The winter months have been busy with several projects taking place, many of which have been funded by partner organisations. Visitors to Wirral Country Park have had to put up with the usual hedgerow flail cutting taking place alongside contractors working on the last section of the Wirral Way Widening and Safety Improvements Scheme. Contractors have also been removing vegetation from the Wirral Way bridges allowing them to inspect the 150 year old brickwork and to carry out any necessary re-pointing and other structural repairs. New and reinstated surfaced paths have been installed as part of the Dee Cliffs Site Management Agreement and although this has meant a lot of vehicle movement over the protected site the grassland will recover and the new paths will allow future maintenance with vehicular access directly from the Wirral Way and so reducing the effects of compaction erosion which features in an article on page 8 of this newsletter. The Site Management Agreement also included reinstatement of the cliff top ditch with the soil that was removed remaining within the protected Site of Special Scientific Interest and used to create an embankment for a wider path suitable for prams, wheelchairs and mobility scooters to be constructed. We hope that reinstatement of the grassland; with removal of invasive woody vegetation, levelling uneven areas, the new surfaced paths and the planned regular grass cutting, will result in the site going from the Natural England site classification ‘Unfavourable - No Change’ to ‘Unfavourable - Recovering’ and eventually to ‘Favourable’ by the end of the five year improvements programme. Wirral Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society have funded construction of a safer access route for all users (featured on page 3) and the Wirral Autistic Society have secured monies from the West Wirral Constituency Fund to extend an area for new seating to be installed adjacent to the Visitor Centre Pond and to create new barbecue stands. The Friends of North Wirral Coastal Park continue to make access improvements and a joint project with Leasowe Golf Club has reinstated the long post and rail boundary fence from the Gunsite to Leasowe Bay. New vehicle height barriers have been installed to help reduce fly tipping and overnight parking and dune restoration work will continue to ensure the survival of this important habitat. On Hilbre the Friends have been ‘spring cleaning’ ready for the usual busy summer months on the islands. Volunteer Coastal Wardens will be in residence throughout the summer months assisting visitors and helping with delivery of the Rangers events programme which will be available on-line shortly at www.wirral.gov.uk.
The 2015 Wirral Walking Festival

There are 127 walks planned to take place as part of this year’s Wirral Walking Festival in May. The Wirral Ramblers and Wirral Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society have once again made a fantastic contribution to the walks calendar. The Wirral Ramblers have included their evening walks (don’t forget to take some money as they often end up in a pub afterwards!) and the Wirral Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society have introduced a series of ‘Stroller Walks’, which are one hour walks avoiding step over stiles that some people find difficult negotiating. The Wirral Autistic Society have several Ranger-led walks around the new Port Sunlight River Park. John Bullen, from the Long Distance Walkers Association, will be leading a series of four walks to cover the 36 mile Wirral Circular Trail and Robin Eley Jones, from Wirral 3Ls will be leading three Photographic Walks where he will be offering tips on how to get the best out of your digital camera. Wirral History and Heritage Association members will be leading walks around Flaybrick Cemetery and some of Wirral’s historic villages and this year the walks calendar includes the Nordic Walking sessions that start at West Kirby Concourse Leisure Centre and are organised by Wirral Sports Development. Another Wirral Sports Development led activity that is included in the brochure is ‘Run in Wirral’ (it’s like walking only faster). Two ‘Heritage Bike Rides’ (it’s like walking only sitting down) organised by Sustrans also feature in this year festival to promote the organisations role in championing sustainable transport. The 28 page 2015 Wirral Walking Festival Brochures are available FREE from all Wirral libraries, sport centres, one-stop shops, GP surgeries, and from Birkenhead Park Pavilion and the Wirral Country Park Visitor Centre at Thurstaston.

