

Staverton, a walk back in time

I was fortunate to be able to attend the second day of the conference “A Millennium Celebration of Trees” at Staverton.

The day started with a guided walk around the Staverton Park and “Thicks” in dappled Suffolk morning sunlight, luckily in contrast to the previous days’ rain. The park, whose name has possible Saxon origins, had its earliest reference in 1275 but the date of the emparkment of mature trees goes back to before 1178. The 13th century saw the stripping of bark from oak trees for tanning leather, the sale of timber and also use of the land for grazing. By the 16th century pollarding of oak took place which continued to the mid 1800s. This has given the park its unique character especially in the “Thicks” containing the old pollarded oaks interspersed by the famous hollies. This area supports much wildlife and vegetation such as rare mosses and lichen and has not altered much over the ensuing years.

Our morning walk over, we returned to the pavilion to hear David Russell, Chief Forestry Advisor to The National Trust, give his talk “What is a Wood?” supported by his knowledge and work for the Trust.

The afternoon session was firstly taken up by Archie Miles’ talk and slide presentation from his book *Silva: Trees of Britain*. The undoubted professionalism of his photographs was an optical feast. The interest and understanding of his subject imparted to his audience was both interesting and thought provoking.

The second afternoon session “Celebrating the Future of Trees” given by Richard Mabey was again a very individual insight into thoughts and feelings for trees. The talk contained some very interesting references to his radio broadcasts and anecdotes from his listeners. One interesting snippet of information was that the playground game of conkers probably existed before the importation of the horse chestnut tree to Britain. It was first played with snails, a practice this tree warden thinks may be worth re introducing if the present onslaught of his vegetable patch continues by these little molluscs!

Roger Turpin: *Tree Warden, Wortwell*

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Wacton Walk

Six of us braved the rain to have a very interesting whistle stop tour around the Parish of Wacton on 24 May. A big thank-you goes to Robert Maidstone whose detailed knowledge of all things animal, vegetable and mineral was once again very much in evidence as he led us.

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Community Environmental Grants

The grant scheme has now been revised to include greater provision for Tree warden activities, and help with tree surgery. A leaflet and further details are included with this issue.

Tree Line

Issue No.4
July 2000



Forthcoming events 2000

- 26 July** Annual South Norfolk Forum at South Norfolk House
7.30pm start. Please let Wendy Saunders know if you plan to attend (01508) 533818.
- 18–22 September** Ten Years of the Tree warden Scheme Exhibition at South Norfolk House.
Please send photos/items for inclusion to Robin Taylor at South Norfolk Council.
- 23 September** Regional tree warden Forum in Suffolk. Some free places are still available. Let Wendy Saunders know if you would like one.
- 22 November to
3 December** National Tree Week, including World Record tree planting attempt.
All subject to confirmation and details will follow.



The Glyphosate Debate

In my salad days, when I was green....I used to wonder why some hedges had a clear area underneath whilst others were a profusion of nettle, cow parsley, etc. It turns out that some people are so keen to encourage trees and hedges that they routinely spray the ground around them with 'Round-up'.

Of course we are told that glyphosate breaks down in contact with the soil but even if this happened instantly and no invertebrates, bacteria or fungi were adversely affected (which I doubt) then consider what damage is being done by removing large numbers of plants (a weed is a plant in the wrong place).

Apart from reducing biodiversity and destroying the habitat and sources of food and shelter for any number of creatures there is the reduction of what should be natural to a form of parkland.

The same frame of mind might extend to dealing with moss-covered lawns by concreting over

and covering with astro-turf. In any case, any half-decent tree or hedging plant should be able to fend for itself with a little judicious weeding.

Woodentop

Woodentop Headbanging:

Why does my heart sink when I read of a planned World Record Tree Planting event (TreeLine 3)?

Because the planting is only a small part of the story. As well be the proud male of the species, full of ones prowess in having impregnated a female. What of the ensuing child, its nurture and education?



Letter from Eric Wilkinson - Tree Warden for Chedgrave

It has been a very busy time working ... into the Millenium. The spare trees from our nursery have been spread far and wide. Farmers, other Tree Wardens, private landowners and schools have all received a supply to satisfy their requirements. The nursery has been replanted with ... new saplings ready for the future.

