

Surrey Wildlife Trust Trainees Day July 2008



Volunteers from howell jones solicitors prepare meadow for rare cattle

From left to right:

*Nick Ball Clare Joyson
Danielle O'Malley Elsie Lyford*

On a grey wet day early in July five volunteers from the Surrey legal firm, howell jones solicitors, deserted their desks to get their hands dirty clearing shrub and brambles for the Surrey Wildlife Trust.

They were preparing a six acre field on Brentmoor Heath, near Camberley for a new herd of rare Belted Galloway cattle.

The volunteers from howell jones offices in Kingston, Walton-on-Thames and Guildford teamed up to help an SWT ranger prepare the ground for a three strand electric fence. This will keep the cattle in and marauding dogs out.

Elsie Lyford, a trainee in the commercial and property department in Guildford, said: "It's important to do this kind of thing to help the environment and learn something. It'll be fantastic when the fence is up and there's nothing nicer than seeing cows mooch around!"

Nick Ball, a trainee in company and commercial, added: "I'm doing this because I want to learn more about the environment and give something back to the community. Despite public perceptions of us being a stuffy lot, lawyers in fact are just normal people.

"It's also a good way to mix with colleagues from other howell jones offices in Surrey, whom I wouldn't normally see on a daily basis."

Danielle O'Malley from the Kingston office, said: "I've just joined the Surrey Wildlife Trust as a great thing to do with my 7 year-old-daughter so she can learn about and appreciate the countryside.

"I also wanted to do my bit to help the environment and take in the peace of the outdoors."

Walton-on-Thames based Clare Joyson from the Family Team said: "It's so nice to do something completely different, help out and to see the other lawyers from other howell jones offices."

The project will have two benefits: return cows to grazing after many years, and with their help, expose the ground to allow flora to flourish. This will include com-spotted orchids, bog asphodel flowers and sun-dew plants which eat flies.

So how did they fare? "Well, they certainly got wet," says Scotty Dodd, the SWT ranger, who supervised the day. "But they were fantastic and weren't put off by the rain.

"They worked really hard, and I left them to their own devices as they worked naturally as a team. Some raked and some forked on to the drag nets and together we finished more than I expected. I'd certainly have them back!"