Alternatively the brochure can be viewed and downloaded at www.visitwirral.com

Comments from the 2014 Walking Festival Feedback Forms:

“An enjoyable walk around the village with a pleasant group”

“This event was absolutely brilliant. The enthusiasm of the many experts, particularly the Ranger leader Matt, enhanced the occasion. It was wonderful to have so many experts around, and despite visiting Hilbre several times before, I came away with a much increased knowledge of the island and respect for the wildlife and surroundings. Thank you very much for a wonderful evening”

“The walk was fantastic and the knowledge of the leader was very good”

“The walking festival is a fantastic idea and will definitely be trying more next year.....”
A brand new path at Wirral Country Park, Thurstaston, links the overflow car park to the Wirral Way. The path is fully accessible for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs and bikes. Previously, visitors had to cross Station Road to access the Wirral Way and the Visitor Centre from the overflow car park. Councillor Chris Meaden, Wirral Council’s Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture said: “This work is another positive example of the Council working in partnership with the community. It has been made possible thanks to funding from Wirral Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society and completes the link to the Visitor Centre started two years ago, again with funding from the same group, who have now contributed over £4,000 to ensure that our award-winning park is accessible to all. The new path under Station Road Bridge now means that visitors don’t have to cross the road to get access onto the Wirral Way or to the other facilities at Wirral Country Park.”

The path is named ‘Max Kirby Way’ in memory of the past President of Wirral Footpaths Society who died last year at the age of 92. Always a lover of the countryside, Max joined the Society in 1984 as Footpath Inspector for South Wirral. His seemingly endless energy and enthusiasm saw him walking all the footpaths in his area at least once a year, attending stakeholder meetings and producing walks leaflets which were sold to raise funds for the Society. Max went on to produce two booklets – Walking on Wirral Footpaths and Walking on South Wirral Footpaths. With each book giving detailed descriptions of 20 walks, Max helped countless visitors experience some of the delights of Wirral. Max also served the Society as Publicity Officer and Map Librarian. In 2000, he was made President, a position he held until his death. In 2007 the Wirral Society presented him with the Keith Davidson Award as Wirral’s Environmentalist of the Year. Ever generous, Max donated his prize money, dividing it between the Footpaths Society Sculpture Trail project in Eastham Country Park and the Willaston Wildflower Meadow. Multi-talented Max was a keen photographer and painter. Some of Max’s watercolours have been turned into greetings cards – another fundraiser for the Society. Susanne Christian current Publicity Officer said ‘I think Max would be delighted to have a path named after him especially one that improves access to the countryside so more people can experience and enjoy it. Wirral Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society was founded in 1888, to ‘preserve, maintain and defend’ Wirral’s footpaths and open spaces. 127 years later we are still going strong – and the creation of Max Kirby Way shows that we have modern concerns which are very much at the heart of what we do’.

For more information on the Society email info@wirralfootpaths.org.uk or visit www.wirralfootpaths.org.uk

A gradient of 1:15 was achieved making the path suitable for wheelchair users

The ‘Max Kirby Way’ leading from the car park onto the Wirral Way and along the old station platform to the Visitor Centre
The Big Arty Beach Clean
Article by Emily Cunningham Tidal Dee Catchment Partnership Officer

This Valentine’s Day saw volunteers of all ages loving Thurstaston Beach as part of a beach clean with a difference...

Together, we cleared a trailer full of litter from over a mile of beach. Then, with the help of Shore Cottage Studios, some of the litter we found was weaved into a huge sculpture of a Common Skate; which is now proudly displayed at the Wirral Country Park Visitor Centre in Thurstaston. We also ran a short session on litter surveying, collecting valuable data on the types of beach litter found over a 100m transect. Our survey documented the usual suspects: plastic fragments, crisp packets, plastic cutlery, sanitary items and cigarette butts, as well as a lone shoe and a toy plane! Unfortunately marine litter is a global problem and our beautiful Wirral beaches are no exception. As well as blighting beaches, marine litter injures or kills over 100 million sea creatures every year! But where does marine litter come from? Surprisingly not the sea! Around 80% of litter found on our beaches is land borne, consisting of general litter, sewage related debris and industrial waste. Globally, it is estimated that around 8 million pieces of litter enter our seas every single day. It’s a big problem, so it’ll take every single one of us to solve it…

- **Put in the bin or take it home with you!**
  No matter where you are, if there’s no bin - take it home!

