

Sadlers Wells Community Woodland

Registered Charity Number 1105117



Supported by the
Heritage Lottery Fund

Newsletter No. 16 – Spring 2014

Recent News

1. The gate at the far end of the Wood has now been erected and is sturdy and self-closing. People will still have the responsibility to look after and control their children and pets.

2. Unfortunately, we have lost a number of trees in the past few months. At the end of last year, there was concern over a large willow on the easterly boundary which had started to lean dangerously over a neighbour's garden and it had to be felled. At the same time, there was also concern over an adjacent sycamore and an old oak at the other end of the Wood. The very high winds in mid-February have caused this oak to fall against another and it will have to be removed. These same winds have also severely damaged another large willow down by the brook near to the seat and at the time of writing the willow is leaning against a large beech. The beech itself is of somewhat dubious stability as it was one of a pair and the other fell down a few years ago without warning and without any obvious cause. The willow will be the third large willow that we have lost within the last two years. Cheshire East have confirmed that it is in order for us to remove the oak and the willow and are considering our application to deal with the sycamore.

3. Further damage also occurred in mid-March when an oak snapped off some twelve/fifteen feet above the ground and fell across the public footpath on the northerly boundary and into our neighbour's field blocking his access and bringing down the telephone line to his house. Fortunately the local tree surgeons, Monkey Business, had a man available and he was able to deal with it very speedily and efficiently with minimum damage



to the hedge and fence, so that everything was removed within three hours of our being notified of the problem. The standing part of the tree has been left in situ to provide entertainment for woodpeckers and other environmental reasons. The neighbour was given the timber from the fallen part of the tree to compensate him for the inconvenience caused and he appeared very happy with this. We have received a claim from BT for damage to their telephone line on the grounds that it occurred as a result of our “tree cutting works”. The matter has been referred to our insurers and we have pointed out to them that the tree fell naturally without any action on our part,

4. On 25th March Peter Tonge and I put in further trees and shrubs to supplement the under storey in the old Wood, planting birch and rowan with a few crab apple and small leaved lime. The bare root plants were kindly provided by the Cheshire Landscape Trust but these may be the last available as will be seen below.

Meet the Trustees

No. 9 – Andrew Fairclough

Andrew became a trustee in August 2103 after nomination by Bunbury Parish Council. He has lived in Sadlers Wells for the last 16 years with his wife, Janine, having moved here from what he describes as a sleepy village in Essex. They have four children.



Andrew has a degree in Physical Geography and has always been fascinated with landscapes, especially the great diversity and shades of green that the climate here gives us. None more so than in the diverse woodlands we are privileged to have here in Bunbury at the end of his road. He feels that not only the wood is of great aesthetic value but that it is important in sustaining the types of ecosystem which have been disappearing from many areas over the last few decades. He has been involved in the Cub Scouts and other young persons' groups and wishes to encourage as many people as possible to use, support and sustain the Wood. He feels that the

Wood is a brilliant asset for the School, Cubs and Brownies to enjoy, appreciate and learn about the importance of green woods to all and that it is a special place of which the Village should be proud.

Chairman's Notes

My first six months or so as Chairman have been fairly busy with more happening than usually happens in a couple of years. As mentioned at the start of this Newsletter, we have suffered a lot more damage than is usual and the safety of some other trees may have to be reviewed. Thankfully, we have not suffered any flooding.

We have received a claim regarding the damage to the telephone line to Ivy Cottage but I cannot help but wonder why BT should feel it necessary for a large company like them to make a claim on dubious grounds against a small charity. The claim will be dealt with by our insurers and I hope they resist it.

Cheshire Landscape Trust

The Cheshire Landscape Trust have been enthusiastic supporters of the Wood ever since negotiations for the possible acquisition of the Wood started in the 1990s. They have had the power to nominate one of our trustees, first Bob Price and more recently Peter Tonge. The Landscape Trust were originally funded by Cheshire County Council and subsequently by Cheshire West and Cheshire East, but this funding is no longer available and they reluctantly decided on closure at the end of March 2014.

