

Sadlers Wells Community Woodland

Registered Charity Number 117184



Supported by the
Heritage Lottery Fund

Newsletter No. 29 – Autumn 2021

Working Party; October 2021

On a beautiful, warm October morning 7 intrepid adults and 2 children met at the entrance to Sadlers Wells Wood armed with gloves and saws. We went into the new woodland where Derek, Katherine and Stephen had felled several of the Ash trees which had been most severely affected with Ash die-back disease. We then sawed the branches up to create piles of similar sized branches to allow diverse habitats for insects, amphibians and snakes to live, as well as to allow natural rotting which encourages the fungi which we are hoping will become part of the mycorrhizal network of the Ancient semi-natural forest immediately over the river.



Ancient semi-natural forests have a particularly diverse number of fungi associated with their trees and roots, and part of our hope is that by making Sadlers Wells Wood large enough to continue to support this diverse network we will contribute to maintaining this very important part of our natural world.



As well as being the starting point for many valuable medicines such as penicillins, fungi are obviously vital in recycling the nutrients from previous generations of trees to allow a fertile soil for future generations.

My thanks to Joy and Sean Pendleton and their children and also to Anne and Fred Morris and John Quinn, 3 new Friends of the Wood, who came along for the morning.



Also, to Dave Clapperton who came to take photos to record the event even though he is still convalescing after a back operation, and to Stephen my husband who very fortunately also likes our days “forestry”

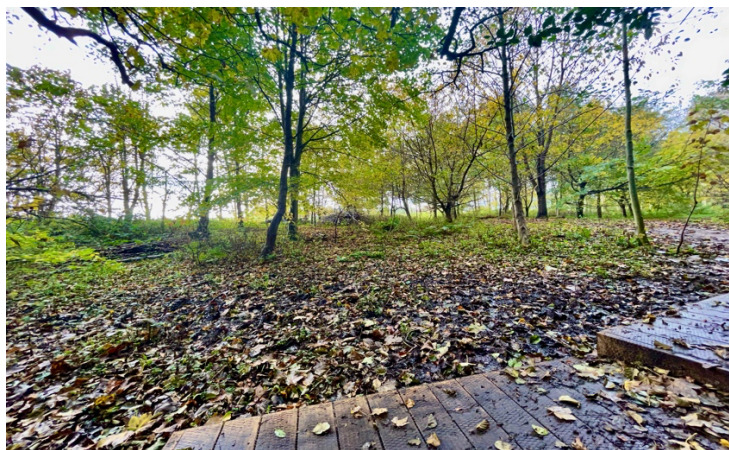
We are currently expecting to cut down some more trees in order to clear a way in for the digger and allow enough sunlight to reach a new pond we plan to build (see report from Dave) and this work will take place on 11th November so shortly after this we hope for another working party to clear the felled trees into habitat piles as we have done before- watch this space.

Katherine Hutchinson

Sadlers Wells Wood Pond Project

Back in early June I received an email from Cheshire Wildlife Trust who are partnering with Natural England to create and restore ponds in Cheshire East for the conservation of Great Crested Newts. The ponds are being created to compensate for the environmental impacts of development. It is expected that newts and other wildlife will colonise the ponds naturally.

In response to this I made a tentative enquiry to Ralph Connolly who is the Senior Living Landscapes Officer for Cheshire East. A discussion with him led me to mention the possibility of a pond in the Woods with the Trustees which in turn led to Ralph coming over to see us and survey the site as to its suitability, to explain the process and to answer all our questions.



At a subsequent Trustees Meeting further discussion ensued and we agreed that this was a project with which we wished to proceed. Naturally an area for the pond has to be cleared and the recommendation was to position it just over the bridge at the entrance to the New Wood as shown in the photo above.

In order for a pond to be naturally sustainable it needs to have a minimum size of approximately 150 sq. m and this will require the felling of a number of trees and the clearing of the area in readiness for the pond. The date set for this work is 11th November.

Later, early next year probably, the pond will be dug.