- **Think before you flush**
  Only flush the 3 P’s: Pee, Poo and Paper.
  Everything else, including face wipes and cotton buds, should go in the bin.

- **Do a 2 minute beach clean / street clean!**
  Next time you’re on the beach or on the street, take 2 minutes to pick up the rubbish you see. If we all did so, the problem would disappear overnight…

Thank you to Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Shore Cottage Studios, The New Brighteners, the Wirral Council Rangers and all those that came along for their support on the day. To join organised litter picking activities on the Wirral, check out The New Brighteners on facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/thenewbrighteners
For further information, please contact the event organiser ecunningham@cheshirewt.org.uk
Save our seas with a letter!

The Government is asking for your views on 23 areas being considered as Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in English seas.

Did you know that our local seas are as diverse as coral reefs? The Irish Sea supports a wealth of species from lobsters, sponges and anemones to at least 30 species of shark and 12 species of cetacean (whales, dolphins and porpoises)! But our amazing underwater wildlife is in trouble - with human activity driving an alarming decline. Designating MCZs is a vital part of better managing our seas for both wildlife and people – and we need your help to make this a reality!

Simply write a short letter to the Government with your thoughts and memories about our seas, coast and wildlife – the more personal, the better! Whether you enjoy sea angling, have fond childhood memories of rockpooling or simply agree that our marine wildlife is worth protecting, every letter makes a difference. For letter writing inspiration or to respond online, visit http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/saveMCZs

Alternatively, send your personal letter to:
Defra MCZ Team, c/o Post Room, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR.

The consultation closes on 24th April 2015, so please act today!
New Signage for The Wirral Way

Part of the Wirral Way Widening and Safety Improvements Scheme encouraged public feedback and over 130 completed questionnaires have been received in the last 12 months. Several comments were received regarding the existing signage requesting cyclists to give way to walkers and users commented that the signage was inappropriate on a route that is promoted as a multi-use access but which gives priority usage to one group over another. Wirral Council Officers will be engaging with users to agree a sign that can be used along the Wirral Way. We also hope to work with colleagues in Cheshire Countryside Management Service so that there is a uniform code of conduct along the 12 mile route. We would welcome feedback from the suggested signage and Code of Conduct that appears on this page. Please send your comments to wcp@wirral.gov.uk

Draft Code of Conduct

All Users

- Where different paths or sides of the path are signed for different user groups – please keep to your side
- If you are in a group, please do not walk, run or ride across the whole width of the path, leave space for others to pass you easily
- Take great care where the Wirral Way crosses or follows roads
  - Take all your litter home

Dog Owners

- Please clean up after your pet – dog mess spoils the use of the park for all users and poses health risks
- Keep your dog under close control at all times – preferably on a short lead
- Please keep your dog on a lead around the Thurstaston Visitor Centre

Horse Riders

- Use only the side of the Wirral Way where horses are allowed
- Do not use the Wirral Way unless you can control your horse – you may encounter walkers, people using wheelchairs and scooters, cyclists, dogs or maintenance teams and their vehicles
  - Do not canter or gallop along the Wirral Way

Horse Riders and Cyclists

- Warn others when you approach so you do not startle people as you pass by – call politely or use a bell
- Slow down when approaching other users who are unpredictable, particularly children or animals; remember too, some people may have a hearing impairment
  - Helmets and high visibility clothing will add to your safety
  - Please ride in single file on narrow sections

Cyclists

- Must not use the Wirral Way for racing competitions or speed trials
- Be careful with your speed – especially where visibility ahead is limited
North Wirral Coastal Park Height Barriers

