

March Newsletter

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 Monkton Nature Reserve





Upcoming events:



Nourishing Sound Bath - 8th March

Sunni will start this immersive sensory experience with a short meditation, followed by a bath of soothing vibrations, so you can drift on the waves of sound into a beautifully dreamy state of being. [Tickets for this event are found on Whitstable Yoga and Wellbeing Centre's website](#)

Forest Bathing - 16th March

Here, Vicki provides a solution to the ‘tech-boom’ burnout and to inspire people to reconnect with, and protect the country's forests.

Equinox Alchemy Afternoon - 22nd March

Celebrate the Real New Year and bring in the brighter months with Joe’s family afternoon event aimed at maximising health, wellness and personal success!

Nature Wellness Immersion - 29th March

Sarah’s event is for teenage daughters and mothers to be in nature, learn about the moon’s cycles and how they can help women's health, natural ways to reduce anxiety and a nature walk.

Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing - 30th March

TMW is a specially developed sequence of movements taken from Tai Chi and Qi Gong and made more accessible, promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing. Lesley offers this as a drop in-session or as a course.

[Book your place on our website](#)

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*Tickets for this event are found on Whitstable Yoga and Wellbeing Centre’s website.
To book your places for any of these events, please head to our website's events page – <https://monkton-reserve.org/events/>.



Events

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•Forest Bathing [16/03] ~ “Here, Vicki provides a solution to the ‘tech-boom’ burnout and to inspire people to reconnect with and protect the country’s forests”

•Equinox Alchemy Afternoon [22/03] ~ “Celebrate the Real New Year and bring in the brighter months with Joe’s family afternoon event aimed at maximising health, wellness, and personal success!”





Membership Subscriptions

At the quarterly meeting of our trustees at the end of February, we made the difficult decision to raise our Membership Subscription fees from April 1st. Whilst we all appreciate that we're in the midst of the 'cost of living crisis', we've had to take into account our ever-rising expenses to keep our wonderful reserve and facilities in a welcoming and safe condition. As a not-for-profit charity, we have to raise funds for everything that we offer to members, the local community and our conservation and education activities. The new annual subscriptions will be: –

