

SNC Survey training evening

Enthusiasm is essential equipment for Tree Surveying. Robin began the latest training evening at South Norfolk with a practical demonstration of how to engender this by offering the audience tiny chocolate Easter Eggs. Then the fourteen Tree Wardens who attended the evening on 4 April settled down to enjoy a very interesting and informative talk.

Tree surveying is something which Tree Wardens are being asked to consider as part of a new role. This involves them in the process which follows a "Notice of Work to Trees in a Conservation Area" being received at South Norfolk Council. A decision has to be reached within six weeks whether to allow the work. The only way it can be prevented is by serving a Tree Preservation Order. In the first instance, the Tree Warden for the Parish will be sent a copy of the enclosed form with the relevant details filled in, and asked to make an assessment. Tree Wardens have invaluable local knowledge and their involvement will be of great assistance to Robin and Tina, helping to ensure that all the sites are visited in the shortest possible time.

The presentation Robin gave outlined the key points to address in tree surveying and which will be used on the standard form. Other types of tree surveys which Tree Wardens might want to undertake were identified, such as stock-taking, veteran trees or recording particular species.

Measurements, form, condition and age of trees all need to be recorded

and it was explained how to collect this data. Habitats for wildlife, hosts for other tree or plant species need to be noted, as does any historical or cultural information.

Details of recording hedgerows were given and everyone was pleased to hear that surveying individual trees in woodland is not required, but a description of the species, mix, form and age of the wood is required, with perhaps a detailed survey of a small representative area.

Uses for the collected data were suggested. For example, information can provide references for general and planning inquiries, form the basis for Tree Preservation Orders or planting projects.

Access for Tree Wardens must always be with the landowners consent if their subject for survey is not on public land, but often trees can be surveyed from a distance, as long as it is noted that guesswork and estimates have been used.

Finally, the equipment. Don't forget a tape measure, compass, record sheets, camera, map and plan, and enthusiasm! *Tina Gray*

World Record for Tree Planting

The latest news from the Tree Council is that they had a very enthusiastic response to the World Record attempt. In excess of 100,000 trees were planted during the three-day period last November. These figures have been submitted to Guinness who have not yet issued a final result.

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A walk through Sisland Wood

Sunday the 6th of May dawned cold and windy (not that that has been unusual). Not the most inspiring weather for a walk in a Bluebell Wood even if there are going to be tea and cakes afterwards. More likely we'd be looking for the St. Bernard with a small cask attached to its collar.

However, sometimes the sun does smile on Tree Wardens and by 1 pm the weather was much more inviting and so we went to Sisland Wood and were guided round by Eric Wilkinson in his element. Quite apart from the bluebells in stunning profusion, we were shown an abundance of alder and black poplar down in the Carr (boggy place) and such wonders as a Wild Service Tree sporting thorns as well as the 300-metre plus hedge that three separate organisations had had their arms twisted to provide funds for (see TL6).

Eric is threatening to lead a group of Tree Wardens on a tree identification walk there in the winter (bags I take Alan Mitchell). In the meantime he has alder for the asking and beech seedlings from two TPOed trees (now there's a way of saying thanks) or the famous leaf mould Carol Carpenter told me about – a bin-liner full will provide a veritable cornucopia of trees. But ask Eric before taking your bucket and spade in there.

Ken Grayling

NELSON'S TREE

To the north-east of the parish church stands the mature Cedar of Lebanon known to the villagers of Woodton in Norfolk as Nelson's tree. This venerable and battle scarred specimen stands adjacent to the remnants of the walled garden of the 'new' Woodton Hall which was completed in 1694. This was the family home of Nelson's mother, Catherine Suckling, until its sale and subsequent demolition in the mid 1840s. It is believed that while at school in Norwich, Nelson was a regular visitor to the Hall where he was reputed to have spent time climbing the tree now named after him. Many years ago a barn close to the tree was blown down revealing a beam into which had been carved the initials H N. Tradition has it that these were cut by the young Horatio while balancing in the trees overhanging branches.

The Cedar of Lebanon is a native of Syria and Asia Minor and while it is not known who first brought the species to this country, the first seeds are thought to have reached London in the mid 1600s. These were probably first planted in the Chelsea Physic Garden by Sir Hans Sloane. Records indicate that many of the early plantings were destroyed by the great frost of 1740 and it is now thought that few trees left today originate from plantings prior to 1780. The precise age of Nelson's tree is not known. It is, however, quite possible that it was planted shortly after the completion of the 'new' Hall in 1694, thus making it one of the oldest surviving Cedars in the country.

This is a species that once established grows with great vigour, particularly in girth, resulting in its assuming a premature appearance of

great age. Initially conical in form when young, it rapidly develops the distinctive spreading, tiered and flat topped crown that adds great character, scale and contrast to the churchyards and parks with which it is typically associated. Large trees are not uncommon. One specimen growing at Petworth House in Sussex has reached 40m in height, while another growing in Blenheim in Oxfordshire has a trunk diameter of 2.61m. However, more typically, few trees either exceed 35m in height or attain trunk diameters greater than 2m. For the record, Nelson's tree stands 15.45m in height and has a trunk diameter of 1.73m.

The robust habit of these trees belies their tendency to lose larger horizontal branches during heavy snowfall and strong winds. Although over the years the Woodton tree has lost many such branches, its form has not been substantially compromised and the large wounds clearly visible in the crown add to its character and bear testimony to the storms that it has endured.

