The Norfolk Trails team have been working really hard over the past 12 months improving access across the county and have delivered a number of projects successfully.

Part of the Trails remit is to promote countryside access and provide information for more people to be able to access and better understand the Trails network.

To this end, we have created a “Trails Tube Map”. We tweeted this over Christmas and it has since reached over 50,000 people - one of our team received a tweet about it from New Zealand!

EXCLUSIVE OFFER: Volunteers are eligible for a free copy (saving you £2.50), just pick one up next time you're out with us on a volunteer day! There are loads of volunteering opportunities coming up, read on to find out more!
One of our Volunteers, Val, has completed a number of reports on one of her circular walks at Salthouse.

We have programmed the work into our Winter work programme and have been able to complete the re-signing of the route before the walking season starts again.

It’s incredibly helpful for our volunteers to report any issues, so that the trails team can get out and carry out repairs as a result of the reports.

Over the past year, we have repaired the handrail at Beeston Bump and have further improvements planned for this stretch of the coast path. We have dealt with over 50 fallen trees during the Winter period from the Nar Valley Way through to Hopton-on-Sea, from Boudicca Way to Brancaster, so really the whole length and breadth of the Norfolk Trails network.

Each and every volunteer report has a value and we do try to put a financial value on each report we receive. This helps us with applying for external funding which helps in turn with improving the Norfolk Trails network. So a huge thank you for all of our volunteers that have helped out over the past 12 months!

www.norfolk.gov.uk/volunteering
BOUDICCA WAY SIGNAGE  by Jack Davidson

Over the past few weeks, the team have been working really hard in South Norfolk on Boudicca Way, and we’ve now replaced all the signage between Diss and Tyrell’s Wood.

The next stretch of signage is on order and once arrived we will be installing this, heading north from Tyrells Wood.

When the project is complete, we will have installed more than 125 signs on the Boudicca Way.

Keep up to date with our progress on Facebook and Twitter!

www.norfolk.gov.uk/ boudicccaway

NORFOLK WALKING & CYCLING FESTIVAL  by Drew Middleton

It may only be February, but we’re already starting to plan for this years Norfolk Walking and Cycling Festival, taking place throughout October 2018.

As part of the HLF Funded Marriott’s Way Heritage Trail project, we have big plans for a number of guided walks, talks and cycle rides across the Marriott’s Way! We’ll also be incorporating a range of Heritage Open Days into our festival programme too.

To add to the festivities, Cromer Walkers are Welcome will be hosting the National Walkers Are Welcome annual general conference with 110 Walkers Are Welcome towns and villages invited to attend. Cromer WAW will be putting on variety of led walks showcasing the best of this part of the county.

We will also be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the North Norfolk Coast with events taking part in the this beautiful landscape.

The festival programme will be available from May 2018. If you’re interested in hosting an event, please contact us on norfolktrails@norfolk.gov.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!

www.norfolkwalkingfestival.co.uk
You’re invited to Norfolk’s fourth Walking & Cycling Festival. Throughout October, there will be events for all ages and abilities.

www.norfolkwalkingfestival.co.uk

Programme of events to be released May 2018.
Matt & I have been working with Norfolk Trails as Year in Industry students since July, meaning we’re just over half way through our placement here!

The YII student role is really varied, and no two days are ever the same, which makes it difficult to describe “my typical day at work”. We’ve been able to get involved with such a range of jobs, almost everything you read in this newsletter we’ve helped out with.

The best thing I find with this job (as I did with conservation volunteering) is being able to see a project through from start to finish. Seeing the difference your work makes definitely makes the role extremely rewarding!

My favourite project so far has to be the Norfolk Coast Path Junior Passport. It’s the first time Norfolk Trails has done something like this for kids, and we’ve received some great feedback! It’s given us as YII students an opportunity to work along the stunning coast path between Hunstanton and Cromer. We’ve put some information on our website at www.norfolk.gov.uk/juniorpassport if you’d like to find out more.

Part of my role is to keep our social media updated. I find this really interesting because you get a real sense of how much work we do across Norfolk when it’s all collated onto our Facebook and Twitter accounts!

Matt and I often say that choosing to take a year out from university to work is the best decision we’ve made. It’s also great for our academic work as we’re both now doing our dissertation projects on topics related to the Norfolk Trails.

