

Friends of Lamplighters Marsh

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Friends of Lamplighters Marsh (FOLM) is a volunteer group formed by local residents in 2015. The group's purpose is to protect and enhance the Lamplighter's Marsh Local Nature Reserve.

Lamplighter's Marsh Local Nature Reserve is next to the tidal River Avon in Shirehampton, near the M5 bridge at Avonmouth, where the river flows into the Severn estuary. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor along the tidal Avon, which includes the Downs, Leigh Woods, Old Sneed Park, Bennett's Patch and White's Paddock, and Pill Foreshore on the opposite side of the river from Lamplighter's Marsh.

The reserve includes the Daisy Field, which lies between the Portway and the Severn Beach branch line. It is managed as a wild flower meadow, and bee orchids grow here. There is a small orchard, cared for by Shire Greens. The Daisy Field overlaps with the historic site of the Shirehampton Remount Depot, where thousands of horses imported from America were temporarily stabled before being sent by rail to play their part in the First World War.

Lamplighter's Marsh and the Daisy Field provide a diverse range of habitats in a small area: intertidal saltmarsh, a brownfield site, a freshwater pond, dense scrub, improved grassland and orchard. Viper's bugloss, moth mullein and a nationally rare moss grow in the Lamplighter's Marsh. Waders such as curlew and redshank can be seen along the river at low tide.

FOLM is open to everybody and is free to join. We work with Bristol City Council, who own and maintain part of the reserve. We only work on the council-owned part of the local nature reserve, and our working party activities are agreed in advance with the BCC Parks Department. We also take advice from expert naturalists and wildlife groups to help ensure that we know as much as possible about the habitats that the reserve provides, in order that they can be protected.