



Explore
THE
ECOLOGICAL
PARK
ELMS VALE, DOVER

WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRYSIDE PROJECT



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Project Officer

THE ECOLOGICAL PARK, ELMS VALE, DOVER

Friday 15th March saw the official opening of the Ecological Park next to Elms Vale Recreation Ground. Known as Whinless Down, it is a small surviving area of ancient chalk grassland, 80 per cent of which has been lost in the past 50 years.

The Park was opened by Mr Sheila Whisker, Chairman of Dover Council Tourism Committee, and an outdoor information panel was unveiled. A cheque for £2000 was presented to Mrs Whisker from the Nature Conservancy Council to pay for the information board, leaflets and for 250 new trees to make a 'living museum' of native tree species — a Wild Arboretum.



The Park has been set up by the White Cliffs Countryside Project, and is being designed and built by local schools with the help of conservation volunteers 143

The White Cliffs Countryside Project has been working with local schools to develop new ideas about how to use the countryside as an outdoor classroom.

A wide range of the intellectual and practical skills called for by the national curriculum can be learnt in a new and interesting way. This applies not only to Environmental Education and Biology, but also to other less obvious areas such as Maths, CDT, History, Religious Studies, English and other languages. An education pack is being prepared by the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation, with sponsorship from Eurotunnel, to provide prepared worksheets that tie in with the national curriculum, to enable schools to investigate Science, History and Geography on sites such as the Western Heights and other chalk grasslands around Dover and Folkestone.

A lady rang us asking to become a Voluntary Warden for the Ecopark because she regularly walks on Whinless Down and has spotted children and young lads using the new trees as practice for slalom on their bicycles and motorbikes. This illustrates how important it is to have Voluntary Wardens and to get the environmental message over to some of the young people!

Whinless Down is a lovely site which has spectacular views over Dover. It has a number of different habitats ranging from alkali chalk grassland to acidic heathland. The natural vegetation will be managed using "green" ideas to create an attractive refuge for wildlife and people.

We will shortly be introducing grazing around St. Martin's Battery on the Western Heights to improve the grassland. The lovable Dexter cattle should be there from the end of April or the beginning of May. Obviously litter is a particular danger to cattle, particularly plastic bags and any sharp objects.

We need more volunteers to help us with the practical work, and others to act as Wardens to keep an eye on the Western Heights and the Ecopark. If you have a little

time to let us know if there is any fly-tipping, vandalism or other problems your help will be gratefully received by the White Cliffs Countryside Project staff. Please contact us at the office at 6 Cambridge Terrace, Dover or call us on Dover 241806.

You are welcome to come along to the guided walks, which are all of moderate difficulty and are listed on the following page



Wood sage



Knapweed

I44	Sunday 19th May 2 pm	WILDLIFE OF THE WESTERN HEIGHTS Meet at Grand Shaft, Snargate Street 3 miles Dogs on leads allowed
	Sunday 2nd June 2 pm	FARMING AND WILDLIFE Meet at Little Farthingloe Farm Car Park, Folkestone Road, Dover 4 miles Dogs on leads allowed
	Sunday 9th June 2 pm	ARCHÆOLOGY OF THE WARREN Meet at 'Valiant Sailor', top of Dover Hill, Capel-le-Ferne. (A20) 3 miles Dogs on leads allowed
	Sunday 16th June 3 pm	WILDLIFE OF LANGDON CLIFFS Meet at the Ice Cream Kiosk, Langdon Cliffs Car Park 6 miles Dogs on leads allowed
	Sunday 16th June 7 pm	BIRDS OF ALKHAM Meet in Alkham Village Car Park 4 miles No dogs
	Sunday 23rd June 2 pm	EXPLORE THE ECOLOGICAL PARK Meet in Elms Vale Recreation Ground Car Park 3 miles Dogs on leads allowed
	Sunday 30th June 2 pm	WEST HOUGHAM WANDER Meet in Elms Vale Recreation Ground Car Park 3 miles Dogs on leads allowed

Further details of these walks, and details of others may be found in the leaflet: **WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRY GUIDED WALKS, 7th APRIL to 30th JUNE** obtainable free in local Tourist Information Centres and in Libraries. 21 walks are listed.

There is no charge for the walks but donations to the group(s) represented by the walks leaders are welcome. Advance booking is not necessary.

Proposed return visit to **CALAIS ACCUEIL** 5th October 1991

There have been several requests for more information about this event which was circulated with the AGM agenda.

As reported in *Newsletter* No. 9, the Society, last October, received in Dover a group of members of the French society: Calais Accueil, which welcomes and helps newcomers and visitors to Calais. They warmly invite us to return the visit and, as announced in the Programme on the back cover, we propose to do so on the 5th of October.

Our day's programme in Calais would be

similar to theirs in Dover: a conducted visit and a mayoral reception, after which we would disperse to find our own lunch and go shopping, before the return crossing. The conducted visit could be one of the following: the historic Town Hall, the church of Notre Dame, the school and museum of lace-making or the French terminal of the Channel Tunnel. Please let me or Lin know your preferences.

A booking slip will be sent out in due course, nearer the time.

LEO WRIGHT