

Sadlers Wells Community **Woodland CIO**

Registered Charity Number 1171849

Newsletter No. 22 – Spring 2017

Our new Constitution

I have written previously about the change of the charity's status into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The registration of the new Constitution was duly completed with the Charity Commission on 2nd March 2017 and the CIO accordingly took over from the original Charity with effect from 1st April, the commencement of our new financial year as originally intended.

The HSBC finally decided that they could make some simple amendments to the existing Account and that we did not need a new Bank Account after all, so this is one complication avoided. Solicitors have been asked to transfer the freehold of the Wood to the CIO and deal with the renewal of certain obligations by the CIO to the Peckforton Estate and when this has been completed the original Charity will be wound up.

HMRC will need the CIO to be separately registered in respect of future Gift Aid claims and this will be done in due course. I am at present waiting to hear from them on the question of whether new Gift Aid declarations will be needed from all our supporters, I will let you know if these are required.

Chairman's notes

Spring is here yet again and a visit just before Easter found that the spring flowers are showing well in the Wood. Bluebells are beginning to spread but it will be several years before there is extensive cover. I also found Wood Anemones, Celandines, Lady's Smock (or Cuckoo Flower) and a clump of Marsh Marigolds by the Gowy which is a plant not recorded on the previous botanical surveys. On the debit side, we seem to have lost our primroses; these grew at the base of a willow tree which blew down in a storm a few years ago, and without the protection of the tree, brambles and nettles have taken over. The primroses may be surviving somewhere underneath but will not be thriving. The wild cherry trees were also in flower and the flowers on the wild crab apples were beginning to open.

Maintenance of the Wood

The whole of the old Wood is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (usually known as a TPO) and we have been having discussions with Cheshire East to see whether the procedures can be simplified to save having to make a formal application every time work is needed. With at least three to four hundred trees, there is always something that needs doing.

Bob Harris and I had a meeting in the Wood on 20th March with Gary Newsome of Cheshire East to discuss the matter and show him what was involved. He felt that he was unable to give general permission for maintenance even though it was pointed out that the amenity value was in the Wood as a whole and there were very few, if any, trees which were good enough specimens to warrant a TPO on their own account.

We were however able to agree a process to deal with the work which should not need too much detail being provided based on an expert's annual survey which we have anyway. This will require the expert's written recommendations with a plan showing where the tree is in the Wood, but they did not require to see detailed drawings of the work to be carried out.

An application has been made on the basis of the existing written survey and we hope that this will go through in the next few weeks. In the meantime, the 2017 annual survey is now due and no doubt another application will have to go in to deal with any problems which are revealed.

Working by annual surveys should cope with non-urgent maintenance work, but anything that arises later in the year which cannot wait until the next annual survey will have to be dealt with separately.

The new plantation and any exiting trees to the south of the Gowy are not subject to the TPO and we are free to deal with these at any time without applying to the Council for consent.

Who did it?

When we went round the new plantation with Cheshire East on 20th March to show them the planting we had done, it was noticed that one of the trees planted, a wild crab apple, had been badly chewed all round from ground level up to a height of about eighteen inches as you will see from this photograph. It is not clear who or what caused the damage; we have a large number of rabbits but they do not normally take such an amount of bark. There have been no sightings of any deer in the area and they would not usually chew the bark down to ground level. No other trees had suffered any similar damage. The damage to this tree is such that it is unlikely to survive although its spring leaves are opening and it is

beginning to flower as normal at the moment.

In subsequent discussion, it was suggested that rabbits might for some reason have found this tree particularly tasty and reached up on their hind legs to eat the bark at a higher level than usual. Badgers were thought unlikely culprits.

Does anyone have any other ideas?

Village Day

We shall again be having a stall on Village Day which this year is Saturday 24th June and also intend to have the usual free quiz (this year's subject yet to be decided) to test identification skills in a gentle manner, but the prize is a bottle of wine which will go to the person whose ticket is drawn out of those who provided all the correct answers. There will be a separate quiz and prize for juniors. The stall is a good opportunity to make our presence known and to meet existing Friends of the Wood and also hopefully to recruit some new ones. The fact that the Quiz is free enables us to draw in members of the general public and explain what we are doing.

Help to man the stall would be greatly appreciated; you don't need any expertise in conservation or woodland management, just chat to people and get them to try the Quiz.

Nest boxes

The cleaning of the nest boxes took place in the Autumn and again a good number had been used during the summer. Some however were showing signs of wear and will have to be replaced before next winter so that they can be used for roosting and shelter.

Friends of the Wood

The annual subscription is still a minimum of £5-00 each and the 2017/18 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.

Please treat this newsletter as the usual request for payment and an early response would be greatly appreciated. Payment should be made in the same manner as previous years with the slip at the end of this Newsletter either to Michael Bourne or Bob Harris whose details are given below; cheques should be made payable to Sadlers Wells Community Woodland CIO. Gift Aid is a valuable source of income and we would appreciate subscriptions being gift aided if you are able to do so and if you have not already done it. The amount of Gift Aid on a single subscription is only small but the total amount we get each year is significant.

And finally.

How much do spiders eat? It has recently been reported that scientists from the University of Basel have calculated that the global population of spiders consume between 400 million and 800 million tonnes of primarily insect prey every year, or approximately the same weight of meat and fish consumed by humans during the same period. The research was apparently inspired by a British arachnologist (spider specialist!) who calculated nearly sixty years ago that the weight of prey killed by British spiders exceeded the combined weight of the British human population.

Isn't this valuable information you cannot do without? Just think of the number of insects there would be around if there were no spiders to eat them.

If anyone has any comments or queries regarding this Newsletter or the wood generally, please write or e-mail our Chairman, Michael Bourne. We would appreciate response from members to let us know whether we are heading in the right direction. As mentioned in previous newsletters, if you see anything unusual or interesting in the wood, please let us know by telephone or e-mail as we would like to make a record.

Contact us

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Trustees of the Charity

Michael Bourne (Chairman),

Bob Harris (Vice- Chairman), Dr Katherine Hutchinson,
Andy Fairclough, Andy Moore, Ron Pulford and Peter
Tonge.

Friends of Sadlers Wells Wood -- Subscription 2017/8

Name(s)

Amount (min. £5 per person)

Cheques should be made payable to Sadlers Wells
Community Woodland CIO