

Sadlers Wells Community Woodland

Registered Charity Number 117184



Newsletter No. 32 – Spring 2023

Tree Felling 1st March

Anyone going through the new Wood will probably notice some more trees felled towards the far end. These are mainly ash trees which have unfortunately succumbed to Ash die-back disease and need felling before they become dangerous, and also so as to give the remaining ash trees which still look healthy more space, light and ventilation which helps them continue to fight off the infection. We have also been looking at some of the cherry trees which are getting quite big now. Quite a lot of them have multiple stems arising from about 3 feet above the ground. We think this is because once they got established after being transplanted they suddenly grew a lot that year which caused the abnormal growth pattern. However, some of these are causing themselves to split at the "V" as each side grows into the other. This means that disease can get in with the water which pools in these areas making the trees unsafe and so we have had to prune a few trees that are very near the A49 to ensure that they do not cause any danger on the road. We have left one healthy stem for each tree and are hoping that the tree will be able to heal the rather large wounds left by cutting away such large branches. If the trees can do this then we will be able to leave them for many years to come, if not sadly we may have to cut down the remaining stem.

Katherine Hutchinson

A Walk through the Woods

While we were walking to the trees which needed putting into log piles Bob noticed a really clear badger print on the path. You can tell the difference between a badger print and a dog print because the badger print has five toe pads and often claws and the dog print has only four toe pads often with claws but as dogs have a "dew claw" which is higher than the pads they walk on then they leave no print.



Bob also pointed out fungi on some of our recently felled ash trees, which is called King Alfred's Cakes, because they are said to resemble burnt cakes in appearance, and actually they do look as I imagine very burnt cakes might look- not that I would know!

I have included a picture of twigs from an ash tree dying of ash die back disease showing attempts by the tree over several years to grow on from the branch, dying back and new growth starting from further back in the still living branch, you can also see last year's growth with the nearly black ash buds of healthy leaves is much smaller than the growth from previous years showing the tree was not so vigorous last year.

In our pond, which was only dug last year, I was delighted to see a large clump of frogspawn, which is a good indication of just how well the pond is already naturalising.

Finally, in the old wood the old larch which came down in one of the strong winds last spring was obviously very rotten, with many small grubs under its bark as a glorious number of woodpecker holes are clearly visible and we do know we have woodpeckers living in the old wood.



Katherine Hutchinson

Working Party 11 March 2023

The day before there was 4 inches of snow on the ground in the morning, so I did wonder if the working party could go ahead, but we all held our nerve and by late afternoon it had turned into a lovely early spring day. No snow overnight, so we met as usual at 10am and had a really lovely two hours clearing felled trees in the stand of Ash trees, furthest from the Sadlers Wells road entrance, and some of the nearby Oak which had been badly squirrel damaged.



Joy and Sean Pendleton, Fred and Anne Morris, Dave Clapperton, Bob Harris, Andy Moore, Stephen Hutchinson and I all had a really nice morning sawing down trees and clearing up several that Derek had felled the week before and arranging the logs into habitat piles as will be familiar now to anyone following the progress of these working parties.

Bob Harris also cleared some overhanging small holly branches away from the paths in the old wood.

We are getting on well with the backlog of larger trees to fell in the new wood and will soon be able to concentrate more of our energy on maintenance of the “glade area” where we aim to keep the holly to a minimum near the stream and work on having a variety of heights of holly bushes in the old wood, to allow more varied habitats than a large amount of very tall holly would allow.



Katherine Hutchinson

Spring Flowers – Celandines

One of the earliest flowers to appear in Spring is the common Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*). It is low growing with bright yellow flowers and a member of the buttercup family. It is quite invasive and found in gardens and on roadsides as well as woodland. It can spread rapidly through bits of root and tubers if the ground is disturbed.



