



Lychgate at the church of St James, Tedstone Delamere, Herefordshire.

There are two lychgates of identical construction at St James's, which is unusual. No documentary evidence giving a date of construction can be found.

Heritage Lottery Fund support for New National Project

More good news - Caring for God's Acre has received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to support the development of a new 'Cherishing Churchyards Project', which aims to extend the charity's work across England and Wales.

Once the development work is complete then a final bid for funds will go to HLF and if successful, the new 'Cherishing Churchyards Project' will start in 2012.

The new project plans to run workshops and training in 15 selected regions across England and Wales. Further aspects of the project include a Teacher's Pack to support churchyards and burial sites as places for learning and promotion of 'Cherishing Churchyards Week' each year. We hope to have more news for the next Lychgate.



Sacred Spaces Photos on display

A travelling exhibition of photos taken by local amateur photographers titled 'Sacred Spaces through the Ages' is being launched by Caring for God's Acre in September.

The first venue is Acton Scott Historic Working Farm where the exhibition will be on show throughout October. It will then travel to libraries, community centres and churches. As part of the photo project young people in Ludlow attended a workshop by acclaimed photographer Ben Osborne.

Catherine Murphy, Sacred Spaces Coordinator, said: "The exhibition contains photos of ancient, sacred sites in South Shropshire ranging from churchyards to hillforts and a further category 'My Sacred Space' displays photographs which give a delightful insight into what places local people find special today".

Contact Caring for God's Acre to find out where the exhibition will be.

HRH The Prince of Wales to be President of CfGA

In July we received the most wonderful news in the form of a letter from HRH The Prince of Wales agreeing to be the President of Caring for God's Acre for a five-year term.

Such an acknowledgement of what we do from someone as important and busy as The Prince of Wales is a marvellous appreciation of the work our charity does. It is well known that he is a passionate supporter of many conservation initiatives and the fact that he has agreed to give his support to our small charity is particularly gratifying, given that he can only realistically maintain a limited number of positions of this nature at a given time. We can be sure that with the support of such an iconic personality the next five years will represent an exciting and productive phase in the development of Caring for God's Acre. We warmly welcome HRH The Prince of Wales as our President and look forward to keeping him informed about our current activities and future aspirations.

Grasshoppers sing the praises of long grass on Sacred Sites

In many churchyards and sacred sites managed to encourage wildlife a common feature is a 'conservation' area, often composed of tall grassland left uncut throughout the summer to benefit wildflowers and insects in particular.



Such areas can be excellent havens for grasshoppers, but how many people know how to manage grassland to encourage them? Grasshoppers and bush-crickets (Order Orthoptera) are renowned for their enlarged hind legs which they use for jumping and the singing (or chirping) of the males on warm summer days to attract females for mating. Typical grasshoppers of churchyards include the meadow and field grasshoppers, whilst range-expanding bush-crickets such as the long-winged conehead and Roesel's bush-cricket can be present in the tall grass refuges of conservation areas. Numbers in some churchyards can exceed three grasshoppers per square metre of turf. These large populations can benefit spiders and birds

which prey on grasshoppers.

In Rivenhall Churchyard in Essex, grasshopper strips are being used as a novel feature to encourage larger populations of these fascinating insects. The alternate cut and uncut strips about 1m wide provide the mosaic of short and tall grassland which grasshoppers require. Grasshoppers are known to be killed by mechanised mowing of grassland in July and August. It is thought that the large size of the mature adults renders them particularly susceptible to death or damage through contact with rotary cutting blades. Given that most churchyards are cut using a rotary mower it is likely that large numbers of grasshoppers may be killed during mowing. However, those that

jump clear of the blades may find refuge in the uncut grasshopper strips, which are in close proximity to the mown grassland. Perhaps the ideal management for grasshoppers is to cut long grass using a scythe, avoiding the usage of machinery altogether.