The old vehicle height barriers at North Wirral Coastal Park are currently being replaced with wider and slightly higher galvanised barriers. Over the years the original barriers at Moreton Slipway off Leasowe Road and at The Gunsite (Green Lane) have been repaired several times and at 6'6" were stopping access to many of the 4x4 vehicles that weren’t as common when the original barriers were installed. The 6'6" height restriction has been raised to the Department of Transport recommended minimum height of 2.1metres or 6'10" and new signage will also (hopefully) reduce the number of incidents of vehicles (often fitted with roof racks) from hitting the barriers. The barriers are essential to deter fly-tipping and access to the car parks by commercial vehicles (including those used by cocklers) and to stop access by caravans and motorhomes and overnight parking.

The Dee Cliffs

The Dee Cliffs Site of Special Scientific Interest Management Agreement includes removal of woody vegetation and reinstatement of the ditch (which is an essential safety feature between the grasslands, paths and cliff edge). Further ditch reinstatement work has included excavating a section previously filled in where a set of steps were built to access the beach but which have now been removed. The excavated soil has been used to create an embankment around the ponds within the Site of Special Scientific Interest to allow a mobility path to be built and meaning that no additional material has had to be imported onto the protected site.
The ‘Mounds’ at Thurstaston

Visitors to the Thurstaston Centre over the next few weeks are advised to wear their boots as much of the adjacent grassland and unsurfaced paths are very wet! The clay-rich soil usually copes with periods of heavy or prolonged rainfall with pockets of lime-rich clay (marl) and pebble banding acting like sponges and drains. The grass mounds that cover the remains of the Second World War buildings act as reservoirs storing water which gradually seeps through the channels of marl into the adjacent ponds. (A local phenomena is seeing water pouring down the cliffs during a hot dry summer’s day suggesting that the stored water has found a porous line through the clay and is leaking out). Over the last few months Rangers and visitors have noticed exposures of the remains of the Second World War buildings throughout the grasslands. The buildings were made of reinforced concrete and were broken up as much as possible before being filled in and grassed over. The photograph above shows the extent of the buildings which were also partially filled in with household waste from Irby. One theory for the recent waterlogging is that the soil used to ‘cap’ the site (and hide the remains of the buildings when the park was constructed) has been subject to compaction erosion from the millions of visitors that have walked over the site during the last 40 years. The compaction has therefore not only exposed the old buildings but drainage through the top soil levels isn’t as good. The area of aerated and unsaturated material under the soil and above the water table is known as the ‘vadose zone’. Water percolating below this forms the ‘subcutaneous zone’ which may have porous channels (in the case of the diamicton cliffs these will be pockets of marl and pebbles deposited by ice melt). The result is a very mobile water table that is also affected at Thurstaston by a band of mixed sand and marl (lime) which has been compacted by further deposition of clay and which has formed a natural band of concrete which severely affects groundwater penetration and which is responsible for the movement of water saturated material (solifluction) sliding and rotating off the cliff edge. This ‘rotational solifluction’ occurs suddenly and at any time of year and so visitors are advised to take care when walking close to the cliffs. Whilst much of the grassland is water saturated the new surfaced paths that have been installed by the Wirral Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society and the ‘Thursday Task Force’ provide access to the Dee Cliffs, Barbecue Site and pond cluster and the new car park access has been complimented by newly resurfaced paths leading onto Station Road and GJ’s Café. New drains installed as part of the Wirral Way Widening and Safety Improvements Scheme have also been praised by park users, especially at the Heswall/Gayton section where, with logistical support from Heswall Golf Club, sections of the path that were previously subject to regular flooding have remained dry. Although the edges along this section are still bare soil we are hoping that an existing seed bank of wildflowers will develop providing more colour and diversity along the locally designated Site of Biological Importance. Unfortunately one path that we haven’t been able to improve is from the grassland along the cliffs to Tinker’s Dell. It wouldn’t be safe to work with the heavy machinery necessary to level and surface the path so close to the constantly eroding cliffs but the Rangers and volunteers will continue to undertake repairs where possible and to continue to improve access for all. (Photographs from Wirral Country Park archives).
Liverpool Geological Society presents...........