Family £30

Joint £25

Single £20

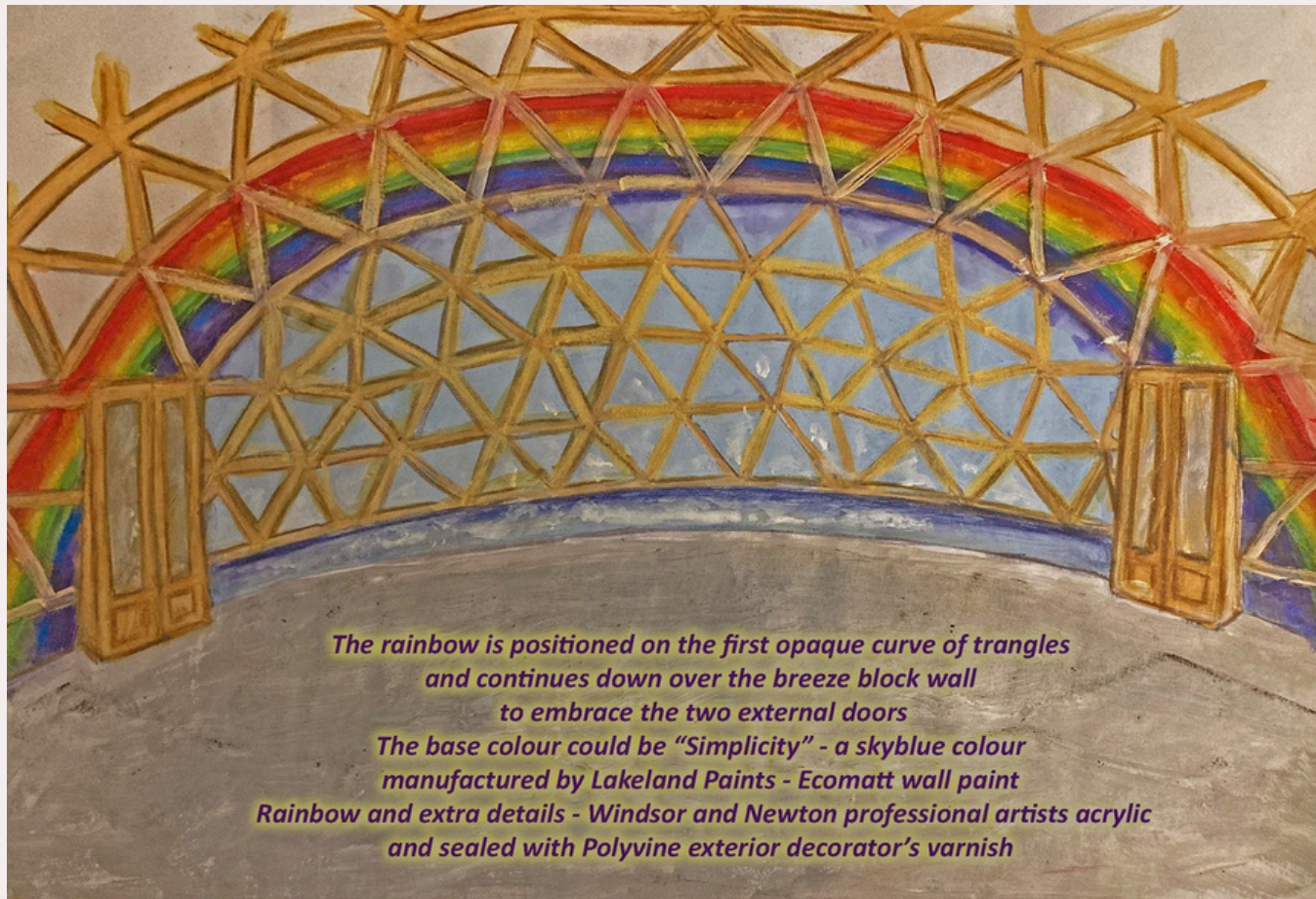


We hope that you will still regard this as good value; it is our first increase since 2016 and we hope that you will renew your membership this year. The main benefits of membership include reduced rates, early notification of events and activities, and free entry to the reserve on all opening days throughout the year.



Brightening up the Dome!

Work will start soon on some 'decorating'! Local artist Annie Begley, a member and creator of our wonderful sculpture trails, has put forward a superb creative design for the interior panels of the Dome. Visitors will soon be welcomed by a beautiful rainbow that will provide a finishing touch to the structure; many people have admired and commented on the artwork on our storage containers and on the outdoor signage around the reserve, also produced by Annie. In another development, volunteers Ray Carter and Merv Shonk have made and fitted new doors for the Dome – we are now leak-free! We thank Annie, Ray and Merv for all their superb work, alongside our other fantastic volunteers.



Widening Access to Nature

Exciting times at the Reserve....but our apologies that it's going to be messy for March!

Work began in the last week of February to provide wheelchair-friendly access into the middle of the lower reserve; the new pathway will offer full access to the Environmental Education Centre for wheelchairs, buggies, prams, etc., and there will be two new observation decks overlooking the key habitats of the Dragonfly Pond and our chalk grassland. The contract is being carried out by local firm Albion Fencing and Construction and we anticipate that everything will be complete in time for the Easter holidays. Funding was generously supplied by the National Lottery Community Fund, Thanet Community Lotto and the Bernard Sunley Foundation; we thank these donors and all our supporters for making this happen.





Nature Notes

To herald the (official!) start of spring, no fewer than five flowering plants burst into life on 1st March! Daisy, Red deadnettle, Lesser celandine, Groundsel and Green alkanet joined Primrose, Daffodil, Blackthorn, Sweet Violet and Snowdrop as early harbingers of better weather ahead! An old favourite, the 7-spot ladybird was seen on the same day.

Several birds not seen regularly on the reserve made welcome appearances in recent weeks; Green and Great-spotted woodpeckers have been active and a pair of Long-tailed tits seem to be setting up a territory close to the Visitor Centre. A Song thrush was heard singing in late February; once one of our commoner garden birds, this species has seen a decline since the 1970s, with a halving of the population in that period. It seems that many young birds are not surviving after fledging and this may be due to insufficient food being available.



Our first butterfly of the year, a Red admiral, was spotted on 6th February – this is the earliest ever butterfly recorded on the reserve. Sadly, it is unlikely to have survived very long as these early emergers can struggle to find enough nectar from the few flowers available to provide their energy needs. Red admirals are one of several British butterflies that can over-winter as adults; whereas most butterfly life cycles involve either very short summer lifespans as adults in the summer, or overwintering in juvenile stages, Red admirals 'hunker down' in nooks and crannies to survive the cold winter months.

