

OUR CONSERVATION CLOISTER

Since the purchase of our new land in 2016, there's been a new consciousness of our surroundings at Hilfield. It's a special environment, set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with 2 nature reserves bordering our land. We have woods, wildflower meadows and grazing land which we manage sustainably, and our neighbours are also engaged in caring for the natural environment.

But do all of our visitors know all of this? Do they know what to see? What wildlife shares our space here? How can we open the eyes of our visitors to 'see' what is around us here—and more importantly, to 'see' what might be around them in their own home situations?

So, in March, we launched our 'Conservation Cloister' along one wall of the courtyard. It is, as yet, under construction, but it is developing by the day. There is a bird 'sightings board' where all of us, community and visitors, are encouraged to write down what birds they have seen and where they saw them; a map with information about the land, and what you might currently see; and the brand new Spring Trail is available—a suggested short walk though the land, for all to use. All the information is available on-line also, so that everyone can stay in touch with the seasonal wonders of our environment.



The Hilfield Community

Continuing the Franciscan witness, long-established at the Friary, the Community consists of both vowed Franciscan Brothers of the Anglican Society of St Francis and also lay community members who seek to nurture and share the Franciscan values of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Inspired by St Francis of Assisi, the Community offers hospitality to people of different faiths and no acknowledged faith and works for a more gentle and respectful care for the earth.



From Brother Clark, Hilfield Guardian

The “Conservation Cloister” at Hilfield is purposely placed next to the Chapel door. This juxtaposition of information about different animals and plants with sacred texts and spiritual worship is an essential part of our Franciscan ethos. What do house martins, goldfinches, roe deer, badgers, lichens and orchids have to do with the Gospel? We believe that every aspect of creation shows forth the glory of God and has an important part to play in the flourishing God intends for each of us. Humans are endowed with the unique responsibility to preserve, connect with, and protect creation especially because we have the unique ability to exploit and destroy it.

As we enter the chapel we collect ourselves for worship and prayer; the Conservation Cloister can give us names and stories, make our concern focused and radical via an informed, intimate perspective. As we intercede for the whole of creation, we offer ourselves to be stewards of the environment around us.

What you see in the Cloister is a beginning. We want to develop the presentation, make it more interactive. We welcome your ideas and help!

We started some wildlife surveys this spring; all results will be posted on the board in the Conservation Cloister, and also on our website.

Moth surveys: Michael Sammes

is helping us set up a moth trap every second month; we have had 2 surveys so far; on the second, we recorded over 32 different species of moths.



Bird surveys: Lydia led our first bird

survey in March, using a protocol for observation which we'll keep to during the season. Daniel ran a second survey in April, and on 24th May we will do a third, with the help of Bob and Julia Hicks.

See back page for two wildlife events in our programme

Neighbours and Nest Boxes From Richard, our Land Manager

One of the most exciting upshots from our purchase of the new land is how it connects neighbours with similar conservation interests, like the missing piece of a jigsaw. Together we've formed the 'High Stoy Conservation Cluster Group'. We offer encouragement, advice and practical support to one another as well as developing a landscape scale approach to conservation. An early expression of this fledgling project is erecting nest boxes. A neighbour donated some tit boxes for us to share, and we will produce some for owls. We have also put up some House Martin boxes, a rapidly declining species, one of Arocha's "Target Ten" for Partners in Action (like the Friary.) Both these relationships help us coordinate our practical efforts and encourage one another incubating a narrative of hope.

Community News

Holy Week and Easter: On Good Friday we used Franciscan International's 'Seven Last Words, Seven Acts, Reflections and Responses on Global Migration', which powerfully connected the Crucifixion with realities faced by many migrants and refugees. The link for the text can be found via our website, under 'spirituality'.

Easter Day was a joy, with the lighting of the New Fire, the liturgy of the Resurrection, and a lunchtime feast of our own lamb, cooked Lebanese-style.

A big welcome to Br. Samson Siho SSF, who arrived in May and will visit the European Province until October 30th. He comes to us from the Province of the Solomon Islands, where he lived at La Verna Friary, Hautambu, West Guadalcanal. He will be mainly living and working at Hilfield, but will also visit other SSF houses.



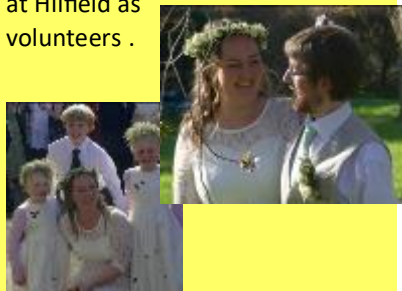
In April, Maria left Hilfield to return to her studies in Germany.

She writes: After a great 7 months of enriching and challenging experiences in Hilfield I am now back in Freiburg to continue my studies of Social Anthropology. I thank everyone at Hilfield for your openness and help towards my research. Above all I give thanks for friendship, patience, encouragement, explanations, and for the energy and joy of living together in community! Thanks for inspiring conversations, new perspectives, new visions and an alternative concept of living! *María*

There's space for more volunteers as from 2018

We would love to hear from people aged 18-30 who would like to share in our community for 6 months, preferably 1 year. If you want to experience life in a Christian community then please contact Br. Clark. Our community is ever more international; we currently have members from India, China, Lebanon, the USA, Germany, Switzerland, the Solomon Islands. UK volunteers are also very welcome!

Lydia and Jimmy's wedding—a wonderful, ebullient, joyful event to which the whole Community contributed. Lydia and Jimmy met at Hilfield as volunteers .



Many congratulations to Chantal and Richard on the birth of Maelyne!

Born on Monday, May 14th, a new sister for Uriel, Felice and Evodie
Welcome to this very newest member of the Hilfield Community!



Recent and Forthcoming Events



Recent events have included ...
The Feast of the Ascension;
a Basket and Creativity Workshop;
and we welcomed 200 guests for
the Secret Garden Open Days.



Upcoming events include ...

2nd—24th June: 'Shaping our Lives'

A weekend of creativity led by Maggie Hooper and Lyn Burton

25th—29th June: 'Understanding Islam' led by Dr Chris Hewer

Saturday 30th June Wildflower day

Guided tours to explore the rich diversity of our wildflower meadows.

21st July 10 a.m.—4 p.m. A Day to discover Butterflies and Moths

Our records will be fed into the UK Big Butterfly Count. Suggested donation £10 which includes a simple lunch.

***N.B.** It is essential to book for these, so that we can prepare properly. Please contact Suzi 01300 341741. There are no fixed charges but we will suggest an appropriate donation to cover costs.*

Please see our website for the full summer programme.

Other dates for this summer:

Hilfield Monthly Lunch Club

12th June, 10th July, 11th Sept
A great opportunity for older folk to meet new people, have lunch, and look round the Friary. **Spaces are limited so ring Suzi to book.**

Hilfield Monthly Craft Days.

13th June, 11th July, 12th Sept.
No need to book, just come along. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Do some craft work alongside other people, with Suzi on hand to help if required. Great fun. Bring a packed lunch.

Hilfield Families Camp

28th July—5th August: New young families are welcome—contact stuarthutton@me.com

Hilfield Youth Camp

11th—19th Sept: See www.hilfieldyouthcamp.org



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