



Buscot & Coleshill Gazette

News & updates from
The Buscot & Coleshill Estate

Spring
2018
Issue 2

Welcome to the Spring 2018 edition of the new Buscot and Coleshill newsletter, produced by the National Trust Estate team for the residents and friends of The Buscot and Coleshill Estate.



INSIDE

Parking Conundrum , Buscot Roof Completed, Conservation Skills Centre Update, Meet the Tenant, Hedge Amnesty, New team members, Projects 2018 and more.

Editorial

Welcome to this second Newsletter and thank you for the feedback to the first and I trust that this is a helpful and an interesting update. I hope 2018 has started well for you.

In May there will be a follow up to our listening drop-ins providing an update on what has been delivered and how we could tackle other issues, including the parking problems in the villages with some proposals.

Although largely a tranquil place, time does not pass slowly on the estate and with the level of maintenance and repair there is plenty to occupy time but it is my intention to ensure we move to more planned maintenance rather than the continual reactive position we are currently in. We have a new Senior Building Surveyor, who joined us just before Christmas, Gabriella; Emily is still with us but on a part-time basis.

One thing I am struck by and you may have gathered from local news, are the number of planning applications on our boundaries and the housing developments. However much needed, houses are literally coming over the hill notably towards Great Coxwell and along the A420 adjoining the Swindon expansion leaping over the A419. This brings increased numbers of visitors wanting exploring the surrounding countryside and heritage, which underlines our need to be clear about what our visitor offer is, so that we are in control and prepared. This will enable us to ensure visitor access is where appropriate, and doesn't impede on the day to day village life but benefits the estate and local businesses. It is an incredibly hard balancing act and one that will continue to be a point of discussion.

A number of our staff team retired or left in 2017 but the team is now back to full capacity to tackle the year ahead.

Best Wishes,

Christian Walker,
General Manager



Restoring the Coleshill Papers

The Records Office in Reading have the Coleshill Papers deposited by the National Trust 24 years ago in addition to papers left by the family and from other sources. However those deposited by the Trust were never catalogued and some remain in a poor state of repair. The Records Office applied for funding from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust and the William Delafield Trust and was successful in 2016 in getting funding to catalogue and conserve the papers over 18 months including employing a dedicated conservator. The work is fascinating to see especially the scientific and delicate restoration of paper work and maps. Their work will finish in April and an exhibition is being planned in Reading from October to December this year and then hopefully some element of this exhibition will come to Coleshill. Perhaps a village coach trip to Reading in the autumn is called for!

(Image is a map fragment before restoration).

Buscot Walks

The Coleshill Walks guide has been a great resource for walkers and ensuring access routes are clear and marked. For a long time there has been a desire to complete a similar set of walks for Buscot and therefore connect the walking routes across the estate. The new Buscot walks largely use existing public footpaths but also new permissive routes. Liza Dibble, Learning and Community Manager, has been working to ensure the new routes will be marked ready for Easter 2018. They will be available from Buscot Tea Room and Buscot Park as well as the Estate Office and downloadable from our website.

Events 2018

Our events calendar is now out and available online, highlights include events at Great Coxwell Barn and an open day in Coleshill. Further details on our websites.



CARS, CARS, CARS...

There are no magic wands and no infinite budgets around solving the car problems in each village.

We actively support the parish councils over attempts to reduce the speed of traffic. The terms of parking were a key issue at the listening sessions in 2016 and we have been looking at some options that we will share in more detail in May. Essentially, the cottages were not built with cars in mind so very few have drives. We are therefore looking at the following options, these are purely ideas at this stage.

COLESHILL

Home Farm:

Create parking within the Home Farm site for all visitors and staff to remove them from the surrounding lane.

Part of the Countryside yard storage needs to be relocated to establish parking. But this could be crucial to realise the use of the redundant buildings even in a low key way

Behind Radnor Arms:

Create parking for tenants only at the west end of the village.

Church Lane:

Remove the now redundant compost bins and re-organise the space to create more tenant only parking.

Public Parking:

Create a country car park, similar to Badbury, (somewhere outside the village) that would allow walking visitors to park and access the 20miles of footpaths on the estate but not park in the village.

BUSCOT

Tenant & Tea Room customers:

Longer term improve the existing parking space to enable greater use throughout the year.