Thurstaston Rocks

Saturday 18th April
at Thurstaston Visitor Centre
Wirral Country Park

10.30am - 12.30pm
Rock and fossil identification in the Lecture Theatre
Learn about how rocks are formed and the importance of fossils
in understanding earth's history

2pm - 4pm
A guided walk along Thurstaston Beach to look at the Dee Cliffs
and the effects of glaciation

This FREE event is suitable for all the family to enjoy and
children under the age of 16 must be accompanied

NO NEED TO BOOK - JUST TURN UP!

For further information 0151 648 4371
e-mail wcp@wirral.gov.uk

Wirral Peninsula
Yet another free public Star Party across the river at the Wirral Country Park, Thurcaston recently took place at the end of March. The weather did its very best to put a cloudy, dampener on the nights events, but that did not discourage 40 hearty members of the public to come along and want to explore the fascinating science of astronomy. Society members provided several designs of telescopes to glimpse occasional views of the Moon, Jupiter, Venus, and the odd deep sky object in and around Orion. Brendan Martin and Ken Clark provided astronomy talks for the visitors and they were joined by David Forshaw, fresh from his successful March 20th trip to view the total solar eclipse from onboard ship just north of the Faro Islands. David showed his images and video of totality to not just visitors but also fascinated society members.

We also gave advice to a couple of owners of newly purchased telescopes, and helped them get a head start on setting up their newly acquired instruments. Dave Galvin provided a welcome respite from the poor weather using an interactive planetarium program to show young and old what was on view during the months of March and April. My leaflet stocks were happily diminished, and Dave Whittle provided the light refreshments. All in all another successful star party, to add to the many others and we hope to do it all again on October 24th 2015. I would like to thank all society members who helped on the night, provided support, and gave up their Saturday night. Again our thanks to the Wirral Coastal Rangers for opening the Thurcaston Visitor Centre.

www.liverpoolas.org
On March 2nd the Wirral Autistic Society were informed that they had been successful in applying for two grants from the West Wirral Community Fund. ‘Picnic by the Pond’ will extend the seating area outside the Visitor Centre and refreshment kiosk next to the pond. The existing fence will be removed and vegetation cut back to form a thick hedge which will help to protect the wetland habitat and especially the nest sites favoured by the Coots and Moorhens. The cycle rack will be relocated and the £930.75 will pay for the area to be surfaced and for new fencing, before two new picnic tables, paid for through public donations, will be sited providing views over the pond and the Dee Cliffs to Wales. Work has already started on clearing the vegetation before the start of the nesting season and we hope that work will be completed by June.

The second grant of £912.00 will be used to create 4 barbecue areas on the large field adjacent to the Visitor Centre. Each barbecue area will consist of a brick built stand, suitable for disposable barbecues, a picnic table (already on site and paid for from public donations) and the four sites will be surfaced to make them safe for users. By creating these designated barbecue areas we hope to reduce the damage to these and other tables and benches throughout the site caused by hot disposable barbecues being placed on them. As with the existing barbecue site, users will be expected to take their rubbish home where it can be recycled and there will be a designated area where hot barbecue trays can be safely left to cool before disposal.
Hilbre Island Seal Watching Days

The Friends of Hilbre organise a series of Seal Watching Days on Hilbre Island each year during the summer months when the number of seals are at their highest. Atlantic Grey Seals will haul out onto sandbanks exposed at low tide in Liverpool Bay and with water quality improvements made over the last few decades they feed in the estuaries taking advantage of the tidal action which concentrates their prey at each ebb and flood. The seals don't haul out onto the rocky shore of the islands but gather on the sandy West Hoyle Bank so a telescope is needed to see them in any detail. Alternatively seals can be seen swimming in the water, including at low water when the north end of Hilbre is at the tide edge. Towards the end of summer the number of seals in Liverpool Bay drops as they depart for their rocky shore breeding grounds around Wales, the Isle of Man, Ireland and Scotland. The Friends of Hilbre Seal Watching Days are free. There is no guide to take people over to the island but the safe crossing route is shown below and the event times shown are when it is safe to walk to and from the islands.