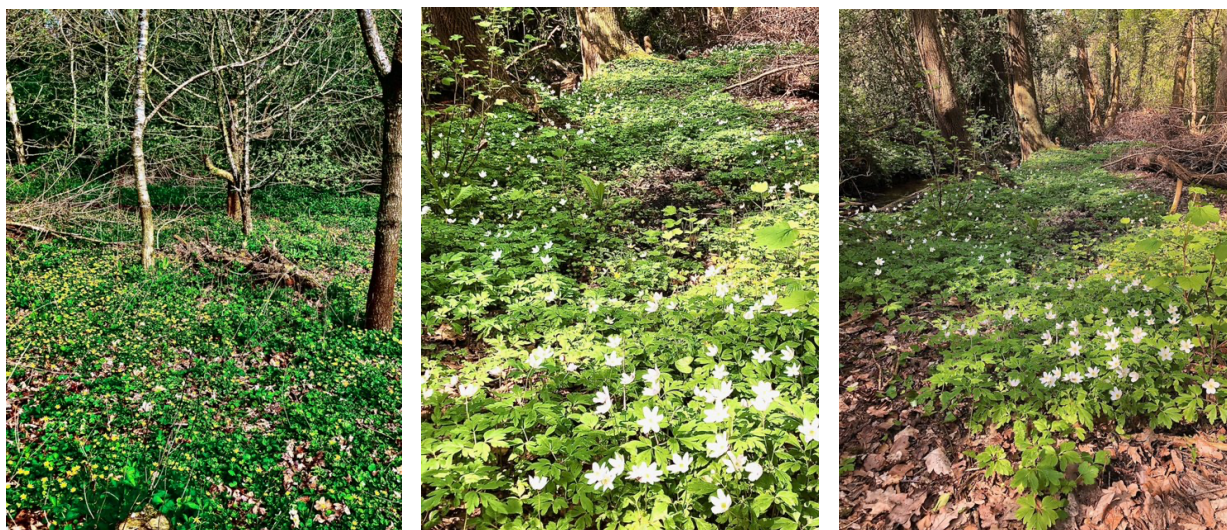
There is also the rarer Greater Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) which is no relation to the Lesser Celandine at all but is a member of the poppy family. There is, or has been, some on the left-hand side at the entrance to the Wood. We shall have to see whether it returns this year. Its flowers are smaller than the usual poppies and appear in late Spring and can continue throughout the summer.



The name “Celandine” derives from the Greek word for a swallow, but the connection to swallows is obscure. It has been suggested that it is simply due to the fact that swallows arrive when they begin to flower but the Lesser Celandines can be in flower a month or so before the birds arrive for the summer.

Mike Bourne

A Spring Walk in the Woods



The Woods are in full bloom with spring wild flowers this month
The blue bells, celandines and anemones are looking wonderful along the paths and
the recently cleared area alongside the stream is also beginning to host more
celandines.



Jess Hitchmough

Our Trustees

Chair;

Dr Katherine Hutchinson
Laburnum Cottage, Peckforton Hall Lane, Spurstow CW6 9TG
Tel; 01829 260112
Email; katherine@spurstow.com

Vice-Chair;

Bob Harris
Nook Cottage, School Lane, Bunbury CW6 9NX
Tel; 01829 260011
Email; harrisrobert357@gmail.com

Clerk;

Dave Clapperton
5 The Hawthorns, Bunbury, CW6 9SJ
Tel; 01829 261218
Email; dave.clapperton@gmail.com

Michael Bourne
Long Acre, Wyche Lane, Bunbury, CW6 9PS
Tel; 01829 260944
Email; mjbourne249@tiscali.co.uk

Andy Fairclough
The Willows, Sadlers Wells, Bunbury, CW6 9NU
Tel; 07976-363056
Email; andrewfairclough@hotmail.com

Andy Moore
25 Darkie Meadow, Bunbury, CW6 9RB
Tel; 01829 260844
Email; canda1953@gmail.com

Derek Burrows
Lost Cottage, Hurst Close, Bunbury, CW6 9QP
Tel; 01829 260346
Email; burrows.ecpd@gmail.com

Becky Mitchelson
15 Sadlers Wells, Bunbury, CW6 9NU
Tel; 07766 256284
Email; rebeccamitchelson@doctors.org.uk

Jess Hitchmough
Trigfa, School Lane, Bunbury, CW6 9NR
Tel; 07704 486581
Email; jessicahitchmough@hotmail.com

Mike Thomas
Beech Cottage, Sadlers Wells, Bunbury, CW6 9NU
Tel; 01829 260440
Email; mike.i.thomas@hotmail.co.uk

The Head Teacher
Bunbury Aldersey School, School Lane, Bunbury, CW6 9NR
Tel; 01829 260524 (School)
Email; PrincipalBunbury@RCSAT.cheshire.sch.uk

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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The annual subscription remains a minimum of £5.00 per person and the 2023/24 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.

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