

# Adopt Hurst Park at East Molesey



## **The Setting**

Hurst Park was laid out in the 1970s following the closure of the Hurst Park racecourse and the development of the adjacent Hurst Park estate. The popular and well used open space is formed of a mature riverside garden with lines of chestnut trees and access to the river at the Sadlers Ride car park. Upstream is a large open space with imaginative interpretation. Beyond the riverside is a large area of meadowland with emerging pockets of woodland and gravel paths.

## **The Challenge**

To maintain this precious and varied environment takes considerable work, much of which has been carried out by the Thames Landscape Strategy. Of particular importance is tree and scrub management that until quite recently saw many stretches of the riverbank covered in scrub which blocked views to the water from the towpath. Invasive species such as hypericum and Himalayan balsam can be a problem. In the pockets of woodland that have been planted in the park, brambles need to be managed. An area dedicated to wildlife has been created adjacent to an area of mature trees that now supports stag beetles and nesting birds.

## **The Opportunity**

Volunteers could be used to manage the riverside, working to a 5-year coppice regime. Due to the sensitive ecology of the riverside, the best conservation option to manage the scrub and encourage a diverse ecology is through the use of volunteers using hand tools. Volunteers would be expected to work alongside staff and pay-back workers from the community narrowboat Swingbridge II. Access from the water is essential in this reach, the boat also provides a useful base for refreshments and toilet facilities.

Sponsorship opportunities exist – please contact the TLS at the address below.