Meet the Friends of Hilbre volunteers at the Telegraph Station between the above times
For further information contact Wirral Coastal Rangers
0151 648 4371
wcp@wirral.gov.uk

April Sunday 26th 10am—2.30pm
May Saturday 30th 1.30pm—4.30pm
June Saturday 27th 12pm—4pm
July Sunday 12th 12.30pm—4pm
August Sunday 9th 11am—3pm
September Saturday 26th 2pm—4pm

1) West Kirby Beach
2) Walk around Little Eye
3) In front or over Middle Eye
4) Follow the path to the Telegraph Station

Atlantic Grey Seal Image © www.turtlephotography.co.uk
THE FRIENDS OF HILBRE

UNDERGROUND WIRRAL
ILLUSTRATED TALK BY
GAVIN HUNTER
FOLLOWED BY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY 14th MAY
7.15 pm for 7.30
VENUE
West Kirby United Reformed Church Hall,
Meols Drive, West Kirby, CH48 5DA
Members of the public are welcome
Donations are appreciated
Contact
e-mail: thefriendsofhilbre@hotmail.com
www.deeestuary.co.uk/hilbre/
Raptor Rescue
The Leading Specialist Bird of Prey Rehabilitation Charity

Raptor Rescue was founded in 1978 by a group of falconers in the North West of England concerned that there was no recognised specialist organisation able to treat the large number of sick or injured Birds of Prey that came into care. Since inauguration, Raptor Rescue has evolved into the UK’s foremost organisation dedicated to ensuring all sick and injured Birds of Prey are cared for by suitably qualified people and wherever possible released back into the wild. In the intervening years Raptor Rescue has moved from being a group of concerned individuals to become a Registered Charity (number 283733) with a board of Trustees responsible for control and management. Since it was set up Raptor Rescue has continued to grow steadily and has been instrumental in caring for and rehabilitating many thousands of Birds of Prey by establishing a national network of rehabilitators and experienced carers to undertake the demanding task of treating the birds that come into care each year. The main aims of Raptor Rescue are:

- To promote high standards of rehabilitation and care for birds of prey
- To treat and rehabilitate raptors as quickly and efficiently as possible
- To establish centres of excellence for rehabilitation throughout the UK and Ireland
- To ensure that raptor casualties are handled by competent people
- To correctly diagnose and treat any ailment, seeking veterinary advice as necessary
- To provide adequate and suitable housing during essential confinement
- To comment, as a body, on any impending government legislation relating to raptors
- To collate and store relevant information and data for future reference
- To provide specialist training and awareness courses
- To provide a central source of emergency assistance for the public

In pursuing these aims Raptor Rescue places great emphasis upon conservation and raising public awareness of our native raptor species, and also provides financial support to established rehabilitators to assist with collection and treatment of birds, purchase of specialist equipment and veterinary costs. The Trustees and rehabilitators from Raptor Rescue maintain close working relationships with a wide range of organisations including British Trust for Ornithology, Independent Bird Register, RSPCA, RSPB, Wildlife Centres, the Police, local Veterinary Surgeons, DEFRA, Scottish SPCA and the Hawk Board. Raptor Rescue provides direct assistance to the public who may find an injured or sick Bird of Prey through:

Raptor Rescue National Help and Advice Line 0870 241 0609

Come along to one of the Raptor Rescue events on Wirral:

Royden Park  Sunday 12th April
Wirral Country Park Sunday 3rd May
Royden Park  Sunday 31st May
Royden Park  Sunday 6th September
Wirral Country Park Sunday 25th October