Further information on managing churchyards for grasshoppers:

Gardiner T, Gardiner M. & Cooper N. (2011) 'Grasshopper strips prove effective in enhancing grasshopper abundance in Rivenhall Churchyard, Essex, England.' Conservation Evidence, vol. 8, pages 31-37. www.conservationevidence.com

Dr Tim Gardiner

Help wanted with two bat research projects



Help is sought with two applied research studies starting at the University of Bristol, supported by the Bat Conservation Trust.

Bats, churches and the landscape: sustainable conservation of bats in the East of England: The project is seeking to understand why and how soprano pipistrelle bats in East Anglia use churches and the surrounding habitat through the year. If you can suggest a church with a soprano pipistrelle colony in East Anglia which could be used as a

survey site, contact Madeleine Ryan at madeleine.ryan@bristol.ac.uk

Mitigating the impact of Natterer's bats in churches: This project is studying Natterer's bats and investigating why they choose to roost where they do, often in sensitive places. They will work with local people and other organisations to understand needs of bats, heritage and church users. If you would like to be involved, or know of a church with Natterer's bat colony contact Dr Emma Stone at emma.stone@bristol.ac.uk

Annual General Meeting and Celebration of Churchyard Task Team Project

Tuesday 15th November (2.30pm - 4.30pm) at The Great Hall, The Bishop's Palace, Hereford.

The Annual General Meeting of the CfGA charity will be followed by a presentation celebrating the wonderful work achieved by the five year Heritage Lottery funded Churchyard Task Team Project which ends in February 2012.

Please join us to celebrate and to thank everyone who has been involved.

The event is free of charge. Refreshments will be served.

To book a place please contact the CfGA office in Leominster.

Is there a War Memorial near you, and is it in good condition?

The War Memorials Trust has a useful factsheet entitled 'Churches containing war memorials', which is available from their website under the Help, advice, factsheets and FAQ's section.

The condition of war memorials, often situated on sacred sites, varies greatly and if there are concerns about the condition of the

war memorial in your town or parish, then you can contact the trust by completing the online form which enables you to provide all the relevant information. Alternatively, you can download the help sheet, print it, complete it and post it. This will help the Conservation Officer to make an assessment of the war memorial's condition.

Website: www.warmemorials.org Tel: 020 7233 7356

New 'Holy Hay' Baler successfully trialled at Hatfield



The little village of Hatfield in North Herefordshire was the site of a Caring for God's Acre 'experimental project' to bale churchyard hay by hand using a special wooden 'baling box'.

Caring for God's Acre has been successful in introducing and supporting the use of hand-held scythes for grass cutting on sacred sites, with many people across the area having learnt to use a them - a sustainable and wildlife friendly method of grass cutting. The problem of what to do with the hay had never been satisfactorily resolved until now.

The hand operated wooden hay baler was made to a plan that was slightly adapted from an American 'homestead' website. The device, quickly named the 'holy hay baler', proved easy to use producing solid, well shaped small bales of hay suitable for pet bedding.

For further information contact Caring for God's Acre or look at our website.

Hedgehogs are in trouble and no-one is fully sure of the reasons why.

A recent report (The State of Britain's Hedgehogs) shows that hedgehog numbers have dropped by 25% in just ten years! In response the British Hedgehog Preservation Trust (BHPT) along with the People's Trust for Endangered Species has launched a three-year campaign, which will draw together data from surveys over the last decade about the status of hedgehog populations in the UK.

An exciting public participation campaign -

Hedgehog Street - aimed at encouraging hedgehog-friendly gardening practices has been launched by BHPT. You can help by becoming a 'Hedgehog Champion'. See the website www.hedgehogstreet.org for a special pack.

To view the report and learn more about our wild European hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and how we can help them go to the website at www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk



'Words and Wild Places'

'Words and Wild Places' is the title of a new writing project based in South Shropshire, for which a grant was awarded by Arts Council England through the National Lottery.

Writing workshops aimed at people who have little or no experience of writing will be a feature of the project.