Every Friday we give all the trees in our care attention; weeding and feeding and checking on ties, etc. Trees that have been vandalised are removed and replaced with another.

Loddon and Chedgrave Society and the Chedgrave Parish Council provide wonderful support and encouragement ... makes me proud to have been their Tree Warden for the last ten years.

I have planted three Millenium trees. A yew in Chedgrave Curchyard A Pin Oak (*Quercus Palustris*) ... and another Yew tree in Sisland Carr Wood.... I look forward to this newsletter ... I like the name TreeLine, but I think Tree Views would be better.

Interview with a Tree Warden

Colin Traverse, Tree Warden for Costessey, talks to Ken Grayling

Pronounced 'Cossie', but you knew that already. A place of two halves - the 'Old' or original village, much of which is a conservation area and the 'New' suburban development. But, for administrative purposes, one parish, larger in population terms than Wymondham or Diss.

The River Wensum provides the northern boundary and, with its tributary, the Tud, contributes a good measure of green. Marriotts Way passes through this area and was designated as part of the Sustrans cycle network - threatening the existing wildlife habitat with tarmac, seats, and sculpture.

There are few, if any, original hedgerows and a general suburban tendency to remove the native stuff, including wild flowers, in favour of the contents of garden centres.

And one Tree Warden to try and help keep the place green and pleasant.

Colin Traverse has no illusions about his task - some parishes have seemingly vast areas crying out for trees, but here the problem is that the trees are either already there; are being planted by others, or there is too little space in the small gardens favoured by modern developers (pile 'em in and sell 'em cheap). So he sees the requirement as two-fold - instilling a love of trees in people as well as an understanding of what is appropriate in any given location.

A positive experience was when the Costessey Society stepped in when Snakes Hills wood was up for sale lest a gravel-extraction company buy it as has happened elsewhere along this stretch of river valley. They got the Woodland Trust involved but had to raise funds before the Parish, District and County Councils would weigh in

with their own contributions. Colin was involved in a massive leafleting campaign that covered the parish and, together with collection boxes in Post Offices and shops, raised several thousand pounds. The woods were saved.

He has identified areas suitable for tree-planting, such as the Oval Road roundabout, and along the Norwich Road where many have been lost in the last two decades but finds that no-one will admit to ownership or responsibility for the areas involved and consequently will not grant approval. The parish council has carried out some of its own tree-planting schemes - the Gunton Lane Playing Fields and Breckland Park, but tend not to involve Colin until the work has been done. The area around the River Tud, used mainly for angling, is being planted by the Wensum Valley Project.

This leaves Colin with the task of educating and energising the residents as their gardens make up the remainder of potential sites for trees. He has written articles in the local Costessey News (put out by the local minister and, at 30-40 pages, bigger than your average Parish Magazine) but found that the main response was from residents wanting to know what he could do about their neighbours with the trees over-hanging and over-shading their property. His advice to them is to try talking to their neighbours !

Another scheme involved balloting the residents to try and set up a 'Tree Trail' of examples of tree 'best practice' gardens. It was hoped this scheme would allow people to see what the tree of their dreams would develop into when mature. Unfortunately there were only two responses, one of

which involved a massive beech - not really suitable for a small two-up, two-down's back garden.

So, Colin returned to the word-processor to write in Costessey Contact - a council free-paper. The first article was on the inappropriate location of trees and how to shape and maintain trees to prevent them outgrowing their welcome. Given the smallness of many of New Costessey's gardens, trees such as rowan are far more suitable than the normal garden-centre offering and this is the message Colin is trying to get across.

He practises his art in his own garden among four varieties of Hazel, five of viburnum, as well as birch and buddleia - the emphasis being on exotic varieties of native or near-native trees. He is particularly concerned that imports contribute to the local ecosystem - that they are attractive to the local insects, birds and animals and useful for food and shelter. Given that not everything has to be strictly practical in a garden he is particularly fond of their Judas Tree with its vivid orange pods and a False Acacia.

In his youth his love for trees started with some silver birch seedlings he found in profusion whilst out walking. He took some home and some of these survived. Birch trees are in fact still his favourite and he will soon have three varieties among all the other occupants of his garden.