Public Parking:

The main car park will be improved this year. The project is due to start after Easter.

Butler Sherborn

Butler Sherborn, an independent Land Agency firm based in Cirencester were brought in towards the end of 2017 to help tackle the backlog rural surveying work including a number of leases that need to be renewed and were in some cases causing uncertainty for those involved.

Ideally we would be managing all lease work directly and this is only an temporary solution that is intended to be professional and swift, they report in to Siobhan on a weekly basis who directs their work.

In addition, Julie Burrow who used to support the estate is now based in the region is also helping us to catch up.



Out of Hours Service

During 2018 a new out of office service will be available for tenants on the estate – this call centre will be available out of hours for emergencies in many cases they will contact our team but if not applicable or they cannot be contacted they will have details for other contractors.

The unreliability of mobile phone signal on occasion has caused some delay in the past in responding and this will resolve this.

Details to follow later in the year.





Buscot Park Roof – Done!

One of the biggest successes of 2017 and the biggest project on the estate for over 100 years has been the project to re-roof Buscot Park costing £2.4m, which was managed by Steve McGlade and Biggs and Son Contractors.

The project started in January after a year of planning and was delivered on time and under budget. At the time of writing the final pieces of scaffolding are coming down and the hard work by many over the last year becomes evident. The two pavilions revealed initially show the level of craftsmanship.

Steve who has been based in the Coleshill Estate Office two days per week for the last 18 months and finished with us at the end of December before taking up a new role as Head of Estates and Facilities for Cheshire Constabulary and Fire Service.

A huge thank you Steve including for all your input on other projects and work. We trust the roof will last another 100 years and certainly a big thing on the to-do list is done!



Conservation Skills Centre Update

We held our Discussion of Ideas day around opening a Conservation Skills Centre at Coleshill in November at Buscot Village Hall, a great day with people from Universities, Princes Trust and skilled practitioners. We were also able to trial a pop-up restaurant of local produce with 80% of the menu being sourced from the estate thanks to Janice of Outsource Catering based in Coleshill. Look out for future local food events.

There was good healthy discussion and some interesting challenges; we are digesting this and confirming our next steps but there will be two or three trial courses during the summer months.

We have also had meeting with an Oxfordshire Health Commissioner to discuss how the skills centre could offer services to the health sector.

Neil Quinn, a Cirencester Architect, has been appointed to complete the concept designs for the works to the former Cart Horse Stables at Home Farm and this will be ready soon. We have been left a helpful legacy that has been allocated but this will not be enough and will be putting a bid to the European Leader fund for Oxfordshire for further funding and elsewhere.



Buscot Roof was not the only roof completed in 2017.

Ashdown Barn (£165,000) and **Strattenborough Castle Barn (£155,000)** had structural issues notably at the latter where it had collapsed.

Again Bats came out to play and the projects were delayed initially but time was made up and both again were delivered on time and under budget.



Meet the Tenant

We've had the opportunity to meet with Tom Ball, both one of our residential and commercial tenants.

Having moved into Coleshill village 2 years ago with his partner Katy and young son Franklin, we wanted to find out about his career and how he's been involved with our upcoming Conservation Skills Centre.

Q: What is your profession and where currently are you based?

A: I am a carver working predominantly in wood and stone. I currently have a workshop here in the model farm in Coleshill but the company I work with (Swan Farm Studios) have a workshop in the Jackfield Tile Museum. Having said that most of my work tends to be on site, all over the country. So it is a great way to explore the country whilst doing work.

Q: What inspired you to become a carver? Where did you learn your skills?

A: I studied 3D design at collage and originally wanted to become a technical illustrator. However, this was a skill that was rapidly becoming almost entirely computer based and I had always really just wanted to be working with my hands. After leaving college I started working with a friend as a carpenter but soon realised I wanted to do something more creative and had realised I enjoyed working with wood. This led me to searching for courses and I came across City and Guilds of London Art School in Kennington, the college offers a full time course in both wood and stone carving. I applied and got a place on the three year diploma course. I really threw myself into studying and enjoyed everything the course had to offer.



Q: What are your thoughts about a skills centre opening in Coleshill Model Farm?

A: I think it would be a great use of the buildings. I'd love to see the Model Farm become a hub of creativity and hopefully I can continue to be a part of this as the project progress. I personally don't think that there are enough courses teaching conservation skills to a professional level and would obviously like to see carving as a part of the skills on offer in the centre.