'Words and Wild Places', linking with CfGA's Sacred Spaces through the Ages project, will be led by writer and broadcaster Dr Paul Evans. Paul said of the workshops: "My approach is to first immerse workshop contributors in the experience of place, observing on different scales and considering their own emotional responses, and then applying these things to writing. The workshop group functions as a

supportive community, responding to each individual's work and helping each other produce a finished piece."

"If we cannot speak and write about the things which matter, we will lose them, as we have lost so much of the social and natural history of this land," added Paul.

The workshops will run throughout the autumn, winter and into next spring in the following areas: Ludlow, Clee Hill, Craven Arms, Bishop's Castle, Much Wenlock, Rushbury, Cardington, Bettws y Crwyn, Chapel Lawn and Clun.

Anyone wishing to know more about joining the workshops should contact the Caring for God's Acre office in Leominster.

Help for Hedgehogs



Animal Homes

for sale!

Every living creature needs particular conditions in which to live and this game teaches children about the habitat that each one needs.

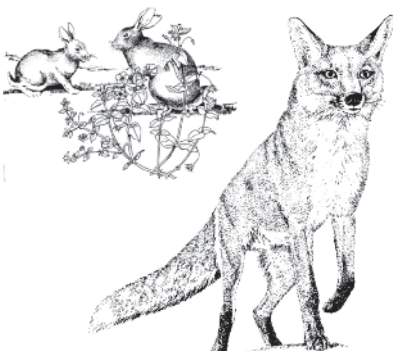
Have a series of cards with 'home' adverts written on them for children to guess the animal. "Wanted, a wood with plenty of rabbits and small mammals nearby" (fox). Or "Wanted, dark damp home with old rotting logs and leaves" (woodlouse).

Children can make up their own ads and even make a pack of pairs of cards: one card has name or picture of the animal and the other has the home ad.

Various games can be played with this pack of cards.

WANTED

A Wood with plenty of Rabbits and small Mammals nearby!



A to Z

of useful organisations to help with churchyard and burial ground conservation

The Churches Conservation Trust

Protects historic churches at risk and those that have been made redundant by the Church of England. The charity cares for over 340 churches.

1 West Smithfield, London, EC1A 9EE
Tel: 020 7213 0660
Email: central@tctt.org.uk

Countryside Council for Wales, CCW

The Countryside Council for Wales CCW is the statutory advisor on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment in Wales.

They aim to make the environment a valued part of everyone's life in Wales.

CCW, Maes-y-Ffynnon, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2DW
Tel: 0845 1306229

Website: www.ccw.gov.uk

CADW

Cadw is the historic environment service of the Welsh Assembly Government. 'Cadw' (pronounced cad-oo) is a Welsh word meaning 'to keep'.

Cadw welcomes over a million visitors to their sites every year and their aim is to protect and sustain, encourage community engagement in and improve access to these sites.

Cadw, Welsh Assembly Government, Plas Carew, Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed, Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff, CF15 7QQ
Tel: 01443 33 6000
E-mail: Cadw@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

The Conservation Foundation

Established in 1982 by David Shreeve and David Bellamy the Conservation Foundation's approach has been to bring about changes in people's attitudes and behaviours through initiatives and ideas in which people from all walks of life get involved. Shortly it will re launch its Community Chest environmental awards.

1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR
Tel: 020 7591 3111
www.conservationfoundation.co.uk

The Council for British Archaeology

An educational charity working throughout the UK to involve people in archaeology and to promote the appreciation and care of the historic environment.

To keep up to date with current issues in archaeology see their website at www.britarch.ac.uk

CBA, St Mary's House, 66 Bootham, York YO30 7BZ
Tel: 01904 671417

Become a 'Friend of Caring for God's Acre' and help us to help you

We are a small, independent charity which:

- promotes churchyards and burial grounds as places for quiet reflection
- supports communities with churchyard and burial ground care
- promotes community involvement in their care
- encourages their use as places for learning

The LYCHGATE

Editor: Dr Ian Dormor

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