



About Trees

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Street Trees – A Love / Hate Topic

The intense sunlight during our recent summer was a powerful reminder that urban trees, particularly impressive mature trees, provide very welcome shade for pedestrians and drivers alike. Yet there are those who see street trees only as liabilities; expensive to maintain, likely to cause problems to hard surfaces and drains, and creating an annoying litter of dead leaves, seed cases, withered blossoms and untidy fruits. In the main, these people merely grumble about these natural processes and reminders of the seasons, but some are actively antagonistic, and demand that trees blocking their light or intruding into their space from the road side are pruned or removed altogether.

Luckily, there are people who champion their local trees: the Woodland Trust produces a Street Trees Celebration pack, the Big Tree Plant is a campaign to get more trees planted in neighbourhoods, and in places such as Helensburgh, residents club together to buy and plant new local trees. And, of course, Tree Wardens and other volunteer groups are dedicated local tree champions.

Street Trees in the Past

Strangely, it's thanks to class-conscious Victorians that we have so many fine, mature street trees in the towns, cities and suburbs we live in.

At a time of expanding towns and urban density, the middle and upper classes hoped to separate themselves from crowded slums and industrial areas, and at the same time display their status, wealth and culture by incorporating tree-lined boulevards into the design of their up-market housing developments. This feature was something many of them had admired during their tours of the cities of continental Europe.

For example, the Avenue des Champs-Élysées in Paris was designed for Louis XIV as the grand axis of Paris running straight to the Arc de Triomphe from his garden at the Tuilleries. Over a mile long, it was a place to promenade between two rows of elms framed by two rows of plane trees, and to bask in French national pride.

The connection between leisure and wealth, and the planting of trees to create shady walks can also be seen in the spa towns of the 1700's. Defoe wrote about Epsom, which had innumerable trees planted in front of the houses. As he said, "at a distance, [it] looks like a great wood full of houses scatter'd everywhere, all over it." Defoe 1724

Street Trees Today

Apart from the obvious beauty of mature trees, shade is just one benefit from street trees and their vital role in making a liveable urban environment.



Havant Road, Emsworth

Other beneficial effects are:

- ◆ Moderate urban extremes of temperature (heat, cold and wind)
- ◆ Protection from ultra violet radiation
- ◆ Urban drainage
- ◆ Screening from street noise and unattractive sights
- ◆ Promotion of urban regeneration
- ◆ An increase in nearby property values
- ◆ Contribution to mental health and physical well-being
- ◆ Provision of green corridors that bring wildlife into the heart of towns.

The Financial Value of Street Trees

A suite of open software developed in America, called **i-Tree**, maps urban trees to calculate the financial value of the "ecosystem services" provided by trees and beneficial effects listed above.

Torbay was the first British council to trial the software with UK company Treeconomics. Their assessment results showed that each year Torbay's trees' carbon storage capacity is worth £1.5m (which is equal to more than 98,100 tons of carbon) and their removal of 50 tons of pollution is worth £281,000. Treeconomics have run similar asset value exercises for London, Luton and Sidmouth, besides working with other groups to provide information on the Tree Canopy cover of many UK urban areas. <http://www.treeconomics.co.uk/>

As a result, assessment of the total tree canopy of many towns and cities in the UK is now accessible on the Urban Tree Canopy website - www.urbantreecover.org

Unfortunately, a quick comparison of similar sized urban areas surveyed shows Havant significantly lagging behind:

Havant	Total Canopy Cover 10.8%	Land area 1,051 hectares
Winchester	Total Canopy Cover 27.4%	Land area 916 hectares
Dorking	Total Canopy Cover 34.3%	Land area 467 hectares

Risks to Street Trees

Generally speaking, the UK is losing more trees than it plants. The Government has made a pledge to plant a million trees in towns and cities (through the Big Tree Plant campaign). The aim is to halt the decline in urban tree planting. There is urgent concern that mature broadleaf trees are under "severe threat" due to development, insurance pressures and public apathy. But, though the Government has, as part of the pledge, given councils new duties to consult with residents about local trees, budget cuts mean difficult decisions have to be made.

Clearly, the ability to value the trees in our 'Urban Forest' is crucial to be able to justify and set priorities and policies to protect and enhance our environment. Given the fact that about 82% of people in the UK live in urban areas, it is vital that robust strategies and policies are in place to maintain and protect our street trees and, as a result, promote human health and a rich biodiversity

Street trees are usually publicly owned, and under the control of the local or highway authority: this is not easy, and getting more difficult, and calls for a very careful balancing of budgets, public safety and public attachment to their local trees. The responsibility of street tree maintenance, promotion of tree resilience and new street tree planting is undertaken for us by the hard-working Hampshire Tree Officers team.

Sadly, in some places the issue of street trees has become a source of much frustration and anger: think of Sheffield, and the decision to fund the destruction of over 300 mature street trees rather than pay out for pavement repairs or expensive pruning. Sheffield's private finance initiative with Amey was intended to improve the condition of the city's streets and the decision to replace "over-mature" trees with saplings, has led to much controversy.

