



# TALKIN TARN Country Park FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

## Woodland Management Work Starts

Woodland Management work has begun in the area of woodland between the toilet block and the pine woodland/island area.

For management purposes, we have divided the area into compartments with each having work carried out each year. This will be an on-going process.

Works will include: removing windblown and dangerous trees, thinning of natural regeneration favouring the native species, clearing some of the more mature invasive species such as sycamore and, also replanting of any glade areas created as part of the works.

Thinning of non-natives such as sycamore will help open up glades

allowing our native species such as oak to regenerate. Native species have a much higher value for our native wildlife.

The scotts pine area, while not truly native to this area, is in fact of great importance as a food supply to our local red squirrels and will be maintained for this reason.

Thanks to Brampton Primary School, who helped us this Autumn with collecting acorns from our woods which have now been planted in our tree nursery. These will be used for re-planting over the next few years.

The felled wood will be used as fuel on site, with smaller branches used for habitat piles or woodchip for paths.

This work is essential to

maintain the valuable wildlife habitat in our woodlands and to ensure that it remains a safe and pleasant place to enjoy a walk.

Proposals are currently being investigated into planting some new areas of woodland at Talkin Tarn. This is to link up some of our existing smaller woodland areas such as Sluice Wood and Roman Wood. We are applying for grant funding bids for this work and a proposed planting plan is underway. If everything goes to plan, this work is likely to start this winter.

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## Autumn / Early Winter Wildlife Reports - by David Pearson

Winter has arrived as expected, wet, windy and icy cold. We continue to feed the birds and keep the site as tidy as possible, removing leaves it seems every day. The swan cygnets are flying and we have outside swan visitors, all actively chased, eventually, off site by our resident male. Sixteen Teal were recorded, which is unusual, with eighteen Wigeon being sited on the 18 September. Gossander have been occurring in odd pairs, and the first Brambling was heard on 6 October.

The Brambling, *Fringilla montifringilla*, is a small perching bird in the finch family Fringillidae. Bramblings mostly eat seeds. It is migratory; wintering in southern Europe, north Africa, north India, northern Pakistan, China and Japan. Occasionally, we can have up to 350 on site in large flocks feeding on the beech mast. In Europe, it forms large flocks in the winter, sometimes with thousands or even millions

of birds in a single flock. Such large gatherings occur especially if beech mast is abundant. Bramblings do not require beech mast in the winter, but winter flocks of Bramblings seek it out as a preferred food. They often flock with Chaffinch in the winter. The Wigeon are slowly building up and have reached 50 this month and will continue to increase.

The number of Mallards on the Tarn is slowly increasing with 173 recorded in October. We are currently keeping track of the numbers of red and grey squirrels that are sighted at the Tarn. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Let us know if you see any squirrels, either red or grey, on the site.

With the help of the volunteer team, we have been working on the willow hide on the west side of the Tarn. We have removed the long shoots from the top of the hide and planted them back in at the bottom of the structure and woven them in. This

reduces the risk of damage from the wind and means that the hide will become a lot stronger and denser as the new shoots begin to sprout. In about three years time, the hide should be back to its former glory.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all site staff.

### Stop Press—Recent heavy snowfall at the Tarn.

We will do our best to clear and grit the entrance drive as a priority each morning. Where time and grit supplies allow we will also clear a route around the car park.

The Tarn circular path is likely to become compacted and icy. Take care.



Brambling

## Goodbye Hilda

Hilda, one of the cooks at Talkin Tarn Boathouse Tearoom is retiring after 12 years and will be much missed by the staff and regulars at Talkin Tarn. In the last few years, she has been working part-time passing on her skills to newer staff. Her baking has helped keep the tearoom supplied with delicious homemade cakes for all these years. Thank you and best wishes for your retirement. Our other cook Julie will be continuing the good work.

## Welcome Jack

Jack has now been working alongside us since July and many of you will have seen him around the site. He will be with us for another six months before returning to Bangor University to complete his studies. Already, Jack has completed training in strimming and mowers and is about to undertake his chainsaw course so he can help us with the woodland management work this winter.