Q: What else are you both involved in locally?

A: My partner Katy is currently working up at Coleshill Organics which she's really enjoying. She also has a lot of wood working experience and has worked with Swan Farm Studios on many projects. She is currently taking a bit of time out to look after our 1 year old but I know she's itching to get back on the tools. She's also done a fair bit of carving and is very good at problem solving, so it's really useful to be able to discuss work problems with her.

Q: Do you have a favourite local view, location, or building?

A: I'm still blown away by the fact that I've got a workshop in such a stunning location. The whole of the Model Farm is special and especially the Bothy and Cart Horse Stables are my favourite buildings. Not forgetting the Great Coxwell Barn of course, what a stunning piece of architecture to have on our door step!

Q: Any last words?

A: Thanks for giving me a chance to tell people a little bit about what I do. I'm very much looking forward to seeing how the Skills Centre progresses in the future and hope to see it evolve into a place where valuable skills are learned and passed on.



Hedge Amnesty

During the Autumn we will be holding a hedge amnesty!

Many tenants inherited hedges that were beyond easy to maintain. At parish council meetings last year and as part of the listening sessions people discussed the need to ensure hedges did not push people off of pavements and into the road and there was a desire to improve presentation.

Tenants are welcome to nominate hedges and we will contact tenants with hedges we are aware of and we will discuss the options and then we will prioritise as we may not be able to deal with them all this Autumn.

Please send your requests through to Richard Watson our new Countryside Manager:

Richard.watson@nationaltrust.org.uk

Stables Update

The Coleshill Stables. The repair works to No.59 (end cottage of stable block) is now complete.

However the main project has not been smooth running as I have updated previously. Tenders went out to contractors in December ahead of work being planned to start in February 2018. However – there is always a ‘however’ with this particular project it seems – Bats have moved back into roost in the fire damaged building and this is not the time for a formal study of them. A delay will be inevitable but at this stage we do not know for how long. A project meeting in Spring will confirm our options after the present rethinking.

White Horse Hill Parking Changes

In October we took the difficult decision to end the parking permit for White Horse Hill introduced 10 years ago initially as a temporary measure when parking charging was introduced.

A large number of villages (none on this estate) were covered with over 750 passes issued costing the office £1000 per year in postage before staff time was added.

A National Trust membership is the most cost effective way to park for regular visitors to the White Horse. The Hill gets £1.00 for every membership scan so it is a good way to support our management and maintenance of the site that costs approximately £50,000 a year.

A letter was sent out to the current permit holders in November and they can use their current expired passes until 31 December 2018. No new or replacement passes will be issued in the interim.



Estate Gardener

In March we will be advertising for an Estate Gardener, a post not filled since Mr Pat Hopkins left over 10 years ago.

This will enable the Ranger team to spend less time mowing but also allow us to offer chargeable garden service to tenants if they want support with their gardens.

Craft Apprenticeships

Jake Punchard and Fraser Hammond have successfully completed their apprenticeships with the National Trust and it is great news that they have accepted permanent roles within the team at Coleshill. Offering permanent roles is not something we can always do but great to see them stay with us. Under a new agreement we will be having Princes Trust short placements during the spring where students come for two or four weeks.

Estate Profiles



Gabriella Smith

Senior Building Surveyor

I started the post of new Senior Building Surveyor mid-September 2017, covering the West Oxfordshire portfolio (which includes Buscot & Coleshill, Chastleton, Ashdown and White Horse Hill).

My background is mostly working on historic building projects having previously worked at Historic England and English Heritage on the large Heritage Lottery funded conservation project of a derelict Mill in Shrewsbury and also a number of Conservation Projects across historic properties in the Southeast Region at English Heritage and prior to that working on the Estate of Harrow School.

Having now worked for the National Trust just over 5 months, I have had the pleasure of meeting some of you already, but still have a lot of you to meet and a lot to learn about the various parts of the portfolio.

The time ahead for the National Trust and the Estate looks exciting and I am pleased to be part of the team to take in hand some of the challenges ahead.

I very much look forward to meeting those of you who have been on the Estate for many years and who know their buildings well, as well as those newer residents who have moved to this beautiful part of Oxfordshire.

