Friends of Forest Farm

SUMMER 2026 139

Welcome to the Summer newsletter. As you will discover it has been a busy few months with much happening and a number of changes that you will see around Forest Farm.

The Rangers have been very active, read Alec's report on Page 2 for more details. In particular the re-engineered Fish Pond is a major new feature (Page 16 for pictures). The old barn, ruined through arson, has eventually been cleared away and we are currently awaiting its phoenix rise from the ashes. Work has begun on a new nature trail behind the Wardens Centre. Work has also begun on the restoration of the Dragonfly Pond, which has been rather an eyesore for some time.

The Friends have been busy assisting the work of the Rangers. The volunteers report (Page 10) gives a flavour of the hard work done by this enthusiastic group. We have assisted financially with the new doors at the Wardens Centre and the new dipping platform in the pond behind the Wardens Centre. Sacyr provided a grant for the Dragonfly Pond restoration and the Friends have also made a similar donation. We are working (and funding) to provide interpretation boards along the Glamorganshire Canal, a significant historical feature which we are so privileged to have at the heart of Forest Farm (Page 13). For a fascinating article on the Old Toll-House go to Page 4.

Lots of conservation work. Articles on Bat monitoring (Page 7) and Hedgehog monitoring (Page 8) at Forest Farm. In addition Marion Sweeney tells us about the discovery of a rare species never spotted before in Wales, which she found at Forest Farm (Page 6).



The Winter Talks programme restarts in October and the regular Saturday walks and the volunteer sessions continue; these are well attended and enjoyed, and new members are always welcome.

We hope you enjoy your visits to Forest Farm and getting up close to our wonderful wildlife.

Naomi & Paul Brightmore

The editors advise that all views expressed by contributors are their own.
Published on behalf of The Friends of Forest Farm and Glamorganshire Canal Nature Reserve.
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RANGERS' REPORT: SUMMER 2026



It is good to welcome our new Ranger apprentice, Josh. In particular, Josh has taken on responsibility for the new Nature Trail in the Warden Centre field. As it develops, Information Boards will highlight special features, including stonepiles and woodpiles designed for Bee and insect hotels, metal sheets providing hiding places for reptiles including Grass-snakes and Slow-worms, and pathways for flower-spotting and insect recognition. This will be a great new resource for visiting schools and other groups such as Cubs and Scouts.

A major new project has been the transformation of two old fish-breeding ponds at the top of the conservation field into a single big dipping pond (see Page 16). It took some large scale excavating by contractors. The two disused ponds were scraped out and re-lined, forming one large pool. With the addition of logs, stones, water-based and Bee-attracting plants, this has rapidly transformed into a beautiful new area. Already Toads have spawned there, Dragonflies and other invertebrates have moved in, and an Otter tunnel is provided to encourage visits. Foxes and a Hedgehog have already been seen. Lesser Black-backed Gulls regularly frequent, with Herons and Egrets too. The pond will not be stocked with fish, although Sticklebacks may appear over time, through natural dispersals. The fence around the pond will remain, keeping it safe for wildlife. This area will be another valuable resource for visiting schools and organised groups.



New scrapes are planned for the conservation field next to the hides, extending the wetlands beyond Hide 2 to provide greater habitat for wetland wildlife. Work on this should start by the end of July. It is also planned for the contractors to scrape out the Dragon-fly pond which will have a new liner and will be landscaped. Some work by volunteers has already taken place and we look forward to the renovation of this much-loved feature close to the car-park.

Following several years of concentrated work, the Scout-field is a much clearer and accessible open space. A new five-year project has begun, to establish a second open field area in the adjacent woods. Volunteer sessions there have already made a big difference to the jungle of Himalayan balsam, Brambles and Bracken that had taken over.



At the entrance to the orchard, a new cantilevered dipping platform has been

built to extend over the pond. Thanks to the Friends for providing the cement for this! It's already in use for schools and Scout groups and we plan to likewise reinstate the one on the opposite bank.



Plans exist for the next section of the canal to be de-silted and repaired this winter. Please anticipate some further disruption whilst this essential work is done to restore our beautiful canal.