They have in the past run the Tree Warden Scheme, a Landscape Warden Scheme, run workshops on various conservation and landscape topics and provided organisations such as ourselves with some free shrubs and young trees each winter; we are extremely grateful for what they have done for us in the past.

The Tree Warden Scheme is being taken over by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. It is also hoped that the Landscape Wardens Scheme may also be able to continue.

Did you Know?

1. A fully grown oak can take up nearly 500 litres of water in a single day. How many oaks do we have?
2. The sycamore, the sweet chestnut and the horse chestnut, although now widespread, are all non-native species which have been introduced over the years. For a tree to be considered native, it must have arrived naturally after the last Ice Age but before the flooding of the North Sea when Britain was cut off from continental Europe.
3. The oldest known tree of known age is a bristlecone pine in California over 5000 years old, but how do they know that without cutting it down and counting its rings? Apparently by taking a core. There are however some olives in The Lebanon believed to be 6,000 to 6,800 years old.
4. There is a stand of quaking aspen in the Fishlake National Forest in Utah which is a clonal species continually dying but renewing through its linked root system and which is estimated to be 80,000 to 100,000 years old. The whole stand covers around 107 acres and is estimated to weigh in at 6,000 tonnes making it the heaviest living organism in the World.
5. The largest tree and the largest single organism in the World is reckoned to be a Giant Sequoia in California known as General Sherman, 275 feet in height and around 103 feet in diameter and containing some 52,500 cubic feet of timber in the trunk alone.
6. Knocking on wood for good luck is believed to have originated from pagan or druidic times when rapping on trees was thought to call up the protective spirits who lived within.

Foxgloves

Foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*) are a well known plant of woods, hedgerows, banks and similar places. The plant is biennial, flowering and setting seed in its second year before dying off. Some survive but are not very vigorous. There are some twenty different species spreading across from Europe to Asia and Australasia and North Africa.

The foxglove has long been associated with folk medicine treating ailments from sore throats, ulcers, swellings and dropsy - accumulation of fluid in the tissues. William Withering in his book of 1785, *An Account of the Foxglove*, proved a turning point in the development from folk medicine to modern pharmacology as he realised that its effect was to slow and steady the beat of the heart and stimulate the function of the kidneys. The dosage is however critical and an overdose can be fatal. The drug is normally prepared from imported leaves but in the Second World War this was not possible and native plants were used. Foxgloves like an acid soil and scientists apparently got quite excited when a batch from the limestone area of Wenlock Edge in Shropshire was shown to be of the highest quality. Alas, the population was only found in too small an area to be of commercial value.



Friends of the Wood

The annual subscription is a minimum of £5-00 each and the 2014/15 subscription becomes due on 1st 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 which is a great help when we approach funding organisations for any grants available to enable the Trust to carry out its work. Please treat this newsletter as the usual request for payment and an early response would be greatly appreciated. Payment can be made with the slip at the end of this Newsletter either to Michael Bourne or Bob Harris whose details are given below; cheques should be made payable to Sadlers Wells Community Woodland. Gift Aid is a valuable source of income and we would appreciate subscriptions being gift aided if you are able to do so and have not already done it.

The amount of Gift Aid on a single subscription is only small but the total amount we get each year is significant.

And finally

If anyone has any comments or queries regarding this Newsletter or the wood generally, please write or e-mail our Chairman, Michael Bourne. We would appreciate response from members to let us know whether we are heading in the right direction. As mentioned in previous newsletters, if you see anything unusual or interesting in the wood, please let us know by telephone or e-mail as we would like to make a record.

Contact us

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Trustees of the Charity Michael Bourne (Chairman), Bob Harris
(Vice- Chairman), Alyson Thacker, Dr Katherine Hutchinson, Andy
Fairclough, Ron Pulford and Peter Tonge

Friends of Sadlers Wells Wood -- Subscription 2014/15

Name(s)

Amount (min. £5 per person)

Cheques should be made payable to Sadlers Wells Community Woodland.