The life expectancy (in urban conditions) of large and magnificent species such as London Plane, Sycamore, Oak and Lime is 250-350 years, while the species now more commonly planted for their modest size and easier maintenance such as birches, cherries, rowan and white beam may live for only 60-100 years. However, these smaller trees give back very much less in benefits, not only in valuable tree canopy cover, but also in all the ecosystem services mentioned earlier.



Suburban street trees in Selangor Avenue, Emsworth

Article and photos by Malinda Griffin

South Eastern Tree Warden Forum

The Forum was hosted at Laughton Village Hall near Lewes on Saturday 6th October. An introduction by Sara Lom (CEO of The Tree Council) was followed by a visit to Vert Woods, 171 acres of mixed community woodland on a 20 year lease.

Vert Woods is part of a much larger forest, which is officially described as Plantation on Ancient Woodlands. Many trees were cleared or replanted over the last century and approximately 120 acres are currently conifer plantation. The land had avoided being broken up into smaller parcels by remaining in the ownership of the same family since the 1400s.

The soil is clay over sandstone which is not suitable for agriculture and this probably helped to preserve the area as ancient woodland. Conifers do not generally grow well in such conditions and the trees removed so far have only been suitable for wood chip. The plan is to gradually remove the conifers as a crop and allow the woodland to regenerate naturally.

Prior to the conifer plantation, much of the woodland was used as hornbeam coppice to produce charcoal for the bakery ovens of London and some of the coppice remains. Hornbeam charcoal burns at a higher temperature than other charcoals which made it particularly useful for that purpose. Sweet chestnut was grown for hop poles and some has recently been coppiced. The

sweet chestnut stools have had to be protected from deer by temporary fencing. Deer numbers are a problem in the area and some culling is necessary to restrict damage to trees and allow regeneration.

The woodland contains a number of interesting features. A drove road with banks links two commons at either end of the woods. The banks, often topped with dead hedging, served to keep livestock out of coppiced areas and prevent new shoots from being browsed during the early years of the coppice cycle. Another drove road has two tracks separated by an earth bank. The Romans are known to have had dual carriageways and it has been suggested that the road may be Roman in origin although further research is needed to confirm the theory.



Jon Stokes with Wild Service Tree



Bacterial Canker on Ash Tree

Photos: Judy Valentine

Jon Stokes (Director of the Tree Council) showed the group an example of a wild service tree, a rare species and an indicator of ancient woodland. Any berries had already been eaten by birds, but leaves were showing autumn colour. Wild service fruit, known as 'chequers' have been made into a beer and that is thought to be the origin of the pub name 'The Chequers'. The original meaning has been lost and pub signs generally show a draughts board rather than a reference to the tree or fruit. The Prime Minister's country house in Buckinghamshire may have been named after the chequer trees that grow in the grounds although there are alternative suggestions.

Next to the wild service tree was an advanced example of bacterial canker on an ash tree. The infection appeared fatal to the tree, but was unusual and interesting to look at.

The work to open up the woodland and let more light in is beginning to show results and more birds have been noticed since the management programme started.

<https://vertwoods.co.uk/>

Back in the hall, the afternoon session started with a talk by Hugh Milner on woodland management with reference to Huntbourn Wood, West Walk near Wickham, and Bere Copse.

Jon Stokes highlighted recent DEFRA publications, including the 25 year Environment Plan, Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit and the Tree Health Resilience Strategy.

A proposed Pilot Advisory Group to help steer the future of the Tree Warden Network was outlined together with objectives. Regional representatives from urban and rural networks and networks with differing structures would meet as a national group, chaired by the Chief Executive of the Tree Council. The idea was proposed at the National Tree Warden Co-ordinators' Conference in June.

Seaford Tree Wardens were working with the South Downs National Park Authority and Butterfly Conservation to plant elm trees that are resistant to Dutch elm disease in order to help the white letter hairstreak butterfly recover. The butterfly gets its name from the letter "W" that is formed from a series of white lines found on the underside of the hindwings and elm is the sole food plant.

The population declined by 96% between 1976 and 2014 and Butterfly Conservation has made the White-letter Hairstreak a UK Biodiversity Priority Species for conservation. The Authority plans to plant 1,000 elms in the national park.

To mark 100 years since the end of World War One and remember Seaford's WW1 war dead, Seaford Tree Wardens have a project to help residents plant 104 disease resistant elms in public and private spaces such as parks, schools, churchyards, residential homes, private or shared gardens. Seaford's war memorial lists 104 dead although the true number who died was higher, as not all the men and boys lost were listed on the memorial. 80 sites had been found, so far.

<https://seafordtreewardens.wordpress.com/>

Robin Hart summarised the Petersfield Tree Survey (see August issue of About Trees). The Petersfield Society had received a plaque in the Voluntary and Community category of the CPRE Hampshire Countryside Awards 2018 in recognition of the Survey.

Lewes Urban Arboretum had completed an i-Tree survey and several large elms had been replaced at a cost of £2,300 each.