All this work will be carried out by Cheshire Wildlife Trust and there will be no expense to us at all.

We are very excited by this project as we feel that as well as helping with some very worthwhile conservation work, it will create a whole new habitat and give a completely new dimension to that area of the Woods.

Dave Clapperton

Tree Thinning

Katherine, Stephen and Derek met in the Wood in October and cut down quite a few of the diseased and dying Ash trees that Bob and Katherine had previously identified, ready for the working party to clear into log piles at the working party on the following Saturday. We stayed from 10am to 4.20pm; so, it was a long morning!

Katherine and Stephen were able to fell several of the smaller Ash and clear any Ash which landed in the footpaths and Derek felled at least 20 of the larger ones, all of which were suffering severely from Ash die back.



We have now cleared an area round the crown of all the remaining Ash trees which still look healthy, and, as stressed trees withstand the fungal attack less well, we are hoping that the remaining trees may be rather more resistant and with plenty of space to grow will be able to continue as healthy trees. We will obviously review this next year and are considering planting some local oaks or horse chestnut in some of the gaps between trees if they are needed.

Katherine Hutchinson

Joining Sadlers Wells Woodland Trust

Having recently retired in 2019 and having completed our new home later the same year, I decided that I would volunteer my services to help out with any working parties to help maintain the woodland. I initially spoke to Mike Bourne who referred me to Dave Clapperton, and following a telephone conversation with the same, I met with Bob Harris in the Wood with the intention of an introduction to what might be required.

Bob is very knowledgeable with regard to the woodland and we had an interesting time discussing the various tree species and age of individual trees. As we crossed the stream into the new area of woods we discussed how wet the approach to and from the bridge was, and although there was an idea to create a stone pathway to and from the bridge, I considered there would still be a problem in the wet weather, and so suggested that I could construct a raised wooden walkway that should alleviate the problem. Bob thought this a good idea and suggested that I cost it so that it could be discussed at the next trustees meeting.

Following my discussions with Bob, I was contacted by Katherine Hutchinson, chair of the Trust. Katherine told me they were looking for new interest and asked if I would consider joining as a trustee, which after some consideration I decided that I would. At the next meeting I was appointed and the boardwalk costs were approved so it was full steam ahead.

I had designed the construction to use standard lengths of treated structural timber, the standard length being 4.8m which cut in half would provide two joists, and cut into quarters, four planks. Having prepared the various lengths in my workshop I transported two 2.4m sections to the wood using my trailer and trusty Defender and set about constructing the approach to the bridge.



In order to support each section, I used short concrete lintels which were set into the ground with postcrete and drilled to fix to the joists. This method should hopefully reduce the risk of wet rot, giving increased longevity. Within the design it was considered that for the boardwalk to slope from the highest point to the bridge, the angle of inclination would be too great, therefore I decided to step the sections which would result in a flatter approach. I kept each step to a maximum of 150mm which shouldn't be too difficult for the elderly, or persons with pushchairs to negotiate.

The completed structure has been covered with mesh to reduce the risk of slipping, and stone installed to the entry and termination points.

I enjoyed working on this project in the woodland, it is particularly poignant for me, having spent so much time there as a child. The Woods remain a part of Bunbury that hasn't changed a great deal, and long may that be the case. Sadlers Wells Woodland, is an area of natural interest and home to numerous forms of wildlife. It is therefore a real asset to everyone and so I look forward to working with the trustees in our common interest.

Derek Burrows

Website

Our website is now up to date so please do take a look at

www.sadlerswellswood.org.uk

In particular there are more photos in the "Gallery" section. If anyone has any other photographs taken in the Wood or indeed any other photos or articles that are relevant to the Wood, I would be delighted to hear from you.

Dave Clapperton

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If you have not yet paid for this year and wish to continue to subscribe then please complete the subscription form on the following page.

If you are paying by cash or cheque then please return the form and subscription to Dave Clapperton, Bob Harris or any of the other Contacts whose details are given above.

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Entrance to the Wood this Autumn

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