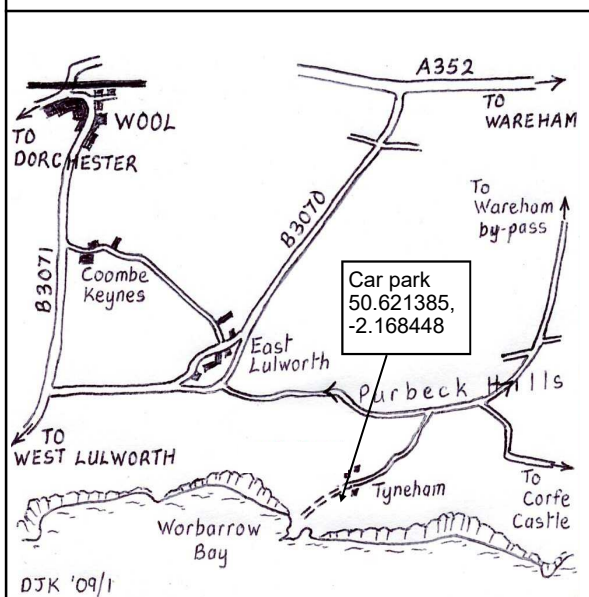
This weekend we are in the lovely surrounds of the Studland peninsula. The area is particularly important for habitats such as heathland, sand dunes and woodland. Nearly all the iconic heathland species are present: rare reptiles, rare birds, dragonflies and other rare invertebrates. Deep within the peninsula, somewhat hidden by woodland, there is also a large natural lake. This formed when sand dunes grew across a bay, cutting it off from the sea and holding back a small stream which then flooded the area with fresh water. Our task is in woodland close to the western shore of the lake. We have been asked to construct another length of boardwalk, near that we constructed last year, and also replace a small bridge. If there is time we might also give the nearby bird hide a new lick of wood preservative. Constructing a boardwalk may seem rather complicated. But it's really a sequence of jobs that are quite easily mastered, from digging post holes to laying wood slats and banging in a very large number of long nails. And with some experienced volunteers on hand you will soon be admiring your handiwork. There will be cold drinks and plenty of water to cool our throats if it's hot, and teas and coffees brewed by our trusty stove if that's your preference. All to be taken with biscuits chosen by the task leader.

**NB:** Parking and access is from the east side of Ferry Road near the Greenlands track (SZ 028 842). Look out for DCV arrows. Insects can be annoying in the woodland if the weather is calm - bring repellent.

**NB2:** Check if ferry is running before driving to Sandbanks at <http://www.sandbanksferry.co.uk/news.php>



## Tyneham OS 194 & 195



## 10 & 11 August: Tyneham, Purbeck

This weekend we have our annual high summer visit to this fascinating location, an old and partly ruined village set deep within the coastal hills on the Isle of Purbeck. The village and surrounding land was requisitioned by the wartime government in 1943 for training use by British forces. Peace came but the army stayed. The village is now a time capsule, a glimpse into everyday rural life before the changes brought by the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of writing the work priorities have yet to be decided but you can be sure of an eclectic mix. There will be the usual breaks for refreshments and whatever treats are brought along for us to try. And there are picnic tables at which to enjoy a long and lazy lunch with plenty of chat.

**NB:** Park in the visitors car park (SY 882 802) at the end of the lane. For those that like working in the wet, bring wellies and wear suitable old clothes for mud. If you fancy a sea dip after the task then don't forget your swim wear – a lovely bay is only a 10 minute walk away.

**NB2:** There will be a shared lunch on both days for those

that want to, please bring your own plate and cutlery.



