

bells. They launched into "Plain Hunting" and then "Bob Doubles". It sounded marvellous.

One might imagine that bell ringers are hefty great men who are immensely strong! Nothing could be further from the truth! In Shipton, John leads a group consisting of 6 ladies and 3 men. Gill Drew, has rung for some years, the two Jo Cook and her sister, Alison started two years ago, sadly interrupted by Jo's recent accident. Joy Brooks and Nicky Pratt are complemented by John's daughter Julie, who is the expert of the group having started with her father some 25 years ago. Mike Brooks, Brian Sellars and John make up the regular

cast of characters.

John would love to hear from anyone who would like to join his group. There is always a need for one or two more people to keep the bells ringing. John points out that bell ringing is the best possible kind of village aerobics for a bad back! What other hobby can you begin as a child and happily continue into your eighties?

**If you think you could be a bell ringer, please contact John McVicar on 01993 831471
Liz Clarke-Watson**



Caring for the countryside

The harm we cause without thinking

In December, I took my dog, Boris for a walk up the Ascott Road from Shipton with a view to a good, long walk down to the river. We'd barely set off on the Ascott road when Boris started limping. Looking where he'd just walked I saw a tin drinks can lying on the verge. On picking it up I realised it had been cut or broken in two, then someone had patiently cut a deep serration in to each half. The result was sharp spikes all round, like a crown, which would cut like a razor blade.

I presumed this was somehow accidental until I found another one, two yards away cut in exactly the same way. Having put the first one in a carrier bag I picked up the second. It seemed churlish after that to leave the other fizzy drinks cans behind so I began a 'one-woman litterpick'. With my fake fur

hat and scruffy dogwalking-garb I think passers-by presumed I was a bag lady!

The sad thing is that, by the time I reached the stile I had picked up 17 drinks cans, 8 cigarette packets, a large water bottle, a wine bottle and half a magazine. I was amazed. This, I have to tell you was the litter not embedded into the ground but easy to reach.

This brief experience left me feeling rather sad. I feel sorry for those who throw litter from their cars rather than dispose of it properly. They are unable to share or appreciate the beauty of the countryside in the Wychwoods which is very much their loss. As for Boris's encounter with the can, he escaped lightly...but sadly, there will be wildlife in the area who did not fare so well.

Jan Harvey

**The Wychwoods annual litter pick takes place in March.
If you would like to help please contact Alice Burns on 832216**