

Summer Day School 2004

What a super day was had by all who attended the Summer Day School at Banyards Hall on Saturday 26 June, at the kind invitation of the Easton family.

We were introduced to Richard Ravencroft and Adrian Kingsbury (the new Broadland Scheme Organiser), who accompanied the tour and provided informative observations on care and management as we progressed. We were also pleased to greet new and prospective members and Tree Wardens from the newly rejuvenated Breckland scheme. Mark Easton whose grandfather was responsible for planting the arboretum, and whose family worked as a team to provide the kind hospitality for our visit then warmly welcomed us.

Without more ado and in view of threatening showers we meandered through the forty acres of fine arboretum (and for Sheena her carriage awaited!). It was wonderful to admire such beautiful examples

of trees with the space and care to show off their natural shape and unrestricted grandeur. With helpful lists, identification bracelets to be found on most residents and two large planting boards, we could identify all the more unusual varieties amongst the eighteen hundred trees.

I found it particularly beneficial to explore such an extensive range of trees enabling comparison, for example, of different varieties of oak, and also to get an idea of the scale of individual trees. As specimen trees, some even found themselves admiring leylandii! Everyone found favourites should they acquire a spare acre or two. Had lunch and showers not intervened at this point I think many of us would have headed round for a second tour. Unable to provide the eagerly anticipated uni-cycling demonstration, Robin showed us how to use the odometer to measure out a distance of hedgerow. We then, by way of an

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Tree Wardens at the Summer Day School (yes, we know it looks like winter!) on 26 June. Mark Easton our host on far right.



Picture courtesy of Dr Peter Rowan, Tree Warden for
Trettsball St Margaret.

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Summer Day School 2004 cont'd

interesting mathematical formula, surveyed three sections of hedgerow and compared results. This was a useful and informative exercise, an insight into one of Robin's many tasks and proof that with long-serving tree wardens about nothing with leaves is straightforward or without an interesting accompanying debate.

We rounded off the day with thanks all round and a photo shoot usually reserved for the likes of Naomi Campbell. Well done to Tina and Robin and all involved for another educational and very enjoyable training day.

Jilly Baines, Tree Warden for Wicklewood

WALK IN THE WOODS

The 'Walk in the Woods' planned to take place on 15 May was postponed. It was a pity as the planned route in Costessey would have made an interesting morning's walk and hopefully we can do this at a later date.

RSPB - PROTECTING HEDGEROWS FOR BIRDS

Enclosed with this issue of TreeLine is a leaflet from the RSPB, reminding us how important native hedgerows and hedgerow trees are for wildlife. It reinforces the importance of our policy of native hedgerow planting.

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER - EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL FORUM

The East Anglian Regional Forum is being held on Saturday 2 October at Center Parcs in Thetford Forest (Elveden). The theme is Trees for Mind Body and Soul. Sue Roe, Chairman of the Tree Council, will introduce the day. Speakers lined up so far include Richard Mabey, author of *Flora Britannica*

You will shortly receive a provisional programme and booking information. We hope that you will be able to attend and depending on numbers, we will be running a coach from Long Stratton.



BARCHAM TREES

- TREES IN THE ENVIRONMENT AWARD

50 FREE TREES!

Barcham Trees are once again making this award of free trees for a planting scheme which benefits both the environment and community.

Last year Barcham Trees received so many qualifying nominations that they split the award between 5 sites, each receiving 10 trees. At the

beginning of Tree Week last November, a ceremony was held at the 'Secret Garden', located between Loddon Middle School and Saxon House in Loddon, as the 10 trees awarded to the scheme were planted.

Barcham are particularly interested in helping schools, hospices, playgrounds & parks, but will consider any cause that you think might benefit.

The nomination has to come from South Norfolk Council and the deadline is 30 August 2004, so if you have any suggestions please contact us as soon as possible.

New Computer System for Planning Services

This summer sees the introduction of a new computer system for Planning. This will replace our existing system and will have the benefit of linking Tree Preservation Order applications and Conservation Area notifications for trees with the planning applications. It will also allow greater and improved consultation with Wardens when appropriate.

High Hedges

Powers to deal with Leylandii hedges are getting closer with the recent consultation by the Government on the proposed procedures. The powers, anticipated to come into force by the end of 2004, are part of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. South Norfolk Council has made additional resources available to deal with the anticipated workload of this new area of work, which has been allocated to the Landscape Section of Planning Services.

Sarah Long: Tree Warden for Saxlingham Nethergate writes about the **Saxlingham Meadows Project**

Background

For many years Saxlingham Nethergate has had the benefit of a well-maintained village Playing Field in a beautiful setting with facilities for traditional games such as football and cricket. A long-standing option to purchase 7 acres of neighbouring agricultural land was exercised in 2001 when the Parish Council, as custodian trustees of the Playing Field charity, bought the land for the future benefit of the village.