# DCV TASK PROGRAMME : August - October 2019

## 17 & 18 August: Powerstock Common, West Dorset OR Higher Hyde Heath, Purbeck

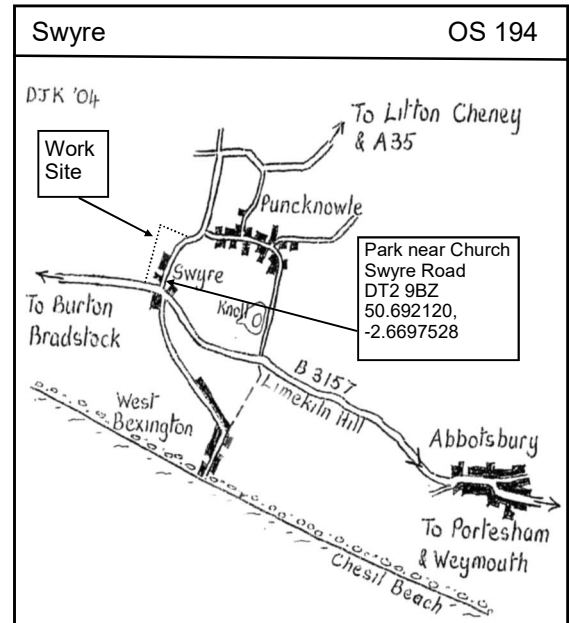
At the time of writing, the task this weekend had not been settled. It is very likely that we will be returning to a fencing task from earlier in the summer in the last programme, either at Powerstock Common in West Dorset or Higher Hyde Heath in Purbeck. The maps and descriptions are in the last programme, so don't throw it out just yet. For Higher Hyde Heath you will need to bring your wellies as the land can be very wet.

Do check our web site or phone Richard, Peter or Doug for details on the task closer to the date.

## Sunday 25 August: Swyre, West Dorset

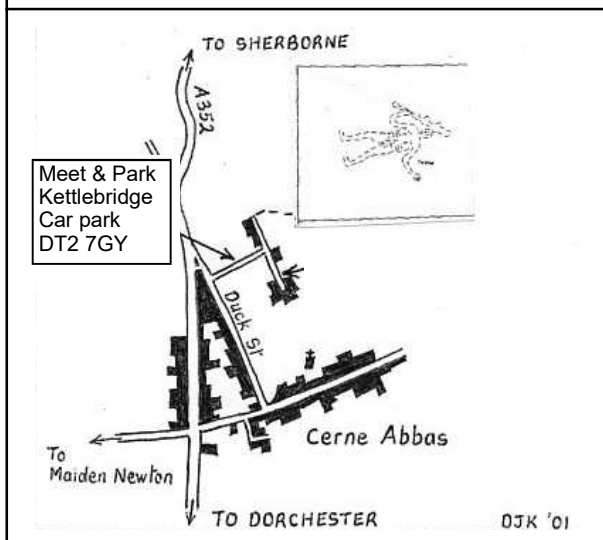
On this usually busy Bank Holiday weekend, just for a day we offer the chance to get away from the crowds at a lovely tranquil location a short walk from the village centre. Here we shall carry on from earlier tasks re-building a length of drystone wall. The landscape is distinctive, characterised by drystone walls, and the village by limestone buildings. The walls are strong and can last for centuries. But over time parts crumble and collapse as the weather and livestock rubbing up against the stone take their toll. We have been visiting this site for over a decade, rebuilding collapsed and collapsing sections of wall in the valley behind the village. Now we have another location – a long, field boundary wall a little further along the valley. Several sections are in a poor state, partly collapsed or leaning at precarious angles. Here they require clearing out and rebuilding, often right from the foundation stones. The art of drystone walling is easily picked up and there will be some experienced DCV wallers on hand to show how it's done. Hopefully the summer weather of earlier months will still be with us and we can bask in the warmth and sun. Come along, enjoy the setting and help restore a landscape that will last for centuries.

**NB:** Park in Swyre village centre near the church (SY 528 883) just off the main road and look out for our distinctive DCV signs taking you through the farmyard to the task site.



## Cerne Abbas OS 194

OS 194



## 31 August & 1 September: Cerne Abbas, West Dorset

Cerne is universally famous for the well endowed chalk giant carved across a hill slope just outside the village and, for those so inclined, his alleged powers of fertility. But as the years pass his chalky surface slowly weathers to a dull and unimpressive grey. Not the best image for one of his powers. So every few years he has a big spruce up, and that time has come again. It's several years since DCV last helped with this exercise, so for many of us this will be a first. Over the weekend we will make a start on giving him a complete face and body lift. Out must come the old grey chalk and in must go bright white new chalk. All this needs to be carried in and out on a steep slope. A job for those with muscles and balance. Then there's lots of priming and tamping to do around his various parts. One part in particular always seems highly popular. Come along, enjoy the setting.

