Sun Rising News

The twice-yearly newsletter of Sun Rising Natural Burial Ground and Nature Reserve

Autumn/Winter 2024-2025

The Nature Reserve

New Kestrel Pole This year we have managed to install a new telegraph pole along the western boundary. This is specifically for a new kestrel box – and immediately the pole was up, a kestrel landed on the top, taking ownership! We are extremely grateful to Steve Cracco, Chris Shelton, Dave from Upton Estate, and Anthony Hart from nearby Hornton Hill Farm who were integral to the success of this project.

Our next plan is a 'swift tower'!

Insect Numbers The mild wet winter of 2023-24, followed by a chilly wet spring and a windy grey summer has meant serious problems for butterflies, moths, bees and other insects. The numbers at Sun Rising have been lower this year than we can remember – a story similar everywhere.

Climate change means such crises are coming more often. And we can't ignore the knock-on effects of reduced numbers of pollinators through all ecological habitats and cycles. At Sun Rising, we are doing our best to provide safe space for these beautiful and critically important creatures.



But gazing over the wildflower meadows this year, concerned about the lack of bees and butterflies, reminds us that we all need to do all we can to help. Choosing **burial instead of cremation** is a very valuable contribution we can each make to reducing carbon emissions, as well as fuel use and pollution. If you'd like a copy of our Sustainable Funeral Choices, let us know.

Renovating the Meadow While creating a wildflower meadow takes a certain amount of skill and hard work, keeping it fresh is another task. Our oldest meadow areas, between the Roundhouse and the South Car Park, are now 17 years old and in some areas the wildflowers are being outcompeted by grasses such as False Oat Grass and Tall Fescue. This autumn, we'll be scarifying and reseeding as part of our gentle process of renovation, to increase the biodiversity once again.

Ash Trees The process of reducing the large ash trees along the lane will continue this winter. They are old, with compacted roots beneath the lane (from increased traffic) and Ash Dieback. The trees we've planted to replace them are doing well.

News

Green Mowing We are pleased to announce that a large part of our grounds care at Sun Rising was done with our new electric rechargeable machinery this past summer. The kit is not only more eco-friendly but considerably quieter.

North Car Park Extension Some visitors may have noticed that we have widened the area of stone in the north car park extension to stop cars driving over the grass.

Picture: Field Vole by Philip Bannister

Events

Planting Weekend Saturday 12 – Sunday 13 Oct, 10 am - 3 pm. This year we hope to have plenty of native bulbs, together with our own wildflower seed packs, for families to purchase. Last year we also had over 350 wild flower perennials in pots, but the cool spring and wet summer means this year the pots are limited.

To be sure every family has a fair chance, you do need to order in advance. Let us know if you'd like to see the list of what will be available.

Note: we do not recommend planting on a grave that is less than a year old, as the earth really does need a winter to settle.

Fungi Walk Tuesday 15 Oct 10.30 – 12 noon. Fungi are such an important part of the cycle of life at the nature reserve, yet all we see of them is their fruiting bodies: mushrooms. Come and join us exploring the fungi at Sun Rising. Please book in advance.

Armistice Day Monday 11 Nov, 10.45 am. Each year we hold a gathering at the cairn to acknowledge those affected by conflict, near and far. It is a non-religious event for silence, remembrance and reflection.

Friends of Sun Rising Christmas Stall will be up in the Longhouse, Fri 6 – Sun 8 Dec and Fri 13 – Sun 15 Dec, 10 am – 3 pm. These are the dates for planting memorial trees this winter too. For planting, you need to order the tree through us by the end of October, and book a slot for one of these December days. Register at the Longhouse when you arrive for the planting.

Sun Rising Winter / Christmas Cards 2024



Christmas in the Longhouse Saturday 21 December, 11 am – 3 pm. Our Memory Tree will once again be up in the Longhouse: come and write a message, poem or prayer for a loved one, beautifully adorning our tree with memories! We are also very pleased to have Companion Voices with us in the morning: a group of singers whose aim is to bring comfort at end of life. They will be singing songs from their repertoire in the Longhouse and around the burial ground on the day.

The Friends stall will be here, with plenty of Christmas present ideas, such as jams and chutneys made from Sun Rising fruits, honey, calendars, tea towels, candles, key rings, nestboxes and more.

Christmas and New Year We are open as usual, between 8 am and 5 pm, every day over the festive period.

The Friends of Sun Rising

The Friends' AGM and Talk This year's AGM on 14 September was a lovely event. After updates on the charity, there was a talk (and quiz) on The Birds of Sun Rising.

Subscription Increase From our very first members in 2013, annual subscription has been £10. From 1 September 2024 it went up to £15. If you have a standing order set up, please do adjust it!

Christmas Cards These come in a pack of all six designs for £9, or £7.50 per pack if you buy two or more packs. They are blank so can also be used as notelets. We can send them by post for a small P&P fee.

Visitors

Christmas Wreaths and Tributes

Everything left on graves must comply with our Regulations: no wire, plastic, glue, dyes or sparkles. Wreaths stay on graves until 6 January, but anything that doesn't comply is removed immediately.

Each year we want to reduce the amount of ***pure waste*** that has to be sent to landfill: Please tell family and friends! Let's take care of the planet, reduce rubbish, keep it natural!