



# Sadlers Wells Community Woodland

Registered Charity Number 117184



## Newsletter No. 27 – Autumn 2020

### Tree Thinning at Sadlers Wells Wood

Over the last year some people may have noticed a few of the trees have been cut down in the new section of the wood over the bridge, which may seem an odd thing for a woodland trust to be doing.

Originally when we planted the trees back in 2006 the trees were only around 2-3 feet high and so very vulnerable to being eaten by rabbits, knocked over by children, growing in a poor shape that will cause problems with splitting later and so on. They were therefore planted at about 2m distance from each other, as is normal forestry practise. This allows a good number of trees to grow and only the best trees are allowed to form mature specimens.

This practice also allows the branches to close over after just a few years, which helps reduce the growth of weeds such as nettles and brambles which can arch over the young growing trees permanently damaging their shape. For example if a tree grows sideways at the bottom owing to being pulled over as a 2-6 foot high sapling, then even if it subsequently grows straight, it will be from the bent section at the bottom and these bent sections remain a permanent weakness, increasing the risk of falling in winds or as the tree ages.

Thus the aim in looking after growing trees is to progressively thin them, taking down trees which are damaged, have a poor shape, are getting overshadowed by more vigorous trees nearby or are simply too close so that the remaining trees do not grow too tall and thin, which can happen if there is not enough light getting into the wood. Excessively tall thin trees are also prone toppling in strong winds and do not make for a beautiful wood, such as we are hoping to achieve.



This is clearly not a “Natural” process; however woodlands in England have been managed for thousands of years and we are simply planning to replicate the established way woods have been planted and managed during that time, more with a view to the formation of the wood, than the more mixed timber requirements and woodland management more common in commercial plantations.

So, we are taking advice from woodland experts who are marking up trees which they feel should be removed to allow the development of the wood and volunteers are gradually cutting down these trees. We then stack the wood into piles of larger trunks and of smaller branches which will allow habitats for many animals to form as it gradually rots. Again, this is standard forestry practise for the smaller branches, although of course in a commercial forest any useful wood will be taken off site and sold.

**Katherine Hutchinson**

## **Website**

Our website is now up to date and there are some photos in the section marked “The Gallery”. If anyone has any other photographs taken in the Wood or any others that are relevant to the Wood, I would be delighted to hear from you.

**Dave Clapperton**

# **Working Party**

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 10am.**

If you are available please come and help. There is plenty to be done including thinning the trees in the new wood before they get too large.

Other work which we need to do is to reduce the height of the holly in some of the areas of the old wood, so as to make a more diverse range of habitats, as the holly is growing vigorously and becoming unusually tall, thus making the wood floor very dark and reducing the range of woodland plants we might find. Similarly, we could reduce the brambles in some of the areas where we have already planted small replacement trees. This will help them develop into well-formed trees.

We were due to do this in November, but have deferred the date because of lockdown 2. Please contact Katherine on 01829 260112 any time before the date if you are available.

## **Winter Migrants**

When we think of winter migrants, the birds that most easily come to mind are geese, ducks, swans and other wildfowl with redwings and fieldfares in rural areas. However, many of the birds which we think of as residents are in fact migratory. In the winter months, large numbers of blackbirds, thrushes, starlings and chaffinches for instance come over from Northern Europe and Scandinavia to supplement the numbers of birds who have been with us during the summer and similarly those that have been with us for the breeding season may move further south and west so that what you see now may not be the same ones in your garden during the summer.

## **Hibernation**

How often do we wake up and have a good stretch to get our muscles working again? Illness resulting in lack of exercise can also cause humans muscle wastage or even damage, but have you ever thought about how animals cope after several months of hibernation? They seem to wake up thinner but otherwise fit and able to move freely, Researchers have been looking into it to see whether anything can be found to help in treating muscle wasting conditions and several of the genes involved have been found studying hibernating bears. One of the things that bears do is to recycle proteins which would otherwise be expelled in their urine. This stops the need to raid their muscle mass for energy and also reduces the need to get up in the middle of the long winter night as well!

**Mike Bourne**



## **Contact us**

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[www.sadlerswellswood.org.uk](http://www.sadlerswellswood.org.uk)

## **Privacy and Data protection**

Full details of our Privacy and Data Protection Policy appear on our website.

The only information which we hold is contact details (name, address, telephone and e-mail) and details of donations and subscriptions paid. We will not sell or share this information with any third party and it will be used only for sending out copies of our Newsletters, subscription reminders and occasional notices of functions and requests for assistance such as work parties. If you wish your name to be removed from our contact list, please let us know in writing – details as below.

## **Friends of the Wood**

The annual subscription remains a minimum of £5-00 each and the 2020/21 subscription became due on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The wood produces no income itself and we therefore have to raise all the money needed to pay for insurance, maintenance, etc. Your subscriptions are therefore very valuable to us, not only in themselves but also because they show a commitment from the local community.

If you would like to subscribe and become a friend of the Wood then please complete the form below and return it with cash or cheque to Dave Clapperton, Bob Harris or any of the other Contacts whose details are given above; cheques should be made payable to

**Sadlers Wells Community Woodland CIO.**

Please ensure that the full name is used as a cheque might be rejected if the CIO was left off.

Alternatively payment can now be made by standing order or by electronic transfer and, if you would like to do this, please indicate accordingly on the form below and return it to Dave Clapperton who will provide you with the relevant banking details.

# Subscription Form 2020 - 2021

Name(s);

Phone number:

Email;

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Amount (min. £5 per person); £

I wish to pay by

Cheque; ☐

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Cheques should be made payable to

**Sadlers Wells Community Woodland CIO.**

If you are a taxpayer and are willing for us to claim gift aid on your subscription then please tick the box.

☐

I/we confirm our consent to you holding our contact details on your list of Members of Friends of the Wood until further notice.

Signed;

Date;