



# About Trees

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## Trees for Streets



Cherry blossom in Stakes Road, Purbrook.  
(Photo: Terry Smith)

You may have noticed new trees planted in Havant's roadside verges in recent weeks. Hampshire County Council is responsible for road verges and has embarked on an extensive tree planting programme. At the last count, 239 street trees have been planted in Havant Borough during the current planting season.

The great news is that Hampshire County Council intends to plant more trees in residential roads during the next planting season, starting in November 2021. The council would like your help to identify suitable locations.

If you know of a local street that could be improved for people and enhanced for nature by the presence of trees, please use this form to tell us. You can nominate any road within the Borough of Havant for consideration for the 2021/22 planting season. We will pass on the suggested tree locations to Hampshire Highways.

### Why plant trees on streets?

Trees help to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, creating oxygen for us to breathe, and provide food and shelter for wildlife. Street trees positively affect mental health, help control excess surface water, clean polluted air and give us welcome shade in summer. They also look good and can increase property values because streets with trees are more desirable places to live.

### How do I nominate a street for trees?

Nominate your streets for trees using this form: <https://forms.gle/54rkMwYiKLiXSFKm6>

Please be as precise as you can with the location and include the road name and house number or other description. Please include any other information you think may be useful, such as trees that were there before and have not been replaced or whether there is space for a large tree that can grow to maturity.



Raywood Ash trees in Selangor Avenue, Emsworth. (Photo: Malinda Griffin)

### How big does the verge need to be for a tree?

Generally, verges less than one metre wide will not be suitable. There may be other reasons why a location may not be suitable, for example, underground services, overhead cables, proximity to gateways, sightlines at junctions or verges used for parking.

### When will the trees be planted?

Hampshire Highways will survey all suggestions and draw up a planting programme for the 2021/22 winter season. Depending on the level of response, it may not be possible to include all suggestions in the next planting schedule and some may be held over to future years.

## Tree Felling at The Slip

We have been contacted by a concerned resident who asked why a huge number of large mature trees had been felled near the Spire Hospital. It was speculated that it could be due to ash dieback as there has been a lot of felling at Stansted for that reason. The felling started a couple of weeks ago in the area adjacent to the road on Comley Hill, towards Rowlands Castle



The Slip after felling. (Photo: Ann Stewart)

Malinda has spoken to Phil Clayton who worked in the The Slip woodland from the Spire along Comley Hill. Phil is confident that the worst of the work has been done and that the yews are safe and the huge sweet chestnut stools actually needed coppice work. The work looks horrendous as it's concentrated along the road side. It is claimed the work was overdue for safety on the road.

Phil says there are plus points. The woodland isn't being destroyed, but 're-purposed' for Woodland burials (with good advice from Hugh Milner to prevent root damage, etc). A lot of the work was for new fencing which will reduce damage from deer.

Phil will continue working on adjacent woodland and says the amount of light now reaching the woodland floor means there'll be a huge burst of new life, benefitting plants and insects in what was overgrown woodland. He made a very strong point that too much council owned woodland is neglected and failing, eg Battins Copse, Great Copse. In the absence of large animals to cause disturbance, woodland depends on the old skills of coppicing etc. People think unworked woodland is natural, but this is not so; it dies without management, and then, if any work is done, it looks so extreme people are upset.

However, this work raises other concerns. This is a most important area for bats - Bechstein's, alcatheo and barbastelle, our rarest woodland species, have all been recorded in Barton's Copse, the grounds of the crematorium or nearby. They will all be adversely impacted by the removal of these large trees. Coppicing and other woodland management needs to be approached very cautiously as it can conflict with bat conservation.

Woodland burials destroy the ground flora and fauna and soil environment. A planning application for similar land use in Johnston's Coppice, a HCC Nature Reserve, was rejected. The woodland burials at East Meon have shown the site will take very many years to recover.

There was an article on Phil's work in The Slip in the May 2019 issue of About Trees.