After several years of waiting the old barn, which was destroyed by arson, has been cleared. Plans and funding exist for a rebuild. However surveyors advised that the barn walls were no longer stable and strong enough to support the new roof. Therefore, they had to be demolished and the issue is back with the City Council planners for decisions on the next phase of work.

The WTSWW Bird-box monitoring continues. Swallows at the farm, seem to be having another very good year. Last year they raised 3 broods and we are hoping that they will do so again. In addition to regular species such as Tits, Robins, Wrens and Blackbirds, other birds which we know have successfully raised broods include Green Woodpecker, Mistle Thrush and Tawny Owl.



Wildlife meadows on the Reserve have really thrived this year. Gareth has been monitoring this higher diversity of plants, particularly in the conservation field opposite the farm. He has noticed, for example, more Orchids (Common-spotted, Marsh and Bee), and also Yellow Rattle for the first time.

With more plants inevitably come more insects. Painted-lady butterflies are particularly noticeable at the moment, and many UK Dragonfly species have been spotted.

Rhodri has been leading on Bat monitoring and has provided statistics for us (Page 7). It is particularly exciting that rarer species such as Horseshoes and Soprano Pipistrelles have been detected.

In July, on a glorious summer evening, the Rangers BBQ for volunteers was very well attended by members of our main volunteer groups. We remain grateful to you all, from Balsam bashing to pond renovation, from path clearance to hedge-coppicing, you make a big difference to Forest Farm. Thank you!

Alec Stewart

THE TONGWYNLAIS TOLLHOUSE, PART 2

In the Autumn 2024 newsletter, we described the history of the Tongwynlais Tollhouse, but what happened to it after regular toll collections ceased? To briefly recap, the tollhouse was built around 1815, next to the newly constructed “iron bridge” that carried a horse-drawn tramway linking the Pentyrch iron works to the Melingriffith tinplate works in Whitchurch. The tollhouse was used for collection of tolls from other businesses and members of the public who also made use of the bridge. In 1871 the tramway was upgraded to a standard-gauge railway, and we believe that regular toll collections ceased around this time.



However, the tollhouse (also known as Iron Bridge House or Riverside House) was to remain occupied for the best part of another century, and for at least some of that time was retained by the Melingriffith Company and rented out to local families. Auctioneers’ records from the period around 1887 have the following entry:

“Freehold cottage and gardens at Iron Bridge let to W. Jenkins for annual rental of six pounds ten shillings”. Prior to the Jenkins residency, the census of 1881 shows David and Mary Griffiths and their four adult children living at the tollhouse. David was a railway platelayer, daughters Catherine and Elina dressmakers and son John, a puddler in the iron works. The Jenkins family had replaced them by the time of the1891census. These were William, a carpenter, his wife Jane and eight of their children. This was probably the largest number of people ever to have lived there! The Jenkins tenancy was not without incident. In August 1894, the tollhouse was struck by lightning! This was described dramatically in the Evening Express newspaper:

“During the storm that raged fiercely on Saturday morning, the inhabitants of Iron Bridge House……..were thrown into consternation by the falling of a thunderbolt in their midst. Close by the house stood an old tree which being struck by the bolt, was splintered in all directions. The flight of the deadly missile shaped its way into the house…… Fortunately, however, nothing more serious happened than the smashing of several windows and the upheaval of the floor, the inmates miraculously escaping into the road.”

The damage may have been more severe than implied here (though the phrase “upheaval of the floor” is gloriously ambiguous); the Jenkins’ neighbours organised a fund-raiser to assist them in

their hour of need, and collected the sum of £22 10 shillings, which was more than enough to pay the rent for the next three years.

In many respects the tollhouse must have seemed idyllic – it enjoyed a scenic riverside setting yet was only a few minutes walk from the delights of Tongwynlais. However, at least until the early 1900s the house seems to have lacked mod cons. In 1900, several cases of enteric (typhoid) were reported in the press at 'the Iron Bridge'. In the opinion of the medical officer this was a consequence of drinking water from 'a shallow well in the bed of the river Taff'.

The Jenkins moved out around 1918, and the next occupants of the tollhouse can be followed via the electoral roll. These include Edward Dignam (1919), and Thomas Hughes Robbins (or Robins). The latter lived there from around 1920, along with his first wife Sarah Jane (d. 1921) and second wife Daisy (d. 1932). He, together with a servant named Edith Hassan, were the last recorded occupants of the tollhouse, being still there at the start of the second world war.

