

World of Widewater

January 2019 Newsletter

Dear Member/Neighbour

Firstly, I would like to wish you all a very happy New Year! As you may be aware World of Widewater (WOW) is a friendly, local community group consisting of over 150 members who share a passion for the Widewater Nature Reserve. We aim to help it flourish by keeping it clean and tidy, helping to protect and encourage wildlife, and are always looking for like-minded people to join us! You will find a membership form on the reverse and contact telephone numbers on our website if you would like find out a bit more about us or to chat to one of the committee. Our website www.lancingwidewater.com also has lots of information about activities, forthcoming events and bird sightings. We would love to hear from you! Please also take a look at our Facebook page - Lancing Widewater Lagoon – World of Widewater (WOW) for up to date news and photos.

Events

About 4 times a year we organise a 'Litter Pick' around the lagoon and sea front area. It is a sociable event and a good opportunity to meet neighbours and supporters. Equipment, such as gloves and litter pickers are provided, and often refreshments are available. We also hold activities such as local history talks, bird watching and flower walks, litter picks, invasive species clearance and beach bbq's.

At least twice a year we organise a social event, last year we had a tremendous turn-out for our 21st anniversary celebrating 21 years of Local Nature Reserve status! We also hold activities such as local history talks, bird watching walks, flower walks, litter picks and summer beach bbq's, some of which we have highlighted below. This year the flower walk will be on Sat 15th June @ 11.00 am

Our Resident Swans

The resident Mute swan family have raised one healthy cygnet this year. Weather conditions again, have affected numbers hatching nationally with eggs susceptible to extreme temperature changes. The juvenile swan will probably stay on the lagoon until the spring when he will be chased away by the parents who will begin breeding again. The juveniles usually join the Adur river flock when chased away.

Flower Walk

We are extremely lucky to have several members who are very knowledgeable about the flora and fauna on the lagoon. Every year a committee member organises a flower identification walk on the Widewater and this is always well attended. Another flower walk is planned for mid-June 2019 so look out for posters. Most of the flora is still sleeping but there are strong showings of Alexanders over the bridge and many underground stirrings. The WOW boat has been replanted and some of the soil renewed so we are looking forward to seeing the results in the coming Spring and Summer

Bird Watching

We are fortunate to have close ties with Shoreham and District Ornithological Society (SDOS) who lead a bird watching walk on the Widewater several times a year. Some of you may have attended the most recent one which was held on 12th January and was extremely well-attended. It was a cold day but well worth braving the cold as a wide variety of birds were spotted including Guillemots, Gannets, Redshanks, Teal ducks and Little Grebes. We were pleased to see today that the Red Breasted Mergansers had returned!

Fund Raising

We have been extremely lucky in the past months to secure funding bids that have enabled us to carry out some improvements on the Widewater. These include replanting the boat, purchasing gardening equipment and providing our super information boards which are placed along the footpath. We were also lucky to have secured funding for our spring 2018, 21st birthday celebration of achieving Local Nature Reserve Status.

World of Widewater Information Centre

We have been working towards our vision of having an Information/Visitor Centre on the Widewater, which would incorporate new disabled toilet facilities and a multi-use space for local groups. Our project team are still seeking to secure funding and exploring possible sources. Just before Christmas we met with Sarah Owen from the Big Lottery who is very interested in the project. However, they have suggested other funders that may help and given advice on how to pitch towards funders for support. We would also like to thank John Smith from Cityzen Architects who has provided, free of charge, some draft sketches taken from our design brief so we can take these to potential funders.

Bridge Renovation and Disabled Access

We have been lobbying West Sussex Council, alongside Cllr Geoff Patmore, to provide disabled access to the Widewater Lagoon from the Brighton Road entrance, opposite the Broadway, for some time. Due to funding cuts this has been delayed but we are pleased to report that the building of a new bridge, including disabled access, has been scheduled to commence in September 2019. The route will be upgraded to 2 metres wide and the gradients reduced to improve access for mobility impaired users.

Water levels

We were extremely concerned this summer at how low the water levels in the lagoon dropped. Eventually we were able to arrange for the weir boards to be removed from the seawater inlet pipe which enabled an increase in the flow of water at high tide. The inlet pipe was also dredged of sand at this time.

WOW membership

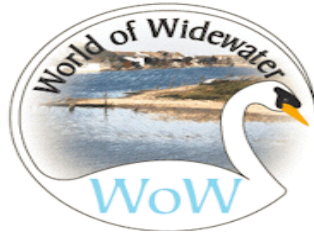
Single membership	£6.00	Senior single membership	£4.00
Family membership	£9.00	Senior couple membership	£6.00

Subscriptions are due each June. There are membership forms and standing order form on our website: www.lancingwidewater.com

Cheques payable to World of Widewater, Please send to Penny Eaton, 252 Brighton Road, Lancing, BN15 8LD. Also remember to include your address

Bank transfers to: Santander Bank
Account Name:

World of Widewater – Business A/C



Sort Code: 09-01-29

Account Number: 26017330

**Contact: Paula Baker - Vice Chair 01903 368863 or Penny Eaton – Membership Secretary
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