The Project

The aim of the Saxlingham Meadows Project is to transform this former arable land into a woodland meadow for the benefit of local people of all ages, to allow for wildlife, recreation and education. Proposed features are to include a central green of short grass that can be used for informal play/village events, a small orchard, copses, patches of flowering meadow and maintenance of the existing boundary hedges.

Fund Raising

So far we have received offers of financial support of £13,773, plus funding from DEFRA of £21,823. In addition an application for £24,037 is being considered by 'Living Spaces'. This is an organisation created by John Prescott to provide funds for developing additional recreation space for communities. The majority of the offer from DEFRA includes annual payments for ongoing maintenance costs.

Site Planning & Design

Consultation has been carried out

with various user groups within the community to learn of their ideas and aspirations.

A plan has been developed that combines the need for a practical community space with areas that have conservation value. The new design aims to break up the current feel of a rectangular field by concealing the borders, introducing curved edges and creating more secluded areas. Considerable help has been received throughout the project establishment process from various organisations such as Otley College, South Norfolk Council (Countryside Management Team), and DEFRA. In particular, a team of Conservation Management students from Otley College prepared a detailed users' manual specifying the various types of work that will be required to create the woodland meadow. This includes a detailed list of equipment, materials, labour requirements and timing of the work.

Where we are now?

It is with some embarrassment that this Tree Warden admits having only developed hands-on involvement with the Saxlingham Meadows project in the last 18 months. The project has been blessed with the energies of two committee members who have been able to drive the project through the initial fund-raising stages. Now that I have managed to withdraw from commitments to other organisations and reduce my working hours, I am at the stage of having the time and enthusiasm to help deliver everything that has been promised! It helps that my daugh-

ter has reached 2yrs old and is more mobile - in fact she can dig for England so tree pits here we come!

While the project will take several years to accomplish the bulk of the work such as weed clearance, seed-sowing and tree planting should be completed within the first year. As you would expect, we are sourcing local materials as far as is possible.

Practical work on the project started this spring with the erection of oak bollards, timber gates & kissing gates, to secure the site. Having spent the last 12 months tackling the weed problem that emerged as soon as the farmland came out of cultivation, we are in the process of getting quotes to prepare the ground for seeding in the early autumn. The plan is to follow on with tree planting in spring 2005. Our team of volunteers expressed a preference for carrying out the planting in one or two phases, rather than subdividing it further.

When making the bids to the funding bodies, assumptions were made about tasks that would be either carried out by contractors or volunteers, which may well change during the course of the project. At this stage, it is hard to predict whether a core of volunteers will emerge who are happy to take on greater responsibility, maybe some kind of Site Warden might come forward.

I look forward to providing *TreeLine* with further updates on practical aspects of the project, over the following 1...2...3 years...?

Woodland in Norfolk

Paul Gowman

Tree Warden for Swainsthorpe

Gerry Barnes is a man who wears his almost infinite knowledge about the woodlands of Norfolk lightly. As he talked to the assembled Tree Wardens in the South Norfolk Council Chamber on 14 April, it quickly became clear that here was a man who knows his trees and woodland root, branch, leaf and twig.

Gerry has been engaged all his working life in tree and woodland management and is employed by Norfolk County Council in the countryside section and sits on various woodland management committees as well as being recently appointed Chair of the East of England Forestry Regional Advisory Committee. His talk made use of the research he undertook for his recently completed PhD at the University of East Anglia and took us on an informative ramble through the woods of Cato and Pliny to the 21st century. It turns out that nothing is new and what goes around comes around. The ancients cleared woodland for agriculture and pushed the woodland back to their boundaries. Within these boundaries they made meadows, cultivated vineyards and made coppiced woodland for fuel and tool making.

The British and Celts scratched about clear felling around settlements and harvesting timber from woodland but it was the Romans who really started to make inroads into our heavily wooded landscape

- (what did the Romans ever do for us?).

The next onslaught on our woods came from the Danes, Angles and Saxons. We think of them as warriors but they were primarily farmers being displaced by tribes who were expanding and moving into their territory. In particular the Danes had a large impact on our landscape by imposing their system of local government of 'Hundreds'. Each settlement clear felled and cultivated the land and, as with the Romans and Greeks, the peripheral woodland became hedges or boundary markers. Many of the place names we use today stem from this time and hundreds of villages bear the names of the main forest trees that were evident when the locality was first settled - as in Oakhampton, Bracon Ash, North Elmham and so on.

As the Normans were direct descendants of the Danes and cousins to the Saxons it is not surprising that they continued the trend. Where the King made grants of land to his loyal followers boundaries were bushed back and villages renamed to reflect the new ownership such as the Pulhams and Burnhams. The Domesday Book shows a clear link between the number of pigs recorded and the amount of woodland available for foraging, so clear that where no woodland is recorded the acreage can be extrapolated from the recorded pig population. With

intensive farming I don't think we could do the same calculation now!

