

Hassocks Parish Council announce new footpath **Parklands Copse Opening Ceremony**

The Parish Council owns a piece of Ancient Woodland which has been used as an informal footpath by local people to access the fields and footpath network around the village. The original path was boggy, slippery and in places dangerous to use in winter. Also the lack of maintenance was allowing invasive species such as Blackthorn to take over from the natural flora of the wood and adding to the difficulty of accessing the wood.

The copse has a Downland Stream running through it as well as an impressive collection of woodland plants and bird life. And emerging from the eastern end one is treated to amazing views of the South Downs.

Back in 2004 the council set up a working group to provide access to the copse and streamside and provide a safe route for local residents.

The field into which the new path would emerge contained permissive footpaths created by the landowner, who agreed to allow access through to the existing Public Right of Way.

Sussex Wildlife Trust surveyed the Copse and helped create a design which allowed walkers access the stream as well as creating a modified route that protected the existing plant-life.

During 2005 contractors cleared the invasive blackthorn, removed or trimmed any unhealthy trees and created a hard route through the copse.

The design included two bridges and connecting walkway to enable people to get really close to the stream without damaging the banks.

The bridges and connecting walkway were constructed and installed by ***The Monday Group***, a local group who voluntarily maintain footpaths and styles around Hassocks.

The Opening Ceremony was at 10.30 am on Saturday 16 April followed by refreshments and a display at the nearby scout hut. The display is available at Hassocks Parish Centre for those who missed the event.

Cutting the Ribbon was performed by John Card from the Monday Group, assisted by Ian Weir Chairman Hassocks Parish Council.

In his address Ian Weir thanked

Sussex Wildlife Trust for their advice and help in designing the route

Tom Turner, a local farmer, for granting access to paths running across his fields

The Council's contractors - Roots Upwards for tree safety and clearance work and
- MD Contracting for constructing the Paths

The Monday Group for designing and building the two bridges and walkway

Hassocks Parish Council members - who saw a way to turn an impenetrable woodland area into place that the whole community can enjoy.



Official Opening of Parklands Copse by John Card of The Monday Group





Chairman Ian Weir and Councillor Leslie Campbell who organised the Parklands Copse scheme with members of The Monday Group who built the bridges



A good turn out on the day!



Afterwards at the Scout Hut