If you have any questions about our work or about the Year in Industry programme, just email us at norfolktrails@norfolk.gov.uk.
We have been auditing the length of Marriott's Way to support people accessing the trail. To audit the whole of Marriott’s Way, we divided the trail into ten short walks and have identified potential accessibility difficulties people may encounter on each route. To carry out the audits we have had help from Active Trails and The Dragons (Disability Real Action Group of Norfolk) who have been out with us in all kinds of weather. Both groups have been so helpful in giving us a different perspective on accessibility issues on Norfolk trails.

With the information we have gathered from these audits we have created access tested booklets. The booklets will make the accessibility information we have collected about Marriott's Way and other trails available to the public online. We are also hoping that the booklets will help people with accessibility difficulties who are planning a walk around the Norfolk countryside much easier. We have almost completed our auditing of Marriott’s Way, so look out for the booklets with the access tested logo that will be available online soon.

#MWHeritageTrail
### North Walsham conservation group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Site Meeting Point at 1 pm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 7th February</td>
<td>Honing Old Station (Briggate)</td>
<td>A gated community? Not here - all welcome for restoring the old station gates!</td>
<td>Weavers Way car park, Station Road between Meeting House Hill Road and Corner Common Road, Briggate, near Honing, NR28 9QX (TG316276).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 14th February</td>
<td>Pigneys Wood</td>
<td>Nowhere to hide? Dismantling an unsafe old bird hide, and reusing the timbers.</td>
<td>Pigneys Wood nature reserve car park, Hall Lane, Knapton, NR28 0SH (TG 296 321). [Please note NOT the Hall Lane in North Walsham].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 28th February</td>
<td>Pigneys Wood</td>
<td>The old ways are the best – but this ancient trackway is clogged with blackthorn which we need to remove.</td>
<td>Pigneys Wood nature reserve car park, Hall Lane, Knapton, NR28 0SH (TG 296 321). [Please note NOT the Hall Lane in North Walsham].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mid Norfolk conservation group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Where to meet us at 11.15am</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 2nd February</td>
<td>Longham</td>
<td>Mud, mud, glorious mud! Continuing with path clearing and opening up the ponds.</td>
<td>Site entrance (small driveway near white cottage about halfway between Chapel Road and Roofing Merchant’s yard), on Hoe Road, Longham, NR19 2RP (TG944160). Parking at Village Hall nearby on Chapel Lane. Bring wellies and perhaps some spare clothing just in case!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 9th February</td>
<td>Mayfields Farm</td>
<td>Hedging our bets? Clearing an overgrown hedge by the wood and putting netting on the boardwalk.</td>
<td>Mayfields Farm car park, Reepham Road (between Peddlars Turnpike and Kerdiston Road), Foulsham, NR20 5PS (TG 053 245). WC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 16th February</td>
<td>Foxley Wood</td>
<td>Coppicing: Another chance to get acquainted with Hazel and her friends Holly, Cherry and Honey(suckle)!</td>
<td>Foxley Wood nature reserve – 1st (most northerly) car park after public entrance, Themelthorpe Road, Foxley, NR20 4QR (TG 049 229).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 23rd February</td>
<td>Gressenhall</td>
<td>If you go down to the woods today ...... you can make habitat piles and bug hotels in the Centenary Wood! New site.</td>
<td>Main car park at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, Gressenhall, Dereham, NR20 4DR. (TF975170)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have been lucky enough to spend a lot of time on a particularly lovely section of the Little Ouse Path - from the little white “Dad’s Army” bridge at Santon Downham where the riverbank path hugs the River Little Ouse as it meanders its way through the wonderful Breckland landscape linking Santon Downham to Brandon.

Over the last 3 years we have worked with partners on the Breaking New Ground project undertaking various access improvements at this particular location including the installation of new signage, the replacement of pedestrian concrete steps with newly created bridleway steps opening up the route to horse riders, and more recently the final piece of the jigsaw has been the re-surfacing of a short section of the path significantly improving the route for walkers and riders alike.

This very popular route was narrow, uneven, slippery with tree roots, and sometimes flooded making it very difficult if not almost impossible to walk at times, but now it has been transformed!

As the route runs through a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area (SPA) the wildlife here is extraordinary – water voles, otters, kingfishers and rare birds all share this wonderful environment and we had to ensure that this major work had minimum impact. It took at least 8 months to obtain the required permissions working with both Natural England and the Environment Agency making sure that all bases were covered and the habitat respected. It then took another 3 months for our contractor to complete.
There are a number of opportunities with Norfolk Trails to get involved, helping us carry out work to improve the routes for its users. Earlier this month, a volunteer helped us to replace the bridge that had collapsed at Litcham Common. This is a great way to get outside and help our team to improve access, in this case providing a route for walkers and preventing a dangerous potential health and safety issue.