Although regular toll collections ceased in the 1870s, occasional collections occurred thereafter. Oral histories, from the 1980s for a local history project, recall the presence of a toll collector gathering revenue from pedestrians crossing the iron bridge on January 1st each year (thanks to Allan Cook, Chair of the Radyr and Morganstown History Society for this information). We also have examined detailed logbooks from Amgueddfa Cymru archives dating from 1st January 1916 and 1927, listing the names of persons crossing the Iron Bridge and monies collected. The purpose of these collections was probably to establish in law the rights of the Melingriffith Company over the bridge. These toll collectors did not live at the tollhouse and had other regular employment.

The toll collector on 1st January 1916 was Albert W Jones, who gave the following declaration on completing his day. "I Albert W Jones, Glanchyd, Velindra Road Glamorgan, declare that on January 1st, 1916, I was at the Iron Bridge Tongwynlais…..from 6.30 am to 4.45 pm and collected two shillings and ten pence 11 buttons and one piece of black lead as tokens for tolls from people that crossed the Iron Bridge."



The toll collector on 1st January 1927 was John Cox, a first World War veteran. He would not have been happy to receive a piece of black lead as payment, as his account shows. His logbook details two furious arguments with people who refused to pay, the first of these was a postman:

"Between the hours of 11 am and 12 noon, A postman attempted to cross the bridge from Tongwynlais to Morganstown. I intercepted him for the purpose of taking a toll. His remark was, 'to hell with you, don't stop me, my minutes are precious'. I told him he could not cross the bridge unless he gave me a coin of the realm…… He replied 'Don't stop me; I am going to deliver these letters'."

The argument continued, the postmen exclaiming "To hell with you and the Melingriffith company. I am working for the government a bigger concern than the Melingriffith!" The ex-soldier prevailed, and the people of Morganstown had to do without their New Years day post.

The tollhouse was abandoned sometime between 1939 and 1945, and was in a derelict state by the time it was demolished in the 1950s. It was partially restored by the Tongwynlais Historical Society, the work being completed in 2022. It now exists as a landmark on the Taff Trail.

Marion & Glen Sweeney

PICTURE LEGENDS:

1. Tongwynlais Tollhouse in a state of disrepair, 1951. Photo ©Ian L Wright courtesy of Stephen Rowson.

2. The Iron Bridge at Tongwynlais, photo March 2025, ©Marion Sweeney

Editor's note: Thank you Marion and Glen for this very interesting article, and also for your fascinating talk in our Winter talks programme.

A NEW SPECIES FOR FOREST FARM – AND WALES!

A casual stroll in September at Forest Farm led to an unexpected finding. During a quick dash round between showers, I was more concerned with getting some exercise than spotting wildlife, but my eye was caught by two Harlequin ladybirds. I stopped to take a quick snapshot of them, when I spotted something else - a small Ichneumon wasp on a nearby leaf. I photographed this too, hoping to identify it when I got home. Ichneumon wasps are often hard to identify, so I was surprised when the Obsidentify app identified it as *Zanthojoppa lutea* with 100% confidence. Apps can be wrong, and an internet search suggested that this wasn't a UK species. I posted the photo to the UK Bees, Wasps and Ants Facebook group, where its experts can offer help. This confirmed the species was indeed *Zanthojoppa lutea,* which has been expanding its range from the near continent into England in recent years; however, this was the first sighting in Wales! I have submitted the finding to the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre, where it has also been



verified.

Ichneumon wasps are parasitoid solitary wasps, with over 2500 species in the UK. They have a parasitic stage to their life cycle - typically eggs are laid in a living host species where they hatch and consume the host. This sounds rather grizzly, but they are important environmental regulators of species numbers. They have no stings and are harmless to humans.

Thanks to Jaswinder Bopari (UK Bees Wasps and Ants Facebook group), and Malcolm Storey (via SEWBrecord) for ID help and verification.