**NB:** There will be the classic DCV tea breaks with biscuits.



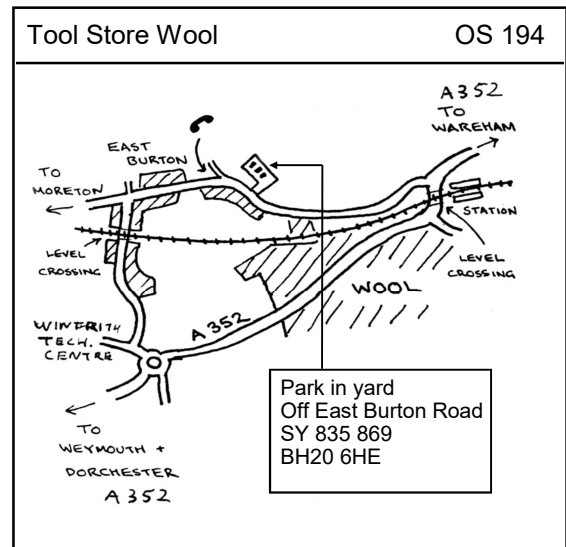
# DCV TASK PROGRAMME : August - October 2019

## Sunday 8 September: Tool Store, Wool, Purbeck

**Please note: date of this task is subject to confirmation – look out for email closer to the date or phone Richard, Doug or Peter for update**

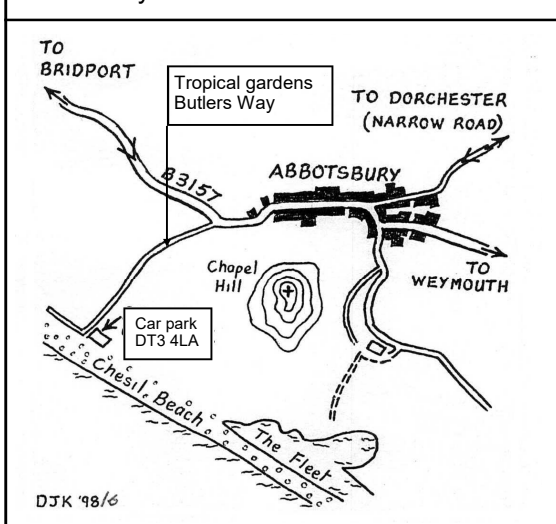
The start of our seasonal tasks involving saw, lop, slash and burn is just a few weeks away. So it's timely to ensure our tools are up to the job, especially to impress our friends from Orchis who will be joining us for a cut and lop task later this month. And the summer tools need checking over, cleaned and put in storage for another year. Another vital job will be to give our trailer a good overhaul. It works tirelessly for us every weekend and now needs some TLC on the paintwork, electrics, tyres and so on. We may also need to carry out some repairs on the tool store roof - a job for those with good balance on ladders and the sloping roof surface. And if we get all this done, then there is still more work to do on the yard area fronting the tool store. So there is much to do on all sorts of things to keep us occupied. As usual this is a leisurely task, with lots of chat and hopefully the sun for company.

**NB:** There will be the classic DCV tea breaks with biscuits



## Abbotsbury Beach

OS 194



## Sunday 15 September: Abbotsbury Beach, West Dorset

**Please note: date of this task is subject to confirmation – look out for email closer to the date or phone Richard, Doug or Peter for update**

This Sunday we are again joining the Dorset Autumn Beach Clean, a massive volunteering event all along the county's coastline. On this occasion we are looking to go beyond our traditional stretch on Chesil Beach, the part from the far end of the Fleet lagoon back to the car park. Instead our focus will be on the seaward part of this huge shingle bank, going onward toward the Isle of Portland. Just how far we get will be the challenge, but certainly not its full 16 mile length. We hope to set up a 'basecamp' at the tank traps, as we did when extending the fence last summer. From here the more adventurous can go forth into the 'unknown', those less inclined might scour the section back toward the car park. In the spring beach clean we collected and sorted a small mountain of litter, but notably less than in previous years. That's why we are venturing into new territory. Here we expect to find all sorts of plastic and other paraphernalia washed in from the sea: bits of fishing and boating gear, lost clothing, footwear, and more unusual items to ponder. Come for all or just part of the day. There will be breaks for hot teas and coffees and a choice of biscuits. Plus, as a backdrop, the natural wonder of Chesil Beach and its lagoon, and the open expanse of the sea.

**NB:** Gloves provided for the day if you forget. Meet at Abbotsbury Beach car park – bring your newsletter and tell the attendant you are doing the beach clean for free parking. This task is on a very exposed coast and conditions can change during the day. So do bring suitable clothing for whatever the weather may send our way.