All the above events are 10am—4pm

www.raptorrescue.org.uk

Raptor Rescue
Registered Charity No 283733
When early spring arrives, familiar garden birds such as the Blue Tit start to pair up for the nesting season. They will use their traditional nest sites such as natural holes in trees, but will happily take up residence in suitably sited wooden/artificial nest boxes in gardens. The small entrance hole keeps predators such as woodpeckers and squirrels from taking the eggs or chicks. Between April and June, 8 – 10 eggs are laid and are incubated solely by the female. This is timed perfectly when juicy caterpillars are abundant for feeding newly hatched youngsters that are fed by both parents. Their life expectancy can be very short, as many of them can die within a short time after leaving the nest – the reason why the blue tit lays so many eggs. An empty nest box in the autumn and winter will often be used as an overnight roosting site by many species. If you don’t have a nest box in your garden, try putting one up. It may be too late to attract some activity for this year – but there’s always next year!

The 7 Spot Ladybird is one of the most easily recognised and best known beetles in Britain – you just have to count the spots! They start to appear on warm spring days and can be found almost anywhere in the countryside and in our gardens often resting on low vegetation. Their diet consists of aphids, making them most welcome in our gardens! As well as their bright colouring which acts as a defence to warn off predators, they produce a foul smelling yellowish substance when they are disturbed. Mating takes place during late spring with a new generation of ladybirds emerging in late summer when the adults die off. This new generation will overwinter in cracks in walls or among vegetation and emerge in spring to start the process all over again!

On warmer days, look out for Common Crab Spiders (Xysticus cristatus). They are quite small in size with the females being only 8mm long and the males slightly smaller again at 5mm long. This spider doesn’t make a web to catch prey. Having good eyesight, it will sit patiently waiting for small insects to pass by before grabbing it with their long front legs. The prey is paralysed fairly quickly after having poisonous venom injected into it. These tiny spiders are quite aggressive for their size as this one actually raised its front legs in a ‘defensive’ pose to the camera when I was photographing it – just like a crab!

Butterflies start to appear as the temperatures rise. Being very similar to the Small White in both appearance and size, the Green-Veined White is readily identified by the prominent green veins on the underside of its wings. The first ‘brood’ appears in late April, followed by a second in early July. This butterfly is quite common in Britain and can be found in a variety of habitats such as woodland edges, damp flower meadows and will even visit gardens. Although the main food plants for the caterpillars are those including Garlic Mustard and Ladies Smock (which are members of the cabbage family), the good news for vegetable gardeners is that these butterflies don’t like cabbages!
USEFUL CONTACTS

Wirral Coastal Rangers
0151 648 4371
wcp@wirral.gov.uk

West Kirby Marine Lake
0151 625 2510

The Friends of North Wirral Coastal Park
www.friendsofnorthwirralcoastalpark.co.uk

Friends of Leasowe Lighthouse
www.leasowelighthouse.co.uk

Friends of Hilbre
www.deestuary.co.uk/hilbre
0151 648 7115
thefriendsofhilbre@hotmail.com

Dee Estuary Voluntary Wardens
0151 648 4371

Hilbre Safe Crossing Times
0151 648 4371/3884

Boat Launching Permits
www.safewater.co.uk
0151 630 0446

Lobster and Steakhouse
Wirral’s newest speciality restaurant

As the name suggests this new restaurant on Hoylake’s Market Street specialises in serving an exciting selection of fresh, delicious lobster & steak dishes, alongside a new and innovative cocktail list as well as a selection of spirits, wines and beers on draught

For a full menu listing visit:
www.lobsterandsteakhouse.com

OPENING HOURS
Wednesday to Saturday:
4.30pm until 11.00pm
Last sitting 9.30pm
(Sunday, Monday & Tuesday: Closed)

0151 632 1122
bookings@lobsterandsteakhouse.com
20 Market Street, Hoylake
Wirral CH47 2A

See our customer reviews on:
Excellent Meal” ... “Excellent Service”...
“Fabulous Evening” ... “Superb”...
“Outstanding”