And when he eventually removes his tree warden hat, apart from working part-time at Norwich Union Direct, he is a keen guitarist and performs mostly folk songs arranged for his wife who is a trained mezzo-soprano, in addition to religious songs - some written by him. He also sings Alto (counter-tenor). Oh, and he builds model railways.

Hello and Goodbye

We are pleased to welcome Mr James who has agreed to be Tree warden for Ditchingham. There are now wardens in 89 of the District's 118 Parishes.

Isolde Cutting has left South Norfolk Council to take up a post of with "The Landscape Partnership" in Woodbridge. Issy hopes to keep in touch with the Warden Scheme, and intends to contribute articles on German Tree Folklore.

Hedgerows Saved!

Hedgerow Protection Notices have recently been served by South Norfolk Council to prevent the removal of a total of 2km of hedges in the Parishes of Shotesham, Winfarthing and Brockdish.

From: Forestry.Client@leeds.gov.uk
(Forestry Client)

After visiting your web site, we are writing to suggest reciprocal links between our sites, as they are ... woodland related.

We are currently in the process of creating a new web site for the "Forest of Leeds", part of the Forestry Section of Leeds City Council ensuring continuous tree cover throughout the city of Leeds.... We currently have over 80 woodlands in city ownership, all with active management plans.

Lisa Sanderson, *Assistant Woodlands Officer*
and

From: Editor@UtilityArborist.com
We are pleased as punch to let you know that the Tree Line [coincidence!?] Connection (TLC) is now online at www.utilityarborist.com.

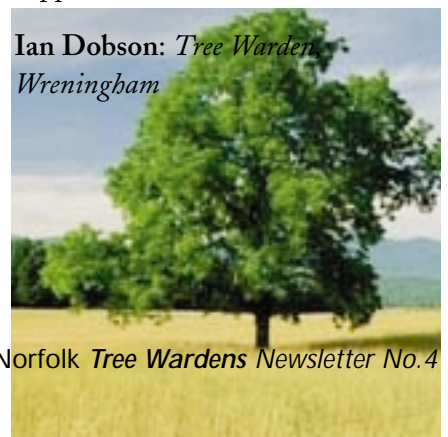
A visit to Long's Wood, 16 June 2000

A beautiful evening was the setting for this stroll round some of Long's Wood, a recently planted acreage of previously 'set-aside' farmland. The woods present the best possible investment and management of such projects using native, predominantly deciduous, trees in an ever increasing site of some sixty five acres.

The group was small yet balanced as to gender, one of the ladies having brought her young family to appreciate the evening and this setting, her daughter was a delight and keen to explore the woods. Guided by Dennis Long, the owner/ manager, the whole group was able to get a real feel for the difficulties and pleasures involved in such an undertaking. He was able to give some details about the origin of wood names, e.g. Debro's Wood - Debro was a herdsman who used to work sheep in that area.

Dennis also took us to see the progress being made in the most recently planted areas. Here there were some special delights with two areas displaying Bee Orchids, one area with many dozens raising their pretty heads between the rows of saplings. A very pleasant evening was had by all, in no small part due to our host, Dennis, to whom we extend our thanks and continued support.

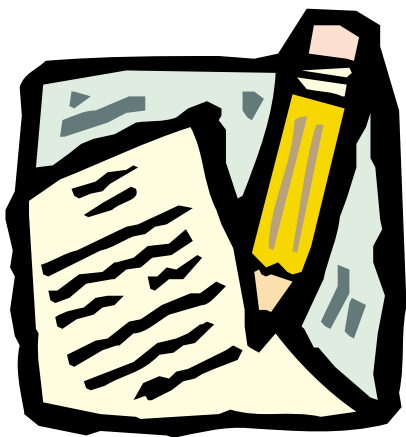
Ian Dobson: Tree Warden
Wreningham



Access to South Norfolk Tree Wardens

Tree Wardens and the Internet/
World-Wide Web

E-mail addresses are given for those Tree Wardens and organizers already on the web. If in doubt visit Ian's woodland web site: <http://www.ibdigital.co.uk/woodland>
... and let us know when you get online!



Write to us

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It's all about sharing information and best practise so please contribute any item of interest, local or national activity. Your news and views will be most welcome.

...see Issue 4 in colour @

<http://www.ibdigital.co.uk/woodland>

Any ideas -put them in the (e)mail.