<https://friends-of-lewes.org.uk/natural-environment/lewes-urban-arboretum/>

Terry Smith

Tree Survey Update - Eric Walker

Another interesting month. Terry Smith and I had a meeting with Andy Moffat and Robin Hart in Petersfield to talk about the tree survey they did, as reported in August's About Trees. They gave us great advice about surveying trees in Havant. The i-Tree manual indicates that about 200 samples of 0.1 acre should be done in the survey area, but goes on to say that is only a suggestion. We have about 13,000 street trees in Havant and about 1,300 trees with TPO's, so I'm wondering if there is a statistician willing to support us as we prepare for a survey.

We have done initial surveys of about 460 trees on Hayling Island, which includes the TPO trees we have addressed and found quite a few missing, although they are shown on the Havant Borough Council map.

Our surveys have enabled to see what they comprise of and how to do them. The survey results have been put on our Dropbox site even though they are incomplete. Next, is to focus on why we are doing surveys and what we are to look at. We now need to enter the data onto Treezilla, CAVAT and i-Trees; this will soon tell us whether the surveys we are doing are broad enough and what we are unable to do because of lack of knowledge. In this regard, the estimate of the useful life (SLE) of a tree, we know is a gap. Also how do we know what the position of a tree is, so as to enter it on Treezilla, if it is away from the street and Google maps. The Google maps of Hayling are about 4 to 5 years out of date and the users, such as Treezilla and the Woodland Trust, are totally dependant on those maps.



I am looking for a home for some Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*) seeds. Send your postal address to me (eric.walker377@gmail.com) and I will happily post them to you, for free, hoping you will grow them.

The biggest of these trees in the borough are in Mengham Lane, Hayling. Just how they compare with Havant's Giant Redwood is yet to be established.

Monterey Pines on Hayling Island

Photo: Eric Walker

Harvest Time in Emsworth

On Saturday 29th September, Emsworth Tree Wardens visited Hampshire Farm Meadow and had the immense pleasure and satisfaction of harvesting the first apples from a tree planted by them in the autumn of 2015. In that year Greening Westbourne (a local environmental group) planted more than an acre of apple trees on the open space and designated it a community orchard. Local groups were invited to donate trees to the orchard and we donated a Sussex Forge variety which dates back to the 1850's and has its origins around the old iron forges of East Grinstead. It is said to be a cooking apple, but the longer it remains on the tree the sweeter it becomes. In fact, there are five of these trees in the orchard together with about 30 other old varieties found in Sussex and Hampshire. We spent the morning cutting grass and clearing weeds from around the tree roots and collecting the apple harvest which was taken to Emsworth Square the following morning where community members enjoyed an apple pressing day. Greening Westbourne earn our congratulations for this inspirational initiative and we are proud to be associated with them. The meadow and orchard are well worth visiting if you are in the area.

Brendan Gibb-Gray



Emsworth Tree Wardens' Sussex Forge apple tree.

Photos: Malinda Griffin



Apple pressing in Emsworth Square.

Diary Dates – October

Saturday 13th and Sunday 28th October – South Downs Autumn Foraging Course

Queen Elizabeth Country Park PO8 0QE 12.00pm - 3:30pm.

The group will meet outside the Queen Elizabeth Country Park visitor centre at 12.00pm for an introduction on what to look for and a brief of the general countryside codes where they relate to foragers. This will be followed by a 2 - 3 hour walk around the park identifying the different plants, fruits and mushrooms along the way. A light wild food lunch will be provided from recent finds and what is found on the walk.

There are limited spaces available, so please book your place online.

<https://www.wildfooduk.com/foraging-trips/hampshire-south-downs-autumn-foraging-courses/>

Standard price is £45.00; under 16s £22.50 and under 12s free.

Monday 22nd October - Tree Planting at Berewood Open Space

Berewood School, Kentidge Way, Waterlooville PO7 3BE 10.00am – 3.00pm Please allow time to meet the leader of the session before walking from the school to the planting site.

The children of Berewood School have been growing trees in pots and they are ready to plant out. 100 - 200 trees will be planted over two sessions in the half term, making an accessible copse for the community and young people to see grow and appreciate.

Tools, training and refreshments will be provided. Booking required.

<https://www2.tcv.org.uk/cgi-bin/volunteer/activity-details?id=28841:date=2018-10-22;search=PO7>

This activity is organised by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). The project is supported by Havant Borough Council.

Newsletter Contributions

Please submit newsletter contributions to hbctreewardens@gmail.com

Photographs illustrating articles or photographs on their own (with captions) would be appreciated. If you are not the photographer, please check you have permission and say who is so that credit can be given. To keep file sizes manageable, please avoid sending high resolution images. The ideal image size is 500KB or less.

Deadline for next issue: 24th October

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Membership of Havant Borough Tree Wardens

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in trees. We do not currently charge a membership fee and, although we need members who want to be involved in practical tasks or the running of the network, we also welcome supporters. If you would like to become a member, please request a membership application form by e-mail to hbctreewardens@gmail.com

Donations

If you would like to make a donation to Havant Borough Tree Wardens, payments can be made into our bank account. Please include your name as a reference.

Account No: 84937017 Sort Code: 55-70-34