Marion Sweeney

Photo caption: *Zanthojoppa lutea* at Forest Farm. September 2025 © Marion Sweeney

BAT MONITORING AT FOREST FARM

One of our Rangers, Rhodri Hughes, has taken responsibility for monitoring the numbers and types of Bats flying in Forest Farm, using a full spectrum ultrasonic Bat detector. Full spectrum detectors record sounds at their original frequencies, i.e. ultrasonic sounds are not converted to a lower frequency in order to make them audible.



Since the call frequency of Bats is unique to their species, the detector enables each species to be identified, and also records how many Bats pass over. Rhodri sent us the sampling figures for the month May to June 2026; this makes interesting reading. Particularly note that this data includes the Greater Horseshoe and Lesser Horseshoe Bat. Both are priority species and **very rare** across the UK, so this is exciting and again highlights the importance of Forest Farm Nature Reserve!

Bat Species	**Number of passes**
Whiskered Bat (*Myotis mystacinus*)	46
Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii)*	63
Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctule*)	1107
Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)	6
Common Pipistrelle Bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)	3757
Soprano Pipistrelle Bat (*Pipistrellus pygamaeus*)	4701
Greater Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*)	1
Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*)	12
TOTAL	9693

Many thanks to Rhodri for this interesting report. Don't forget that our second Winter Talk this year (November) will be given by Cardiff Bat Group – a great opportunity to learn more.

Sources:

Rhodri Hughes, Bats.org.uk (information and photograph)

HEDGEHOGS AT FOREST FARM

In last Winter's edition we described the participation of Forest Farm in the National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme (NHMP). This project will, for the first time, produce robust UK Hedgehog population estimates. Previous surveys have given information on where Hedgehogs are, but this new survey will also tell how many there are. Surveys that indicate only where Hedgehogs are present don't reveal how that population is faring until it has disappeared, but monitoring numbers can give warning if the population is in trouble. The project also looks at regional and habitat differences in Hedgehog populations, to help identify what factors impact them which assists in producing effective conservation plans to help reverse the decline of this iconic species.



In 2025 they surveyed 40 sites across England, Scotland and Wales. Forest Farm is involved, with cameras placed around the reserve. Analysis takes a long time, but we now have some preliminary results from the 2024-5 monitoring.

The surveys have generated a huge number of images; nationally over 5 million have been uploaded to MammalWeb, with lots more still to be added. Hedgehogs have been spotted at over half the sites surveyed, but this number is expected to rise as more photos are uploaded and classified. In August 2024, thirty cameras were placed around Forest Farm, and again in 2025, to photograph anything passing in front of them. Nearly 70 000 images were uploaded to MammalWeb from these cameras.

AI filtered out irrelevant pictures and the remainder were passed to volunteers to identify what species had been snapped and to find the hedgehogs which will be analysed further. Nearly 200 volunteers have helped as 'Spotters' to classify the image sequences from Forest Farm, (so thank you very much if you're one of them). There are still lots left for spotting, and NHMP are asking for more volunteers to assist. Please look on MammalWeb at https://www.mammalweb.org/en/

Results so far reveal 34 species of wild bird and mammal had been spotted at Forest Farm, Red Foxes appear on the most cameras from the site, appearing at 27 of the 30 cameras. Grey Squirrel and Woodpigeon are the next most frequently spotted species. One camera even spotted a Tawny Owl right in front of it!

We're pleased to report that so far, Hedgehogs had been spotted at three cameras, making them the 15th most spotted species across Forest Farm. There are probably more still to be identified.

Please note that these are preliminary results. There is a lot more work to be done before meaningful density estimates can be achieved. The more Spotters viewing and classifying the images, the faster NHMP can produce results.

If you'd like to have a go, you can find instructions here NHMP Guide to Spotting.

Sources: Cardiff Local Nature Partnership and https://ptes.org/campaigns/hedgehogs/nhmp/

VOLUNTEER REPORT: SPRING/SUMMER 2026

APRIL: A wonderful Spring day, and an excellent turnout with more than 22 people coming along! The usual die-hards, and some very welcome newcomers – including a Duke of Edinburgh Award student, and a group of ladies from the Rebel Badge Club. Whatever people's motivation, everyone got stuck in and worked hard as usual, amidst much fun and laughter.