Along with this work, we have worked with volunteers at Lenwade on the Marriott’s Way and will have a number of other chances to work with us in the near future. Look out for more chances to volunteer in the newsletter and on Facebook & Twitter.
Since October, we have been out with nurture groups from Framingham Earl and Aylsham High Schools three times, the students braving cold and wet to work on a whole range of tasks. Back in October, Framingham Earl pupils undertook clearance work at Hellesdon with the Norwich Fringe Project, stripping ivy and overgrowth from the historic platform and burning the waste material. Just before Christmas, a second group returned to Hellesdon, this time on a mission to help birds survive the winter. Collecting a range of wreath-making supplies (pictured), they began by crafting festive wreaths. This collection process was only briefly paused for some competitive zipwiring. Back at school, the students used lard and birdseed to create a fatty mixture that they stuffed into pine cones to embellish the wreaths, or rolled into fat balls to provide some avian nutrition through the colder months.

January saw the first session of the academic year with Aylsham High School’s nurture group, who dove straight into an exploration of Marriott’s Way in spite of undeniably icy temperatures. The idea of this session was to focus on establishing a plan of action for the upcoming months, gathering ideas from the group about how this part of the path could be made better for everyone. After a brief introduction, the pupils ate their lunch under tree cover, scaling said tree fairly soon after. Walking along from the Tesco end, the pupils talked animatedly about their ideas for improvements and made notes as they went. Proving that you don’t need access to a zipwire for some good (not so clean) fun, a muddy bank along the route was instantaneously transformed into a slide, with the kids inventing ever more dramatic ways to descend as staff recalled the same spot last year alive with burrowing bees. Once the short stretch to Mileham Drive was travelled, we made our way back to the start to work in groups on SWOT analyses of the area. I was, as always, thoroughly impressed by the creativity and engagement of the group and can’t wait to start working with them regularly on Marriott’s Way. If you’re a regular user of the path in Aylsham, keep your eyes peeled for changes, and feel free to get in touch with any ideas of your own.

www.marriottsway.info
Reformative Pruning Workshop, 10:00 - 15:00, Saturday 3rd February 2018, Wandlebury Country Park, Stapleford, Cambridge, CB22 3AE Learn how to prune and re-shape fruit trees (apples and pears) that have been neglected in their early years. Plan for future pruning work and how to manage growth resulting from previous pruning work. Tree age 6-30 years. Led by Bob Lever, orchard enthusiast and experienced trainer. [https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u](https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u)

Restorative Pruning Workshop, 10:00 - 15:00, Sunday 4th February 2018, Tewin Orchard, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Tewin, AL6 0LY Learn how to renovate and prune old apple trees to encourage longevity, improve stability, and encourage growth in the right place. Tree age 50 years and upwards. Led by Bob Lever, orchard enthusiast and experienced trainer. Open to people with some understanding of pruning apple and pear trees. [https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u](https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u)

Formative Pruning Workshop, 10:00 - 13:30, Saturday 10th February 2018, Metfield Community Orchard, Metfield, Suffolk, IP20 0JY Learn how to prune to create specific tree forms – standard, half-standard, bush, multi-stem. Problem solving: tree predators and sward management, and how they might determine your tree form and advanced techniques. Tree age 1-5 years. Led by Bob Lever, orchard enthusiast and experienced trainer. [https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u](https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u)

Grafting Workshop, 10:00 - 16:00, Saturday 10th February 2018, Foxburrow Farm, Saddlemakers Lane, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1NA Led by Paul Read, of Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group and Orchards East. Following a talk on the propagation of fruit trees and demonstrations of grafting, participants will be able to try “bench grafting” for several hours, principally using the whip-and-tongue method. Paul will demonstrate other methods, and other propagation techniques will be discussed. [https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u](https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u)

Restorative Pruning Workshop, 10:00 - 15:00, Sunday 11th February 2018, Rummer’s Lane orchard, Wisbech St. Mary, Cambridgeshire Learn how to renovate and prune old apple trees to encourage longevity, improve stability, and encourage growth in the right place. Tree age 50 years and upwards. Led by Bob Lever, orchard enthusiast and experienced trainer. Open to people with some understanding of pruning apple and pear trees. [https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u](https://tinyurl.com/y87ukv9u)