Slowly woodland became a valuable resource rather than an obstacle to agriculture and woods became managed on an almost industrial scale. Banks and hedges were erected to keep out livestock and woods were extensively coppiced on a rotational basis for timber, firewood, charcoal and cattle fodder. The woods would have been very busy places with many people engaged in woodland crafts.

The trees perhaps most associated with England are the Oak and Elm. Both were extensively used in shipbuilding and began to be hard to get hold of. King Henry VIII passed laws restricting coppicing and encouraging the growing of standards for timber, particularly for shipbuilding. I always thought that the knee and elbow joints in a ship's hull were shaped by carpenters but Gerry told us oak saplings were best, pinned and forced to grow in the required shape.

As houses became larger and fireplaces and chimneys replaced a central open fire, the demand for larger logs increased and so the cycle of coppice rotation was extended.

The Napoleonic Wars vastly depleted our native stock of mature trees and for the first time we imported timber on a large scale. In the 1800's forests were being planted, the first plantations and

included non-native species. In the 20th century again because of war, our forests were depleted.

And now? Well a very mixed picture emerged. Woodland is being planted at record rates and wildlife is increasing but global warming is starting to make an impact particularly on shallow rooted trees like beech and birch. As climate change takes place more diseases of trees can be expected, worsened by the import of foreign shrubs and trees. And perplexingly we are not making use of our sustainable native timber, instead importing endangered species hardwoods for such mundane uses as garden chairs and 'chic' wooden flooring.

I for one, found Gerry's talk enlightening and thought provoking. Surely we should be sourcing our building materials from our local woods, employing local craftsmen, local sawmills and conserving the world's rainforests.

NATIONAL TREE WEEK – MONITORING SUCCESS

This will be the fifth year South Norfolk Tree Wardens have taken part in National Tree Week. The scheme has been very successful and the planting already undertaken, especially in 2000 and 2001, should by now be making an impact in the landscape of our district.

In order to continue running the scheme we continually need to be able to validate its effectiveness. If you carried out planting in the first two years of the scheme then I will shortly be in touch with you to arrange a follow-up visit. In the meantime if you have any information about the planting undertaken in your parish, please let me know. TG

Holly Horror!

Sadly all the Holly plants supplied last year have failed. The nursery believes that the plants may not have been properly hardened off by the grower. As each Holly plant, plus the appropriate shelter and stake costs almost 6 times as much as Hawthorn, we may decide not to include Holly on our list for Tree Week 2004. If you have any strong feelings about this, please let me know. TG



Laid hedgerow at Shotesham Park, 6 May 2004



Trip to Westminster for Tree Council launch

I was privileged to be asked by Robin and Tina to join them and Pat Dore (Hingham) on a visit to the House of Commons on 8 June for a reception to launch Phase 2 of the Tree Council's Hedge Tree Campaign. That this also happened to be the hottest day of the year so far (32 degrees in London) was perhaps an unfortunate coincidence, as London was probably the last place any of us would have chosen to visit, but it didn't spoil the pleasure of the day.

Our train journey to London was fraught with problems- a mechanical defect in Norwich led to an hour's delay, and there was a further long wait at Ipswich which, we were informed, was necessary to

allow for the eviction of "an undesirable customer" from the train (I hasten to add that this was no-one from our party). However, Tina's foresight in booking on an earlier train than strictly necessary meant that we still had time for a welcome sit in the shade of the trees near the Houses of Parliament, looking out over the Thames, before the reception began. Interestingly, the London planes under which we sat were already shedding their leaves in the hot wind and looking decidedly autumnal...

After a walk through the corridors of the Houses of Parliament, seeing some familiar faces on the way, we arrived at the reception room which was unfortunately very warm and

airless. As the reception was hosted by the Tree Council, there was an initial welcome from Brian Donohoe MP, a Vice-President of the Council, before we were treated to a characteristically enthusiastic talk by Pauline Buchanan Black, the Director-General, and a further welcome from the newly-appointed Chairman of the Tree Council, Sue Roe (who lives in Norwich). We also heard from Gareth Llewellyn, on behalf of Transco, sponsors of the Tree Warden Scheme. Ben Bradshaw, Minister for Nature Conservation, was also supposed to be speaking, but for some undisclosed reason he had been whisked off to East Anglia and sent a message of support.

