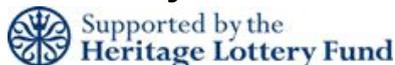


Sadlers Wells Community **Woodland**

Registered Charity Number 1105117



Newsletter No. 20 – Spring 2016

Recent News

1. We have been able to resolve the queries we had over the Tree Survey which we received last year and were able to write to Cheshire East in January to give them details of the Survey and to endeavour to reach an agreement to cover not only the work recommended in the Survey but as much as possible of the routine maintenance which we have to carry out from time to time. It is hoped that this would reduce the need to make an application to Cheshire East under the terms of the Tree Preservation Order every time something has to be done. At the moment we are awaiting their reply.

2. The result of the Survey was that there are some sixteen trees which require immediate attention and seven others that need further investigation or monitoring including one outside the area of the Tree Preservation Order which only affects the trees in the old part of the Wood.

Chairman's Notes

Spring is, I hope, now actually on its way but the weather has been very unusual for the last few months. It was so mild that we had strawberries in flower at New Year but subsequently many things have been held back by a

persistent cold wind even if temperatures have still been higher than normal with no heavy frosts up to the time of writing. Some plants are a month in advance of the usual but others seem to be biding their time. We can only hope that things get back to normal. The swallows are on the way back and the first individuals may have arrived by the time this Newsletter is distributed. According to German research, a swallow's nest may contain up to 1400 mud pellets which seems a good reason for keeping using the old one for several years. Swallow numbers are increasing in the north and west but declining in the south and east. It is thought that the decline in dairy farming may be a contributory factor; fewer cowpats mean fewer insects.

We shall be having a stall as usual on **Village Day** and also intend to have the usual free quiz (this year's subject yet to be decided) to test identification skills in a gentle manner, but the prize is a bottle of wine which will go the person whose ticket is drawn out of those who provided all the correct answers. There will be a separate quiz and prize for juniors. The stall is a good opportunity to make our presence known and to meet existing Friends of the Wood and also hopefully to recruit some new ones. We also intend to celebrate the completion at the end of January of ten years since the Wood was acquired. Further details will be circulated in due course to Friends who are on the e-mail list, and notices put on our Notice Boards for those who are not. Do come and pay us a visit.

The Wildlife Trusts **Involving children with nature**

The Wildlife Trusts are running a campaign nationally to get children more involved with nature and to raise their awareness of the natural world. Some of the facts that they have found are astounding, particularly to country dwellers:-

- 50% of children cannot tell the difference between a bee and a wasp, but 90% could identify a dalek.
- Nowadays, if a child goes outside at all, it is only likely to go 300 yards from home but in 1915 it might have been as much as six miles.
- 37% of children have never played outside by themselves beyond their own garden.

- In 1971 80% of children walked to School, but the proportion in 1991 was only 10%.
- Less than 10% of children now play in natural areas compared with 40% only a generation ago.
- 91% of parents think that access to nature and wildlife is important and 78% are concerned that children are not doing so (but are they doing anything about it?)

Other research reveals that one in nine children in England have not visited a park, forest, beach or other semi-natural environment for at least twelve months.

We are very happy to make the Wood available for use by the School, the Scouts and similar organisations. Children and adults are also welcome to use the Wood at any time; we do however expect all who use the Wood not to disturb the wildlife or the enjoyment of other users.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust have four Wildlife Watch Groups to entertain and educate young children based in Warrington, Congleton, Chester and Tarvin and more details can be obtained from their website or rmoseley@cheshirewt.org.uk or telephone 01948 820728.

Nest box report

A recent cleaning of the nest boxes in the old Wood has shown again that a good number were occupied for nesting last summer, although only one of these was of open fronted type. The bat box had droppings outside indicating use. It has been suggested that birds might be hesitant to use the open fronted boxes because of the risk of predation by squirrels.

Updates from previous newsletters

It was reported a few weeks ago that a colony of unusually large earthworms had been found on the island of Rum in the Inner Hebrides. Apparently, earthworms are very unusual in that they do not stop growing when they reach maturity and the colony which was found in a small fertile area on the Island were up to three times larger than

normal, weighing in at around 12 gms rather the normal 3 or 4 gms. The reason for their size is believed to be the absence on Rum of moles, hedgehogs, foxes and badgers which are their usual predators so the worms in that area were living much longer than they normally do in the wild. A tabloid newspaper is said to have referred to it as an “invasion” but they are not likely to escape from the Island.

In the last Newsletter, there was an article about biodiversity and the number of species that might be found. Just after the Newsletter went out there was an article in the RHS magazine ‘The Garden’ about an ecologist, Jennifer Owen, who had written a book “Wildlife of a Garden – a thirty year study” about recording for a period of thirty years the number of species that she had found in her garden. The garden was described as a normal suburban garden in Leicester not particularly tidy but without the use of pesticides. During this time she recorded no less than 2673 species including seven species of parasitic wasps not previously recorded in Britain and four species totally new to science. She also trapped during that time 14,483 beetles of 398 different species. It reinforces the value of gardens for wildlife in general.

Our Constitution

We are at the moment considering changing our Constitution to take advantage of changes in the law since Sadlers Wells Community Woodland was formed some ten years ago. A few years ago a new form of constitution for a charity called a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was brought into being and its advantage is that it creates the Charity as a separate legal entity capable of owning assets and making contracts in its own name just like a limited company but without the need of complying with the additional administrative procedures that the Companies Acts require. It is undoubtedly the form which we would have adopted if it had been available. Until recently, only the largest Charities were permitted to change to a CIO to spread the workload at the offices of the Charity Commissioners, but it is now open to all.

Generally there will be not much change in how we are run. The management will still be in the hands of trustees

and the same trustees will be appointed to the new body. We need however to clarify how such a change would affect certain aspects of our land ownership and the conditions imposed on the grants we received when the Wood was purchased. It may take some time to resolve these points and, if the Trustees decide to go ahead, to make the necessary changes. A new Bank Account will certainly need to be opened and the proposal for payments of subscriptions by bankers order will therefore have to be delayed for several months. Subscriptions for the year commencing 1st April 2016 should therefore be paid in the same way as in previous years.

We will keep you informed.

Friends of the Wood

The annual subscription is a minimum of £5-00 each and the 2015/16 subscription became 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 should be made in the same manner as previous years 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 if you 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

The BBC Wildlife Magazine has reported that scientists have found bones of a camel over 3.5 million years old in the Canadian Arctic. These camels are estimated to have been around twice the size of those of the present day. The Arctic was warmer then and the animals may have been driven south when the Arctic froze over. However, the adaptations which served the camels well in sub-arctic conditions proved equally suited to their new hotter, desert environment; the hump for storage of fat reserves, the large splayed feet would cope equally with soft snow as desert sand, the thick fur on their backs would protect from the sun as well as the cold and the third eyelid would keep out sand as well as it did the snow. A camel's hump is not rigid but will deflate if the fat reserves are used up, reverting to its original shape when the reserves are built up again.

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), Dr Katherine Hutchinson, Andy Fairclough, Andy Moore, Ron Pulford and Peter Tonge.

Friends of Sadlers Wells Wood -- Subscription 2016/7

Name(s)

Amount (min. £5 per person)

Cheques should be made payable to Sadlers Wells
Community Woodland
