

Our Society is dedicated to promoting and conserving the fascinating countryside of West Berkshire



Learn about our activities

With the exception of specific fund-raising events, our activities are free and open to non-members. We would welcome your company on our walks and on our conservation tasks.

If, after getting to know us, you would like to join our society, we will ask you for a modest annual subscription (currently £15) which covers family as well as individual membership, plus a copy of 'Upstream', our quarterly newsletter.

If the idea of getting to know us intrigues you, read on, or turn to the contact details on the back page.

West Berkshire's Countryside is special!

It is full of wonders. There are the bare open landscapes of the high chalk, the ancient bluebell woods, the coppices of the clay areas with the heathlands that lie between the rivers. And the river valleys themselves with their water-meadows and chalk streams. People have lived here and left their marks since before Britain was an island. And most of it, only short distances away from the towns and motorways, is tranquil – places to calm and revive the harassed mind.

Other places are more energetic. The Kennet and Avon Canal, gleaming in the sunlight with a brightly-painted barge chugging along, is a sight to cheer the heart.

You may well live in one of the ancient villages. How much do you know about the place you call home? Do you know where that path on the other side of the stile runs, or why the road bends just at that point? Finding out turns 'a place to live' into 'a home'. Beware! Growing knowledge can breed love and make the place hard to leave.

Knowledge and love beget responsibility.

Our countryside has been fashioned by people, and people can destroy it. Our Society is dedicated to caring for and enhancing our countryside. We expect things to change, but we will help them to be changed carefully, and we will put effort behind our words.

What sort of effort do we mean?

First of all, we introduce people to the landscape. Our conducted walks take people to places they would not normally go, and show them things they would not normally notice.

We introduce them to the work of the countryside, and to the people who work there, including the rural businesses, and we publish books and leaflets to provide the detail.

Then we help farmers, landowners and Parish Councils by providing volunteers to do tasks that could otherwise not be done. We clear glades, lay hedges, create haloes around veteran trees and remove invasive plants that choke the natural flowers.

Specialist groups set up and monitor barn owl boxes. Their efforts have resulted in increasing numbers of young barn owls to grace the night sky.

Another specialist group has been working for many years to recover the heathland on Bucklebury Common. The glorious purple heather and the returned nightjars are some of the results.

To provide financial support for our work, we run fund-raising and social events - all of which need willing hands.



How to join the West Berkshire Countryside Society...

If you have already made up your mind to join us, please complete this form and send it with your cheque to the address below.

Your details:

Title: _____ Forename _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ *Tel: _____

*Email: _____

(*optional)

How to pay:

By cheque:

I would like to join the **West Berkshire Countryside Society**.

I enclose £15.00 to cover the annual subscription for an individual/a family (please delete as appropriate).

Cheques should be made payable to **'The West Berkshire Countryside Society'** and posted to **WBCS, The Cottage, Ashampstead Common, Pangbourne, Reading, RG8 8QT.**

I would like to make a one-off donation to the Society of: _____

By Banker's Order:

To: The Manager _____
(Bank name)

_____ (Bank address)

_____ (Bank postcode)

Please pay to the order of 'West Berkshire Countryside Society' (formerly 'The Friends of the Pang and Kennet Valleys') at HSBC plc, Pangbourne, Reading RG8 7AH (sort code 40-36-03, a/c no. 71099698).

The sum of £15.00 on the 1st of _____ 20____ and thereafter on 1st January/July 20____ and subsequent years on 1st January/July until cancelled by me.

Account no: _____ Sort code: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signed: _____