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## Oaks in Pots – Tony Athill



I have at last extracted these two squirrel planted oaks from the planter where they have been developing for a few years. They are not native to Hayling and are now about two feet tall. I would like to find them a permanent home and dedicate one to Julian Clokie who was once, I think, a tree warden and certainly a botanist of repute who taught many on Hayling Island about plants and trees. Northney Common would be perfect but anywhere will do.

If anyone can find a home for these saplings, please let us know.

## Trees Lift Lockdown Blues – Malinda Griffin

Despite this Third Lockdown, and despite a security incident taking many of the Woodland Trust's services off-line (including the Ancient Tree Inventory), I am still noticing and surveying our special local trees, sometimes discovering them in unexpected places. I have quite a file now of trees to add to the ATI database, and more get added each week as I wait for the normal recording process to resume.

Here are a few of my favourites from this winter:

Three stunted beech trees caught my eye in a corner of Hollybank Woods\*; although the largest has a girth of only 90cms at a height of 1.5m, I feel sure they are veteran survivors of past challenges.



Above: Group of three stunted beech trees in Hollybank Woods.



Right: Close-up of stunted beech

Andy Brook, who has intimate knowledge of this ancient woodland, sent this in answer to my query:

“The beech trees were in extremely dense Holly for many years. We cleared the Holly about 20 years ago to regenerate the hazel coppice in that area and kept the stunted beech trees as a feature, and made the path that winds through them. Over the many decades previously to the opening up, with little light or air flow reaching them, the beech trees had been stunted and rot had set in. We decided to let them carry on growing with the support of the trees around them. They are a wonderful feature. They are certainly a lot older than their size would indicate. Unless we felled one and counted the tight rings of growth we have no way of telling. So we just admire and cherish them. They would likely surprise us as to how old they actually are!”



There are several remnants of hedgerow or even of old woodland still standing in Barton's Field. This lovely group looked stunning in low winter sun. One of these trees may be a veteran, so I'll check and measure in the spring when I can find clues to identify what species it is.

Left: Remnant of hedgerow - Barton's Field.

Also on Barton's Field, standing in surface water off Little Leigh fields is this large goat willow coppice. It'll take another visit in dryer weather to establish measurements and whether there are enough features to confirm it as a possible Veteran for the ATI.



Right: Goat willow coppice - Barton's Field



Another intriguing tree from Hollybank Wood is this once coppiced, now two stemmed and twisted oak. It has clearly gone through a lot of procedures, but carried on growing and thriving.

Keep your eyes open when you take your exercise walks – you never know what you'll spot.

\* Hollybank Woods is ancient woodland, worked as wood pasture in Saxon times and as Royal hunting forest by the Normans. It is 157 acres of mainly deciduous broadleaved woodland, and still worked by volunteers as medieval coppice and a biodiversity stronghold.

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## Reporting Incidents in Hollybank Woods

Andrew Street of Hollybank Woods has asked us to make readers aware of a new way to report incidents in the woodland.

With the increased use of the countryside it is essential we work together to keep Hollybank Woods safe and secure. Whether it is an after-the-event detail or observation, reports of concern are invaluable in supporting the woodland and its community.

To do so please e-mail [hollybankincidents@protonmail.com](mailto:hollybankincidents@protonmail.com)

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## Hayling Update – Eric Walker

The freebie, The Hayling Trader, this month gave on the centrefold, the list of Hampshire County Council street trees, planted on Hayling over the last four years, with an invitation to send to the Island County Councillor Lance Quantrill any proposals for further trees. We, as Hayling Tree Wardens, have already done this for next winter, but more than that we think it would be worth promoting any proposal for new trees, even on private land. It would be worth a go, try us.

The Woodland Trust had a major cyber-attack recently that totally disrupted their business. One of the results of this has been the delay by a month of the delivery of their tree plants for schools and communities from March to April. Looking on the bright side, this could help for our delivery to Mengham Junior School.