Jack

## Site Updates

### Moodle Site

Our new moodle website for local schools is now up and running with over 150 local children signed up to the system. Is your child's school signed up yet? Why not ask them. It's all free and parents can access the information too.

### Rowing Club

Congratulations to the rowing club for securing funding for their new shed. Work is now well underway on this and likely to be completed by February.

### Aeration System

The aeration system has now been turned off for the winter but will be put back on again, if we get frozen over to help maintain open pools for the birds.

### Orchid Fence

The fence and new steps are all now in place. Monitoring of the area will continue annually to assess the effectiveness of the fence.

### Weed Removal

Site staff and volunteers have been removing the weed from Sandy Bay. This is very labour intensive and work will continue over the next few months to remove the remains of the summer weed and the leaf fall.

### Leaf Removal

Site staff have been working in the car park every few days over the last month or so to remove the vast amount of leaves that drop into the car park every autumn.

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## Who Uses the Water

There are a large range of groups who use Talkin Tarn throughout the year. Water sports, in particular, is very popular. The oldest group is the Rowing Club who have used the site for over 150 years.

On Monday evenings through the summer, you can find Carlisle Model Boat club sailing their range of model boats on the Tarn. Also local Triathlete clubs come down and use the site during the early evening for their open water swimming practice. Carlisle Tri and Hexham based One Life are the two groups who have permission to train here.

Tuesday evenings and Sunday

afternoons, Brampton Sailing Club use the water for sailing. Some Saturday afternoons you'll find them racing a course around the Tarn.

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings, you'll find the Rowing Club racing up and down the Tarn practicing for their heavy programme of summer racing regattas.

The new boathouse facility, which is fast taking shape, has new modern facilities. The club



hopes to expand its membership and range of boats.

If your interested in joining any of the groups, their websites are listed below where you will find their full contact information.

### Rowing Club

<http://www.talkintarnarc.com/>

### Sailing Club

<http://bramptonsc.webs.com/>

### Triathletes

<http://www.carlisle-tri.com/>

<http://www.oneliferacing.co.uk/>

### Model Boat Club

Contact Jack Webster

**01228 564050**

# Boathouse Tearoom Update - by Heather Thomlinson

## Winter Opening Hours

**December - February** Takeaway service only from downstairs on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Thursdays, Fridays Saturdays and Sundays, Main Tearoom open

Weekends takeaway service **and** Main Tearoom are open.

Opening Hours 10.30am—4pm

## Christmas Opening Hours

**Closed** Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day.

All other days during school holidays Main Tearoom **and** takeaway service open.

## Waiter/Waitressing Staff Required at Talkin Tarn Tearooms

Part time hours on a rota and on a casual basis.

Must be over 16 years old or over

For further information call Heather Thomlinson (Tearoom Manager)

Tel: **016977 41050**

## Floor Re-varnish

The Tearoom has just had its floor sanded and re-varnished. It gets a vast amount of wear and needs re-doing every few years. We have gone for a lighter brighter look this time, rather than the usual dark stain.

## Christmas Meals

Christmas meals are available in the tearoom during December. These must be booked in advance please call the Tearoom for a menu or to make a booking.

## Events

### Santas Grotto

Come and fill up on Christmas cheer at our very own Grotto.

Santa will be available to visit between 11am and 3pm on Saturday and Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> December.

Bring along letters to Santa and receive an early Christmas present.

Cost £2.95/child.



Santa's grotto will be amongst an enchanted woodland, magically created in the Alex Boathouse at Talkin Tarn

## Weekend Volunteers

Come and give us a hand to look after the Park, get some exercise, fresh air and make new friends at the same time.

Our Weekend Volunteer Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month, from 10am to 3.30pm. Wear old clothes and bring a packed lunch.

Call the site office for more details.

**Talkin Tarn Country Park  
Tarn Road  
Brampton  
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CA8 1HN**

Phone Site Office:  
**016977 3129**

Photography by: Fiona Shipp  
*Brambling © Debbie Bozkurt*

This leaflet is available in alternative formats please call Talkin Tarn Site Office—  
**016977 3129**