

Upcoming environmental projects in Great Coxwell

We wanted to let you know about a couple of projects that we are planning to do around Great Coxwell this coming winter.

Great Barn Pond

We have been trying to eradicate the Floating Pennywort, an invasive species, from the pond over the last few years. Every time we think it's gone; it comes back again. We have been discussing this with the Environment Agency, who are very keen that we succeed as it's the only site on the Upper Thames that has Floating Pennywort.

We have applied to the Trust for Oxfordshire Environment for a grant to tackle the Pennywort and carry out some improvements at the same time. The funding will pay for:

- Pollarding the two Willows at the far end of the pond
- Cleaning out the silt trap
- Gently scraping back the banks and removing the two Iris clumps to take out any Floating Pennywort roots
- Installing a 2m² floating island with native plants in the centre of the pond
- Installing an interpretation board by the pond to highlight the importance of ponds for wildlife.

The works will look a bit drastic to start with, but the vegetation (minus the Pennywort) will grow back next summer. Any remaining Pennywort will be removed as we see it.

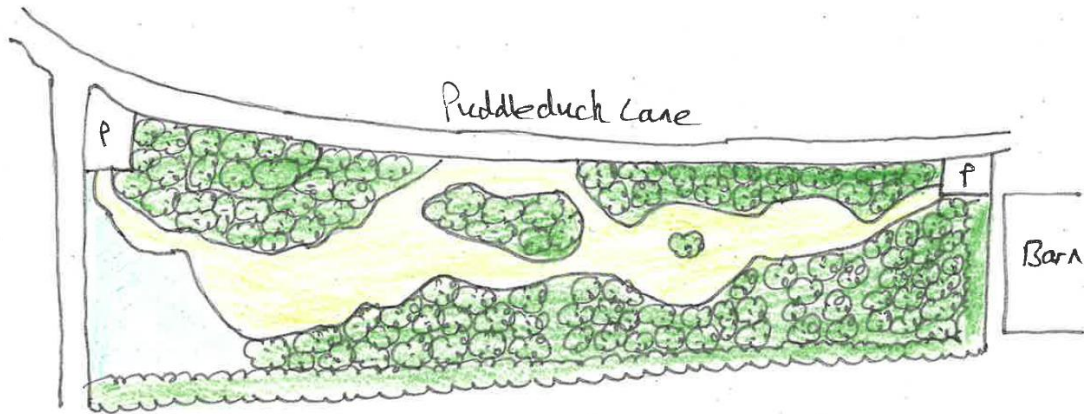
This project is dependent on receiving the funding. We will let you know if we are successful with the bid.

Puddleduck Lane Paddocks

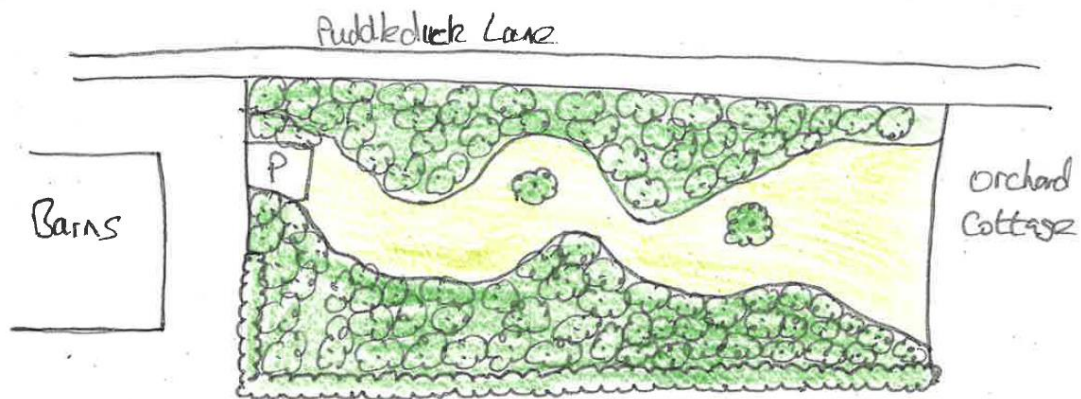
The two paddocks either side of the barns in Puddleduck Lane have come back to the Trust, as they are no longer used for grazing. Having looked at a few options, we have decided to plant some trees to create an area of Hazel and Sweet Chestnut coppice. We will plant a new hedge to surround each paddock, add some fruit trees and create a new pond.

As you can see from the sketch plans below, the area will be approximately 60% planted and 40% open glades and grassy rides. There will be public access to the Western paddock furthest from the village so local people and visitors can enjoy the site.

Western Paddock



Eastern Paddock



To help the trees get established, we will install rabbit fencing on all sides and temporary deer fencing on the field side. The deer fencing will come down in a few years, once the new hedges are grown up sufficiently.

Once the trees are established, we will use the paddocks for training courses in hedgelaying, coppicing and nature conservation, as part of the Heritage Skills Centre here at Coleshill. With good access and parking, the site lends itself to running one or two courses a year.

We are running a planting session on Saturday 14th December from 9.00 till 1.00. If you would like to come and help, then please let me know.

If you have any questions, or would like to help with the planting, then please contact Richard Watson on 01793 762209 or email richard.watson@nationaltrust.org.uk