Any suggestions you have now or in the future on how we can look after the buildings and structures in a more sustainable and conservation minded way and how you can help with that would be most welcome.



Richard Watson

Countryside Manager

I started as Countryside Manager in mid-December, taking over managing the Countryside Team from Robert Sharman.

I first joined the National Trust in 2008 following a varied career that included teaching, farming and managing nature reserves.

I spent five years with the Trust in the South-West Region before moving to a national role in Swindon.

I left in 2016 to join the Cotswold Conservation Board where I spent a year working on various access projects across the Cotswolds.

As a keen walker, cyclist and photographer, I enjoying spending time outdoors, I am passionate about engaging people with our work and help them understand why our places are important. I am very excited to join the team here and help look after the amazing places here in West Oxfordshire.

I look forward to meeting you and working with you in the coming years.

This year we are focusing on getting more corporate groups out to volunteer with us, and improving the wild woodland play areas in Badbury. If you would like to come volunteer with us, please get in touch.

Job Tickets Questionnaire

Please find enclosed a questionnaire about work on our tenants' properties that covers a number of areas including service and communication.

Please return them to the Estate Office in Coleshill.

May Drop in Session

Following up on the 2016 listening sessions with some proposals and ideas for the future of the estate as we draw up a 10 year plan, to include the Conservation Skills Centre in Coleshill with opportunity to see the vacant space and our architects plans. There will be a listening drop in session on:

Thursday 31 May

3-7pm at Coleshill Bothy Meeting Rooms

2018 Projects

Preparation has already started for some projects for next year, the National Trust financial year starts on 1 March 2018. These projects are part of our three year plan – a changing plan that we review quarterly to reflect need and opportunity.

Buscot & Coleshill Estate Roadside Cottage Roof Repairs

Roof Repairs to cottages in Eaton Hastings to a budget of £80,000.

Buscot & Coleshill Estate Wall Repairs

Specific repairs to the walls on the estate as part of the three year planned works to address the very worst repairs of the 7.5 miles of walls. £75,000 over three years.

Coleshill Stableblock

Repairs to section of the stables not affected by the fire. The work it is hoped will take place in 2018 but maybe 2019 due to consents and bat licenses, £100,000.

Buscot Park Lake & Reservoir

Compliance works and repairs to large water bodies to ensure they meet Reservoir Act requirements. £150,000.

Buscot Village car park

Major improvements to Buscot Village car park £80,000.

Badbury Car Park

New car park (charging visitors and scanning members) was to be installed in 2017 but delayed due to larger cycling scheme being refused at planning. The Appeal process of the cycle scheme continues. However the long overdue car park works will be applied for in 2018. £80,000 for car park.

Coleshill Bothy Development

A key project as we start to realise the potential for the Home Farm in Coleshill – see separate on Skills Centre in last Newsletter. £70,000 plus further grant and fundraising.

Void Cottage Budget

A set project budget to tackle void cottages when they return for re-letting to avoid putting pressure on our maintenance fund £65,000.

Goodbye Lynda

At the end of December Lynda Tuckwell retired after 24 years working in the Coleshill Estate Office as Administrator – the face of reception and voice of the office.

It was a sad day when we said good bye. With the wider West Oxfordshire National Trust Team we gathered to say good bye and wish her well.



Save the Date

The Estate Harvest Roast 2018 will be on Friday 14 September at the Great Barn, Great Coxwell. Details and invites to follow. It promises to be a very special one!

Next time...

In our next edition of the Newsletter we will have a farming focus as we meet some of our tenant farmers. We also celebrate the wildlife on the estate and plans to support them.

Keep in touch

There are lots of ways to keep up in touch with what's happening across the estate:

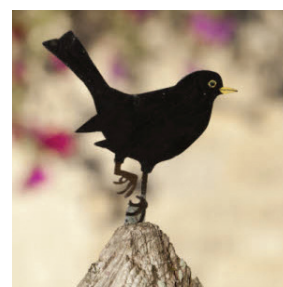
By phone: 01793 762209

By email: buscotandcoleshill@nationaltrust.org.uk

Our website: nationaltrust.org.uk/the-buscot-and-coleshill-estates

Social Media: Facebook @NTbuscotandcoleshillestates

Or, don't forget: you can always drop into see us at the office.



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