We were in the field behind the Orchard. Here, the Rangers have a plan to develop a nature trail for children. There will be signage to illustrate what they might see, a bug corner where they can roll over logs etc to see what they can find, and of course the existing dipping pond. A lovely idea that will develop over time. Our task was to make a start on this project by clearing Brambles from along the fence and pathways, removing old barbed wire, clearing space at the Orchard end for a log pile, and protecting this newly cleared area with a Dead hedge.



We made a big difference and by the end large amounts of Bramble had been cleared from the fence and hedges. The fences and paths were clear, the area around the memorial tree tidied, and the beginnings of the Dead Hedge and log pile in place. The field looked somehow bigger. We look forward to seeing the results as this lovely project comes into fruition. It will be a great new resource and it was a joy to play a part in it.

It was also pleasing to see how good the Orchard was looking following our pruning session last Autumn. There is more to do, but the trees already have a better shape and the blossom looked wonderful against the bright blue sky.

MAY: Another great attendance with 20 people helping out. It was a great task – working up at the old fish ponds that have now been made into a single new dipping pond. This is in the conservation field over the road from the Warden's hut, in an area that will remain fenced off. It will be used for supervised occasions such a school visits. Of course there was Bramble to cut back – volunteering isn't complete without the odd scratch or two from Bramble - and it grows so fast during the Spring!

Following the re-digging and lining of the pond to form one instead of two, the banks were very bare; some old logs and tree stumps had already been placed around it to give a more natural effect. The task was to re-plant with water-edge plants such as Yellow iris and Water Parsnip. Other plants which are Bee-attracting and will encourage insect-life were also planted further from the water-edge. The surrounding area had already been planted with trees and with these additional new plants, the site around the pond will soon be beautiful and buzzing with insects. It was good to take part in another exciting long-term project to improve the Forest Farm Reserve for educational purposes, and wildlife protection.





JUNE: An amazing 24 people (or should that be 24 amazing people?) turned up to volunteer. It was no surprise, at this time of year, to find that the job was to pull-up Himalayan Balsam, a highly invasive plant that is doing a take-over bid in parts of the Reserve. It's very easy to remove if gripped at the bottom of the fleshy stem, near to the roots and pulled, with a satisfying snapping sound. The job has to be done before it sets seed. This is because the seed pods are 'explosive' and trying to remove the Balsam too late in the season results in spreading it further as the seeds eject from the pods.



"Balsam bashing" has been an on-going task for many years. However, it is cheering to know that consistent efforts to tackle it in areas such as the Scout field are having a positive effect. Alec had therefore decided to tackle a completely new area, in the woods adjacent to the Scout field. When we arrived, it looked like a jungle – so much so that a few pioneers had to lead the way by hacking and cutting a pathway through!

Balsam was uprooted and made into huge piles. The surrounding Bracken was also tackled. Few other plants were visible, apart from some struggling Rosebay Willowherb and Hemp Agrimony; next year smaller plants will again be able to flourish.

The difference made in one morning by so many people was impressive – a large area had been cleared and further volunteer groups will be able to continue the work.



JULY: Yet another good turnout from the hardy Friends of Forest Farm volunteers. And did we need to be hardy!

THE DRAGONFLY POND. This sad sight has been empty and bedraggled for a number of years. We are delighted to say that after a significant period of discussion and planning, work is now starting on digging it out, plugging leaks and re-lining it and then remodelling the surrounds. The Friends negotiated a grant from Sacyr (Velindre Hospital builders) of £1000 and the Friends of Forest Farm are also match funding with a donation of £1000. The balance of the cost is being provided by the Local Nature Partnership. Thank you!



Our job was to remove the stones, debris and vegetation from the pond area and trim back the surrounding Brambles and other vegetation, so that the excavation work could begin. We quickly realised what a major task this was going to be. It was a long and hot job. I have never seen the volunteers so dirty and sweaty!

Highlights of the morning included seeing real Dragonflies flying around the site, the fresh scent of water mint as we worked, lots of fun and laughter, and seeing the difference we were making! At one point a tiny Shrew which lived in the bank, frantically popped out. It was gently flipped it into an empty bucket and removed to a new home elsewhere on the Reserve.

