

Workday at Leapings Lane



Sunday 6th November 2011

Sunday dawned with blue skies and bright sunshine. This was particularly remarkable, sandwiched as it was between days which were cold, grey, and damp. On this - first workday that I had organised on the Trans Pennine Trail - I have to admit to being a touch over-ambitious in my aims for the day. I can see, in retrospect, that it was unlikely we would be able to clear all the vegetation, remove all the litter and clean all the signs, along a mile and a quarter stretch of the trail between Leapings Lane and Shore Hall Lane. The sunshine I had assumed was, however, with us all the day, as was a plentiful supply of tea, coffee and biscuits (thank you Sarah!), and good spirits.



We were lucky enough to have two BMBC Rangers with us, Kim and Steve, and it quickly became apparent (in the nicest possible way) that they knew a lot more about the trail, and its upkeep, than I did. This was tremendously useful and saved us a great deal of time and effort - rather than expending our energy cutting down untidy brambles and long grass which the winter weather would sort out, we turned our attention to dealing with the foliage and saplings actually impeding the trail, clearing rubbish and tall weeds from around the seating areas and the bridge, and cleaning signs. Kim and Steve also made a brilliant job of clearing the steps access at Leapings Lane.



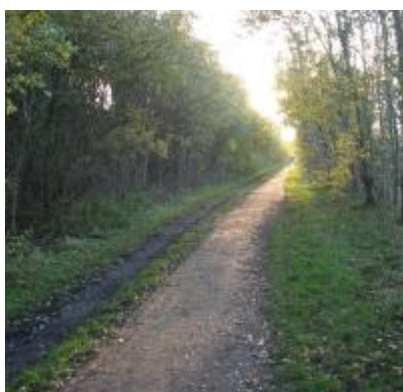
Of course it was not all hard work - lopping, chopping, chatting, and breaks for lunch and for a cup of tea soon put the time in. It was surprising how much difference, between us, we made to the trail: areas which had been overhung with branches were opened up, unsightly litter vanished, signs sparkled in the sun, and seats became inviting places to pause and enjoy the view.

In fact the warm sunshine kept us working away until well into the afternoon. The three youngest volunteers: Corey, Peta-Marie (carrying twigs away, right), and Arron Hurley, worked hard along with the rest of us - a special well done to them.



The trail itself was very busy throughout the day with a variety of users - horse-riders, walkers with and without dogs, families walking and on bikes, and cyclists: male and female, in groups, and on their own. Many of them expressed their thanks or appreciation for our work and generally cheered us on.

A good day for the trail, and for us! Come and join us on our next workday: Lopping, Chopping, Chatting, free tea and coffee, guaranteed - and *probably* Sunshine.



Sunday 4th November @ Bullhouse Bridge (tbc)