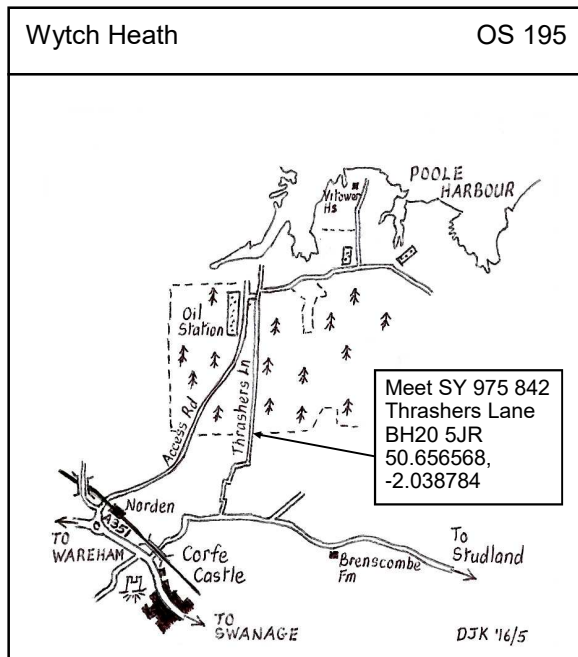
# DCV TASK PROGRAMME : August - October 2019

## 21 & 22 September: Wytch Heath, Purbeck

This is the first in a series of tasks over the coming autumn and winter that take us back into the conifer plantations on the south side of Poole Harbour. Hidden among these plantations is Britain's largest on-shore oil field. 'Nodding donkeys' pump slowly day and night bringing oil from wells drilled out to sea, deep underground. Also hidden among the plantations are areas of heathland, remnants of a vast heath that once stretched across this part of Purbeck from Studland Bay in the east to Wareham and beyond in the west. This task takes us to a shallow valley where plantation conifers have been cleared back to link up areas of heath. But young pines have invaded, along with birch and much gorse. If left the heathy vegetation along with its charismatic reptiles, birds and insect life would be lost. Last autumn we worked through nearly half the area cutting out unwanted pines and birch, and cutting back some of the gorse. This time we shall target the larger remaining part, an area which also has much sallow. But we will have our friends from Orchis to help too. The task site is close to the main oil gathering station, so no bonfire. Think about it – we don't want the biggest ever bonfire! Instead we will need to drag the cut brush under nearby plantation pines.

Come for all or just part of the day. There will be breaks for hot teas and coffees and a choice of biscuits. And to impress our Orchis friends there could be lots of home-made cake too, for sharing around while enjoying a mix of French and English chatter.

**NB:** Task site is just within the pine plantation on the east side when heading along Thrashers Lane (SY 975 842). Look out for DCVs yellow arrows pointing the way to a parking area on a track verge and the task site nearby.



## 28 & 29 September: Tyneham, Purbeck: for map see 10/11 August

Although we are nearing the seasonal change to tasks of the cutting and burning type, there remains time to make a return visit to this very popular task site. This 'lost village' lies in the Lulworth army ranges. The village and surrounding farm was requisitioned for military training during World War II. Peace came but the army stayed and much of the village fell into a partial ruin. More recently the ruined village cottages have been preserved and some buildings restored, including the old school and stone barns at the near-by farmstead. They now provide a glimpse of Dorset frozen in time from over half a century ago. On this visit we shall be putting the wildlife areas and grounds around the farmstead 'to bed' for the winter. There will be summer growth vegetation to cut back, picnic tables to pack away and paths to clear. We also need to complete any remaining work on jobs we started earlier in the year. As usual, lots of choice. And before the picnic tables are stored away we shall make good use of them, coming together from our various tasks for tea breaks, lunch and plenty of chat.

**NB:** Park at the far end of the visitors car park (SY 882 802) at the end of the lane – the old farm lies beyond over the bridge and up valley to left.

**NB2:** There will be a shared lunch on both days for those that want to, please bring your own plate and cutlery.

## October tasks: 5 & 6 October, 12 & 13 October, 19 & 20 October and 26 & 27 October

The tasks these weekend have yet to be arranged. With the shortening and cooler days they will very probably include our first big bonfires of the changing season. So look out for emails closer to the dates or phone Richard, Doug or Peter for details.