Excellent progress was made and by the end a big ‘wall’ of stones was on the bank, the pond basin was clear and we were ready to go home. It had been a very rewarding morning.
We had hoped to also clean the large Dragonfly statue, but time did not permit, and it remains safely in storage. It will be good to see the pond, once again sparkling with water and buzzing with life, surrounded by plants and flowers.

Thank you very much to everyone who came along to the sessions. Your help is hugely appreciated. **Next session** is on **Sunday 9 August** 10.00 am and all are welcome.



UPDATE: THE MAIN ENGINEERING WORK ON THE DRAGONFLY POND HAS JUST BEEN COMPLETED. THE LANDSCAPING AND PLANTING WILL FOLLOW.



FOREST FARM FUN DAY 8 AUGUST 2026 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Come and explore the wilder side of Cardiff at Forest Farm Nature Reserve, with pond dipping, bug hunting, bird spotting and nature-themed arts and crafts.

See some of the machinery that help maintain Cardiff’s green spaces, including a great photo opportunity with our tractors.

There’ll be opportunities to volunteer with Coed Caerdydd and explore their tree nursery and get your hands dirty.

Free event for all the family!

GLAMORGANSHIRE CANAL PROJECT

I have long been interested in the history of the Glamorganshire Canal and its importance in the development of the south-east Wales economy over the past centuries.





The recent work undertaken in restoring sections of the canal running through Forest Farm has prompted me to publish plans the Friends Group have in hand to provide interpretation boards along the canal highlighting its' vital part in the development of south-east Wales. We are in the very early stages of planning for this and are liaising closely with Cardiff Council who will work with us in the project.

We are pleased funds have been made available by Cardiff Council for the canal restoration work, which is restricted to limited dredging of the canal and restoration of parts of the canal edges. Phase 1 took place in late 2025 and Phase 2 is due later this year. Additional work will continue as and when funds are available.

The hope is that regular maintenance of the two remaining locks will make features out of both of them – after all, this section running through the Forest Farm Reserve is one of the last remaining stretches of canal which ran from Merthyr to Cardiff.

Subject to agreement and approval by the council, the boards (to be funded by the Friends Group) will highlight the history of the canal tracing the reasons for its construction through to its economic demise. Clearly space is at a premium so, the narrative will be brief but nevertheless informative.

To complement the plans, a **brief history of the canal** is set out here:

In the late 18th century Merthyr Tydfil emerged as a world leader of iron products. Its remote inland location created major difficulties in transporting goods to Cardiff, the nearest port. Initially, transport depended on primitive roads, using wagons, horses and labourers.

Rapid expansion of the iron trade demanded a quicker and cheaper way to get to the wharves in Cardiff for onward shipment via the Bristol Channel. The canal came into being by way of an Act of Parliament in 1790 sponsored by the main ironmasters of Crawshay, Guest and Hill. By 1794 it was completed. The canal stretched for 25 miles and included 50 locks to overcome significant changes in elevation between Merthyr and Cardiff.

It dramatically improved transport efficiency. Barges could carry up to 25 tonnes, taking 4-5 days for a round trip between Merthyr and Cardiff. Each barge required only a single horse, often lead by a boy, and a steersman. In comparison, transporting the same quantity of goods by road required around 12 wagons, 48 horses, and 12 men and boys. Cannons manufactured in Merthyr for use during the Napoleonic wars passed through here.

By 1840 the canal was transporting 200,000 tonnes of cargo annually, operating at near capacity 7 days a week, day and night. During peak periods, locks were opened every 15 minutes to cope with the constant movement of barges. Over time, cargo traffic between Merthyr and Cardiff became so congested due to increased demand that an alternative means of shipment was needed.

In 1836 the Taff Vale railway was constructed linking Merthyr and Cardiff. Ongoing developments within the network enabled the journey to be completed in under one hour by 1850. Despite this advancement the expansion of the South Wales coalfields ensured that demand remained strong for canal transport. By 1860 however, further expansion of the rail network combined with the declining iron industry lead to a marked reduction in the canal's usage. Notably, one of the original investors, the Crawshay family, dispatched their final shipment of iron via the canal in 1886. By 1898 the waterway had begun to fall into disrepair.

Subsequent changes in ownership ultimately resulted in the cessation of commercial operations and the canal's abandonment. Today, this section at Forest Farm is one of the last surviving stretches of the canal, complete with two locks, and efforts are ongoing to preserve this important historical feature.