Sue Roe Chairman of the Tree Council, Sandy Munro Tree Warden for Bawburgh, Pat Dore SN Councillor & Tree Warden for Hingham and Gareth Llewellyn, National Grid Transco's Group Corporate Responsibility Director (National Grid Transco sponsor the Tree Council and National Tree Week)



The general gist of these speeches was that hedgerow trees are an essential and valuable ingredient of the British countryside, but over the last 30 years large numbers of these trees have been lost to disease, hedge removal, storm damage, felling and neglect. More than a third of the remaining trees are over a century old, and a major replanting, tagging and preservation scheme is therefore needed to redress the damage and loss. Hence the issue of the Tree Council's Hedge Tree Kit to get as many people as possible involved in the campaign.

After these speeches we then heard from Tree Wardens from West Sussex, Cheshire and Shropshire about initiatives they have introduced in their respective areas, with particular reference to hedgerow trees. This was particularly interesting, and some of them, such as the establishment of a tree nursery,

might be worth considering in our area.

Afterwards it was fascinating to see the tree fraternity networking, and also good to meet some familiar faces, such as Jon Stokes of the Tree Council. Their enthusiasm is very infectious! It was also interesting to talk with representatives from some of the organisations connected with trees, such as the International Tree Foundation and the Ancient Tree Forum.

Afterwards we left through the magnificent Westminster Hall, with its 850 year old oak hammerbeam roof. However, on getting to Liverpool Street, we encountered further problems on the journey back. The designated train was severely delayed because the "excessive" heat had had a detrimental effect on the rails during the day and there was a backlog of trains. When we eventu-

ally departed we had to crawl along at slow speeds to avoid damage to the rails!

It was impressive to note that, apart from the representatives from West Sussex, Cheshire and Shropshire who spoke at the reception, the only other Council represented was South Norfolk. For this we have to thank Robin and Tina for all their efforts in getting a representation together at short notice, for what was a most interesting and informative event.

Finally, on the slow journey back, I was able to read the whole of the Hedge Tree Handbook and the rest of the kit produced by the Tree Council and intended for Tree Wardens. It's a fascinating book, and your copy is enclosed with this issue of *TreeLine*.

Sandy Munro, Tree Warden for Bawburgh



Ash tree in hedgerow, Banyards Farm, Bunwell,
26 June 2004.
(Picture courtesy of Dr Peter Rowan,
Tree Warden for Tivetshall St Margaret)

TPO News

Three new TPOs are now in place to protect an Ash, a Willow, a Beech and a Sycamore. The Orders, all served in response to Conservation Area Notifications, are in the parishes of Brooke, Langley with Hardley and Kirstead. The Langley with Hardley TPO was served by the Broads Authority on our recommendation, and is the

first Order ever for that Parish! A fourth Order was served in Loddon, but we have already decided not to confirm it. The TPO was needed to create additional time in which to commission an independent assessment of its condition. Unfortunately the study concluded that the tree had root-decaying fungi, and was dangerous. We tried our best!

WILDLIFE WARDENS

South Norfolk Council's Countryside Team are looking for volunteer Wildlife Wardens, to help protect the environment and learn more about the wildlife of South Norfolk. If you know anyone who might be interested they should contact the Countryside Team on 01508 533947.

BRECKLAND TREE WARDENS

We were very pleased to welcome a large contingent of Breckland wardens to our Summer Day School at Bunwell on 26 June. Our thoughts at the moment are to continue to combine some events, extending the possibilities of both content and company for the interest and enjoyment of all.

HELLOS

Welcome to Ben Watts (Gillingham), Linda Taylor (Toft Monks) and Cathy Terry (Surlingham) who are new or additional Wardens for their Parishes.

We are sorry to have to say goodbye to Rubyna Sheikh (Stoke Holy Cross) and Arthur Hall (Swardston).

At present, 92 of the District's 119 Parishes have Tree Wardens.



New TPO: Sycamore tree at St Margaret's Church, Kirstead (May 2004)



Forthcoming events

- 2 October East Anglian Regional Tree Warden Forum
- Saturday *Trees for the Body, Mind & Soul*
At Center Parcs, Elveden - all day event
- 24 Nov-5 Dec National Tree Week 2004
- 26-28 Nov South Norfolk Tree Warden Tree Planting Weekend

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!

...see all issues in colour @ <http://www.ibdigital.co.uk/woodland>

Contact address and Telephone:

Landscape Officer: Robin Taylor 01508 533813
Email: RTaylor@s-norfolk.gov.uk
South Norfolk Council, Long Stratton.
Norfolk NR15 2XE
Assistant Landscape Officer and
TreeLine Co-ordinator:
Tina Gray 01508 533936
Email: TGray@s-norfolk.gov.uk

TreeLine Editors:

Ian Dobson 01508 489725
White Cottage, Wrenningham, Norfolk NR16 1BA
Email: ian@ibdigital.co.uk
Paul Gowman 01508 470992
6 Munnings Close, Swainsthorpe, NR14 8QE
Email: szphgowman@onetel.net.uk
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.

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

