

Sadlers Wells Community Woodland

Registered Charity Number 117184



Newsletter No. 28 – Spring 2021

Working Party 2020

On 5th December we had the only working party of the year as lockdowns have prevented others taking place. There was much to do and It was wonderful to see so many people turning up.

Peter Styles, Mike Willis and Bob Harris did a magnificent job moving the bench from the glade which had become overgrown to a new vantage point where once again we will be able to stop and admire a view of the Wood down to the stream and over to the meadow beyond.



This included excavating the concrete embedding each leg, knocking this off without damaging the legs and re-concreting it in its new position; a tremendous morning's work. The new position of the bench is easy to find just a short way along the top path through the Wood.



Keith Blackwood manfully cleared the brambles from the outdoor classroom area and moved the old logs which were becoming very rotten back out the way. Dave Clapperton and Stephen Hutchinson renovated the hand rail of the bridge to the new wood and board-walk in the new wood where the supports were rotting so these should now be firm again.

Jess Hitchmough together with Keith and myself reduced the height of some of the holly near the entrance; all supervised by Andy Moore and Tess the dog who were needed to keep us in order.



Many thanks to all of you for lending your support and contributing to an excellent morning's work. We were really lucky with the weather, which after several grey and rainy days produced a lovely cold and sunny wintery day; splendid for getting warm with plenty of activity and I think we all managed that.

Next on the list is checking the bird boxes, clearing out any that have been nested in and taking down any that need repair or replacing. If any friends of the Wood would be interested in adopting one or two nesting boxes and would be willing to renovate/replace them when necessary then please do contact me.

Katherine Hutchinson

Ron Pulford



You will have read in a recent edition of The Paper that Ron sadly passed away on 17th December. He became a trustee of the Wood in 2013 and his subsequent advice and assistance was very much appreciated. He later became Chairman of Bunbury Parish Council and was instrumental in carrying through first the Bunbury Village Plan and then the Bunbury Neighbourhood Plan. Ron was particularly helpful in our dealings with Cheshire East.

He will be greatly missed, and we extend our sympathy to his wife and family.

Mike Bourne

An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

An article in the March edition of BBC Wildlife magazine comments on the Government's aims to establish new National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The identities of these have yet to be put forward but a Landscape Review in 2018 mentioned the Sandstone Ridge as a possibility for a new AONB; we shall have to wait and see whether anything comes of it and whether the benefits are outweighed by any restrictions.

When we bought the Wood in 2006, we had support from an organization known as the Sandstone Ridge Econet Partnership whose intention was to encourage and create wildlife habitats and also create links or corridors between them to allow wildlife to move round from one area to another. However, they soon became known as Habitats and Hillforts, and now appear to have faded altogether. It may well have been a case of funding being willingly made available for a new project, but then the funders lost interest when it came to keeping it going being more attracted to the next exciting new idea.

Mike Bourne

The Wood takes centre stage in Bunbury's first Bird Hunt

This February half term the woods were filled with welly-booted children on a hunting mission!

Early Birds Pre-School was delighted to be allowed to use the Wood as the location for its' first ever Bunbury Bird Hunt.

Hidden throughout the woods were pictures of eight British birds for the kids to find, each with a letter to help crack a secret password. After a good explore around the woods the children were instructed to share the secret password with Kev at Tilly's Coffee Shop to receive a reward pack.



As Lucy, Vice Chair of Early Birds, explains: "As a parent of two young children, Sadlers Wells Woods has been such an amazing place to have on our doorstep, especially over the past 12 months and all the lockdowns. We have spent countless hours there and it always surprises me how many local people aren't aware of the Wood. That's why we wanted to include it in a family friendly, COVID safe, half term activity."

"More than 50 local families took part in the bird hunt which ran throughout half term week. So many parents commented to me what a wonderful place the Wood is, with pooh sticks on the bridge as a firm

favourite activity after the bird hunt. Quite a few young keen bird spotters actually spotted some of the birds on the signs in real life in the Wood.”



The event also helped to raise funds for the pre-school, which has been able to purchase new outdoor resources with the money raised. The Bird Hunt was such a success we hope to be able to repeat it in future years to come.

Early Birds also recently sponsored the planting of two trees in the woods. Lucy continues; “With the Wood so close to the pre-school we often take the children on adventures there and it’s wonderful that these children can watch the trees we helped to plant, grow as they grow.

“Thank you to the Friends of Sadlers Wells Woods for letting us use the woods as a setting for our activity and for all the hard work on the upkeep of this local gem.”

Lucy Oates

The Origin of Bees

Bees have been described as the wasp’s hippy cousins as they are much hairier and predominately vegetarian. The fossil record for insects is necessarily very sparse but from the evidence available it appears that bees evolved from wasps around 120,000,000 years ago when flowers were also few and far between. It is probable that the first bees got a taste for pollen and nectar when hunting other insects which were feeding on flowers and then found it safer than feeding on insects which might fight back. Flowers were few at that time, so it was a strategy which carried some risk. It paid off as both bees and flowers quite quickly became abundant. A Frenchman named De Saporta suggested that flowers increased rapidly because of the visits from bees and other insects which not only aided pollination but also encouraged hybridization and the development of other plant species. Charles Darwin would not however accept this theory and continued to call the rapid expansion of flowering plants an “abominable mystery”. Subsequent studies however showed that De Saporta was right.

There are now believed to be more than 20,000 types of bee worldwide and these include not only honeybees and bumblebees but also many types of solitary bee such as mining bees, plasterer bees, leafcutter bees and others. America also has carpenter bees but these are not usually welcomed as they can make such large holes in timber that structures have been known to collapse

Mike Bourne

Bunbury Litter Pick

During February half term Samuel (8) and Finley (5) who live in Sadlers Wells decided that they wanted to raise some money for a charity close to our hearts; Smile Train UK. Samuel was born with a cleft lip and palate and Smile Train UK offer free surgery to children overseas who have clefts that otherwise would not be able to have this life changing surgery. They also train local doctors to carry out this surgery providing a sustainable model of care



The boys decided to do a sponsored litter pick, so armed with litter pickers borrowed from school they set out each day for an hour at least to collect litter from our local area.

During the first lockdown Sadlers Wells Wood was a haven for the boys; they went there every day for a run around and when life was full of restrictions having the Wood to let off steam was such a bonus. So, it made perfect sense that we focused 3 of our days collecting litter from the Wood. The boys collected several bags of, mainly, drink cans and crisp packets, beer bottles. They also found two rusty buckets, some engine pieces and an old shoe

Over the week they collected 18 bags of rubbish from the streets of Bunbury and raised £752 for the charity Smile Train.

They love playing in the woods and it was great to be able to give it a little spring clean, raise some money and give the boys something to do during half term.

Rebecca Mitchelson

Thanks boys for a wonderful job in the Wood and around Bunbury and all in aid of a tremendous cause.

If anyone would like to sponsor them please visit

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/samandfin



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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Friends of the Wood

The annual subscription remains a minimum of £5.00 per person and the 2021/22 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.

If you wish to continue to subscribe or to become a friend of the Wood 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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