To view the tree, take the first left off the B1332 into Church Road 50 yards north of the village school. Travel along this road for approximately half a mile and the church and its car park will be seen on your right. Park in the car park and take the public footpath that skirts the eastern churchyard wall. The tree is visible in front of you on the far side of a bend in the privately owned track running to your right. The owners have no objection to people visiting the tree but please respect their privacy and do not enter the grounds of the hall itself.

Angus Rae is Tree Warden for Woodton and an East Anglian based freelance consulting arboriculturist. He may be contacted on 01508 482672 for further information.

Interview with a Tree Warden

Ken talks to Phil Lazaretti, Tree Warden for Denton

The choice of Tree Warden for this interview was intended to provide a link with the article on the Tree Survey training course run by Robin Taylor back in April. Phil has produced the definitive example covering all Veteran and other notable trees in his parish and I was keen to find out how he went about such a major task.

Phil cut his teeth and got to know his patch (and a number of its human denizens), during the UEA Landscape Studies hedgerow survey a few years back. He prepared the ground by writing to all the landowners explaining what the survey was about and asking permission to venture on to private land. Only 3 people turned him down, including one who didn't respond and another who threatened to set the dogs on him if he turned up! By the time the Veteran Tree Survey came up this irascible individual had moved on and access was no problem. As a footnote, the tree now has a third owner who has put a tree house in it, and not one of your amateur jobs, either.

The UEA Landscape Studies people provided a survey form which allowed for up to 14 trees per form. Phil found that one tree per form was best especially as he voluntarily included a photograph of each tree, with a ranging pole strategically placed to indicate scale.

Not content with just filling in forms, Phil produced a report of three sections with an introduction explaining that Section 1 was Veteran Trees defined as having a girth of 4 metres plus at 1.3 metres above ground level for pollards and

5 metres for standard trees. These were found to be mostly oak, with two willow, a dead elm and a small-leaved lime which was blown down in a gale. Section 2 was a variety of sampled big trees included because they were there (and which will, with luck be the veterans of tomorrow), and to give some variety as Section 1 were almost all oak. These included hornbeam, poplar and ash. Section 3 was for trees along the parish boundary where he was unsure if they would be counted by anyone else.

Among Phil's findings was that even just measuring a tree's girth can be fraught with problems. If, for example the trunk divides in two below 1.3 metres (as for coppice stools), the measurement needs to be below the official height. Also bulges are to be avoided. At least with Phil's photographs it becomes obvious where measurements had to be taken as, for example, the tree growing out of a ditch the two photographs show what looks like a pollard from the ditch side and a coppice from the bank!

There was also the relatively insignificant tree in a hedge that he had to get his sons to check as he could not believe the measurement of a 6-metre girth he took from it! If a tree is surrounded by ivy it can be very difficult to estimate what is tree and what is not, to get a true measurement.

Phil has been in Denton for 12 years and was volunteered for the Tree Warden job when the scheme was first started about 10 years ago. His knowledge has been

augmented by Conservation courses run by Hockley Agricultural College. The Parish Council is tree friendly, having recently planted a Millennium Wood where the Woodland Trust gave a grant towards buying the land and trees and the villagers went on to raise thousands of pounds to complete funding. Then, with help from schoolchildren from the neighbouring village of Alburgh, they planted trees over a 4-acre area in about one day a truly impressive achievement.

On his own account Phil has raised some black poplar one of which was planted on the village Playing Field to commemorate VJ Day. However, space is limited at home so such ventures are on a small scale.

However, the limitations of space together with the need to accurately describe the trees left Phil with no option but to use one remote tree. Alived Thanks, however to his hard work, one corner of South Norfolk has been comprehensively catalogued with regard to hedgerows and veteran trees.

Ken Grayling



High Hedges

The Private Member's Bill that sought to establish a complaints procedure for problem hedges has failed to get the votes needed for it to progress through the House of Commons. Opposition to the Bill was led by Christopher Chope MP (Christchurch, Conservative) who was concerned about householders being forced to cut down hedges for the benefit of new housing developments.

There are mixed feelings about this at South Norfolk. I know that there are many disputes between neighbours that could benefit by the introduction of a complaints system, however, the estimated number of cases that Tina and I would have had to deal with immediately terrified us!

Robin Taylor

South Norfolk Tree Wardens - Annual Forum *NEW DATE*

The date for this has had to change because of an additional meeting of the Full Council being called at South Norfolk House. The revised date is Wednesday 4 July at the same time of 7.30pm. At the meeting we will be launching the Tree Week Planting Scheme for this November. John Shaw of Norfolk County Council will be there to discuss the procedure for obtaining a licence to plant on the Highway verge. Full details will be sent nearer the date. *Robin Taylor*

TPO News

Three new Orders have been served to protect Oak trees in the Parishes of Alington, Easton and Roydon.

In Alington, concern had been raised by one owner of an Oak tree situated on the three-way boundary between two dwellings and agricultural land. The tree is one of only a few along this hedgerow and can be seen from the road. In Easton, the tree that has been protected is that which will be retained when its neighbour is felled to allow better access to a builders yard. Before this felling was agreed, an extensive consultaion was undertaken to ask the residents of the properties around the site for their views. The TPO will protect the second tree, which was never under immediate threat, and ensure that the short-term loss of vegetation and amenity is regained as it grows. The third TPO protects three Veteran Oak trees situated on a verge in Roydon. *Robin Taylor*

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 all issues in colour @

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

Any ideas - put them in the (e)mail



Tree Warden Hellos & Goodbye

Welcome!

In Thurton, the temporary Warden Mr Whiting has been replaced by Dr Ian Cummings. We thank Mr Whiting for his brief, but very productive, stint and welcome Ian to the scheme.

There are now 92 Wardens in 90 of the district's 118 Parishes.