The canal played a key role in transforming South East Wales from a rural economy to a global industrial centre. It's contribution to the development of Merthyr was immense. The population of Merthyr in 1851 was about 46,000 (about a third of the size of Bristol). There was a great influx of economic migrants from all parts of the world and this created poor working and living conditions. Large parts of Merthyr were classified as slums. The canal revolutionised transport by enabling bulk goods to move far more cheaply than packhorse routes even though it was later surpassed by railways which provided much faster and more efficient transport.

The canal was also crucial to Cardiff's development as a major port. It's population grew from 1,500 in 1790, 18,300 in 1851 to 165,000 by 1900, largely brought about by the boom in coal exports. It stimulated industrial activity along its route including Brown Lennox works, Nantgarw Pottery and Melingriffith tinplate works.

We will be providing updates on the boards as and when progress is made.

Anthony Matthews

ARCHIVING FOREST FARM NEWSLETTERS

When I decided to give up being the (second) editor of the Friends of Forest Farm newsletter in March 2022, after 16 years (Ken Patterson was the first), I had accumulated a full set of the editions from 1990. I suggested to the Committee that Glamorgan archives might be interested, and they agreed that I approach them.

It is not automatic that they accept everything offered. However, after an arranged visit there, I am delighted to say that Glamorgan archives did want our newsletters. One thing I had to go back to the Committee about was what happens if the archives could no longer keep the newsletters. It was agreed that we would ask for their return.

So, the first 30 years of the hard copies of newsletter for Friends of Forest Farm Country Park and Glamorganshire Canal Local Nature Reserve – to give us our full title – are now safely deposited, along with the 30th anniversary booklet. It means they are properly cared for as well as giving access to a wider readership.
Glamorgan Archives are happy to receive subsequent digital copies from us, and as you know, all editions are available on our website forestfarm.org.uk.

Sheila Austin

EVENTS AT FOREST FARM

Nature Walks / Volunteering: The Warden's Centre, Forest Farm CF14 7JH, 10.00 -12.00
Winter Talks: ARARAT Church Community rooms, Whitchurch Common CF14 1PT, 7.00pm
(NO BOOKING REQUIRED)

Wed 5 Aug 1pm -3pm	Introduction to summer tree identification with WTSWW & Coed Caerdydd Tickets, Wednesday 5 August • 1 PM - 3 PM | Eventbrite	Forest Farm Registration essential.
Sat 8th Aug © 10am-3pm	**Rangers Family Fun Day.** A day of fun for all the family.	Park Rangers Forest Farm Warden Centre
Sun 9 Aug	Volunteering	Alec
10-12 Aug	**Ranger Boot Camp**	Registration essential. https://www.outdoorcardiff.com/events/ranger-bootcamp-2/
Sat 15 Aug	Nature Walk	
Wed 19 Aug	Hazel Dormouse Awareness & Footprint survey with WTSWW Tickets, Wednesday 19 August • 10 AM - 1 PM | Eventbrite	81 Frank Rd Cardiff, Wales Registration essential.
Thurs 27 Aug 10am - 1pm	**Forest Farm Hedgehog monitoring** Hedgehog Monitoring Project Forest Farm Tickets, Thursday 27 August • 10 AM - 1 PM | Eventbrite	Forest Farm Warden Centre Registration essential.
Sat 19 Sept	Nature Walk	
Sun 27 Sept	Volunteering	Alec
Sat 10 Oct © 10am-3pm	**Friends of Forest Farm Open Day**	Forest Farm Warden Centre
Sun 11 Oct	Volunteering	Alec
Sat 17 Oct	Nature Walk	
Wed 28 Oct	Winter Talk White Tailed Eagles – Reintroduction to Wales	Ararat Baptist Church
Sun 8 Nov	Volunteering	Alec
Wed 18 Nov	Winter Talk Cardiff Bat Group	Ararat Baptist Church
Sat 21 Nov	Nature Walk	

For current information about events check our website or Facebook pages.

For more information about Friends of Forest Farm: www.forestfarm.org.uk
Also on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/forestfarmuk/

FISH POND RESTORATION

