

Friday 2 nd June	Watercress & Winterbournes Volunteer Forum & Celebration	Whitchurch	<p>Please save the date – Friday 2nd June - 5.00 - 8.00pm.</p> <p>The team would like to invite you all to join to us for a forum and social get together to celebrate your amazing contributions to the scheme. We will send our more details nearer the time, but for now, please do book it into your calendar.</p>
Launching March	Sharing Community Stories	Various areas - initially the Bourne/Pillhill Brook/Upper Test areas	<p>The oral history project, “Sharing Community Stories”, will be launching very soon. The W&W scheme area has a rich history, where the landscape shapes and is shaped by the lives of local communities. We want to capture the history of the chalk streams that exists in the minds of the people living alongside them, and aim to do this by collecting the stream-themed memories and experiences of community members. Volunteers will help to identify people within these communities who have interesting stories or experiences relating to the chalk streams and then, following on from the training provided by our team, will interview these subjects and record their stories in audio or video format.</p> <p>The first training sessions will take place in late February/early March, with more sessions to be arranged in the future. Those who have expressed an interest in conducting the interviews will be contacted soon. If you haven’t already expressed interest, but would like to do so, or indeed would like further information, please let us know.</p> <p>If any of you know of community members who might like to be interviewed (initially in the Bourne/Pillhill Brook/Upper Test areas) please let us know – all ages and backgrounds are welcome!</p>
Friday 17 March 2023	Riverfly Conference	Natural History Museum in London	<p>Just to let you know that a National Riverfly Conference is being held on Friday 17th March 2023 at the Natural History Museum in London. If you are interested, please check out this link for further details: https://www.riverflies.org/newsblog/save-the-date-riverfly-conference-2023</p>
Ongoing	Septic Smart	Various areas - initially Cheriton/Alresford	<p>This project will be launching in the new year and focuses on raising awareness/encouraging positive behaviours around off-mains drainage systems. We are seeking volunteers (initially in the Alresford and Cheriton areas) to support this project. This could involve lower commitment activities like helping to deliver leaflets to houses, or more in-depth involvement such as speaking with local residents and businesses about the topic. Training will be provided in 2023 (timing TBC). Please contact us on if you’d like to get involved. We need help from people on the upper reaches of the Test and Itchen to spread the word. For more information on the issue, and how you can help, visit www.hiwwt.org.uk/septicmart</p>
April (online intro in March)	Open Chalk Stream events	Various areas	<p>During April, we will be running our extremely popular and well received Open Chalk Stream events. This is where some of the landowners open up their land and access to the chalk streams for small groups of visitors for walks and talks from our team and other professionals. These will take place across the catchment, with details currently just being finalised. The schedule will be available soon. We will be calling for volunteers to help us run these events on the day. There are several roles, depending upon the site, but it would mainly</p>

			<p>involve assisting the participants, helping the event leader, taking photos and of course, joining the walk too! They generally last for 2 to 3 hours and can be either a morning or an afternoon.</p> <p>If you're interested in helping out with one or more of the Open Chalk Stream events, please let us know. Maggie has scheduled an introduction and volunteer pre-meeting session on Zoom on Wednesday evening 22 March. We will forward the link to those interested.</p>
<p>Launching May (online intro 12 April)</p>	<p>Invasive non-native Floral surveys</p>	<p>Catchment wide</p>	<p>This spring, we are launching the Floral Survey project. The focus will be to identify invasive non-native plants in designated areas across the scheme catchment, which will include all seven chalk streams. These surveys will provide an update to those initially completed several years ago and will help us to identify the key target areas. This will involve walking along accessible footpaths, with the maps provided, to look for any invasive plants that we have highlighted. This can be an opportunity for an enjoyable walk out with a friend, family or other volunteers with the added interest of looking out for the identified plants. You'll be able to log any findings as you go, either on the survey app (details will be provided) or on paper forms. We are assigning the whole month of May for these surveys to take place, with special focus from the team during the week of 15-19 May.</p> <p>We do need to request that you register your interest with us for the floral surveys as we will need to section the maps according to the number and location of those who wish to participate. To get us started, Maggie will host an online introductory session on Zoom on the evening of 12 April to go through the project, the plants, maps and how it will all work. A link to the online session will be sent out to those who are interested.</p>
<p>May to Sept</p>	<p>INNS (Invasive non-native species) removal</p>	<p>Various areas</p>	<p>The INNS programme, the removal of invasive non-native plants, will run from May to September. On the whole, it involves removing Himalayan Balsam from identified sites as part of a group of volunteers, but also can involve removing other non-native plants from the streams themselves e.g., parrots feather and monkey flower. This work is ongoing and a schedule of sites with dates and times will be sent out soon so that volunteers can let us know if they are interested in joining any of the sessions. Each session lasts about 3 hours. No action needed yet. Further information to follow.</p>
<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Education Volunteers</p>	<p>Various areas</p>	<p>Tracy, our W&W Education Officer works with small numbers of volunteers in various locations delivering educational sessions for children and young people. These include activities such as river dipping, identifying invertebrates and wildlife near our chalk streams, a river's journey from source to sea, water conservation and local heritage.</p> <p>Sessions are mainly with school groups during the day in term time and with youth groups and uniformed groups such as Brownie/Cub groups in the evenings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tracy is looking to increase her education volunteering team, so if you are interested, please get in touch and we can let you know what is planned. <p>N.b. All volunteers joining this activity need a DBS check (we will arrange this for you if you don't already have one).</p>

Ongoing	Water Safety Training	Online	If you would like to take part in any of our activities in or around the water and you've not yet completed any water safety training with us, you will need to do so. We do now have an approved online water safety course. Please contact us for details.
New	Equine Land Management Events	Equine local knowledge needed	This year we are intending to organise some catchment-friendly equine land management events for people who are keeping their horses in the W&W area. We would be really grateful of some help in developing these from any of our volunteers who keep horses or the names of any contacts who you think might be willing to help with this. If you are interested or could suggest some useful local contacts, please contact us.
Ongoing	Save Every Drop water efficiency campaign	All W&W areas	You will probably have seen previously that through our Save Every Drop project we are encouraging our W&W communities to be more water efficient, reducing the amount of water we need to draw from the aquifer and leaving more for our precious chalk streams. We would encourage all of you to have one of Southern Water's FREE water efficiency visits. They are quick and easy and can identify leaks you didn't know you had and provide and fit FREE equipment to help you save water in your house. They have been shown to reduce water use in participating households. You can find out more on our webpages https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/watercress-and-winterbournes/save-every-drop And don't forget when applying for your visit, to mention Watercress and Winterbournes and you will be included in the prize-draw for £500 off your water bill (it also helps us in reporting back to the lottery how many people have had the visit because of W&W!)