## Tree Planting at Hampshire Farm Meadows

Cath and Neil Mant planted another two oak trees at Hampshire Farm Meadows at the end of February / beginning of March. They are also removing the dead stumps of two Field Maples which will be replaced with new trees in the next week or so. The new trees (two oaks and two Field Maples) were very kindly provided by the Emsworth Tree Wardens from the proceeds of the Emsworth Tree Trail book.



Above: Neil with field maple stump.

Left: Cath planting oak.

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## Hooray for Persistence – Malinda Griffin

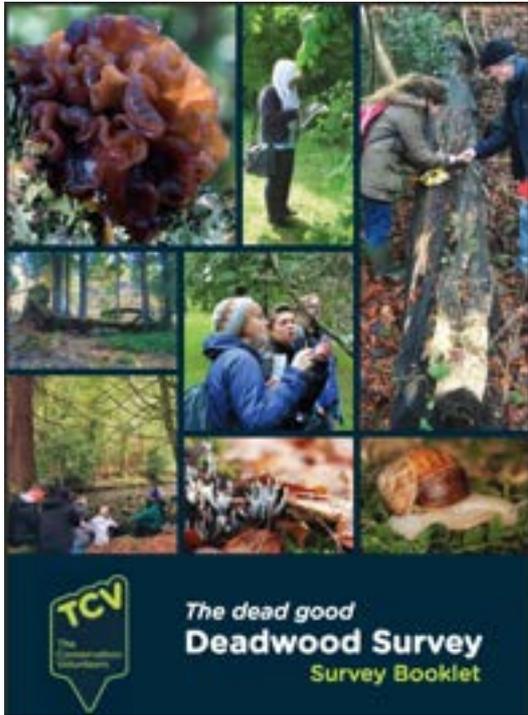
I very recently learnt that the replacement biodiversity hedgerow along the A259 at the Saxon Corner housing development will finally include the deadwood that HBTW pressed for more than a year ago.

When Barratt contractors ‘accidentally’ removed the mature 15ft high agricultural hedgerow, HBTW pressed for 3 parallel rows of native hedging whips to be planted to recreate (in time) the hedge habitat that had been lost. We also urged that deadwood be included at the base of the hedgerow to provide a vital micro habitat for wildlife, particularly invertebrates such as beetle and moth larvae. 40% of woodland wildlife species need deadwood at some stage in their lives.

Deadwood offers the opportunity for some intriguing relationships and specialised biodiversity niches. For example, the pine hoverfly only breeds in wet pockets of decay in Scots pine stumps, but this specialisation is especially vulnerable to human activity and environmental change.

Creatures that depend on mature trees and deadwood are now particularly rare or threatened, most likely because we have become more intent on clearing up what appears redundant or unattractive to us. However, these invertebrates are an essential part of biodiversity; their actions help turn dead trees into nutrient rich compost and they provide food for birds and bats. Stag, cardinal and oak longhorn beetles are increasingly uncommon sights, as are many species of hoverflies and the many moth species that need deadwood to be able to complete their life cycles.

The deadwood piles in the Saxon Corner hedgerows will offer essential help for these fascinating creatures to survive. Well done to Barratt Homes for enabling this.



TCV have produced an easy, fun Citizen Science survey about what is going on with the deadwood near you.

- ◆ How rotten is the deadwood?
- ◆ What animals can you see inside it?
- ◆ What's growing on it?

Sounds like a great afternoon exercise during Lockdown!

The booklet can be downloaded here together with a field guide and a recording sheet.

<https://www.tcv.org.uk/scotland/dead-good-deadwood-survey>

### Tree Planting in Stagg Woods - Pauline Powell

Tree Wardens Jon Snow and Pauline Powell of Portsmouth and Southsea Tree Wardens planted three little trees in Stagg Woods on Sunday afternoon 21st February. Jon did all the hard work! We planted a beech, an oak I grew from an acorn and a rowan "Ember Glow".

These are in addition to the disease resistant New Horizon elm, planted there on 2nd February to celebrate 30 years of Tree Wardening and also the 200 native trees planted by Nick of Gristwood & Toms kindly arranged by Simon Pearce, PCC Tree Officer. Hopefully we will be able to have a celebratory event in the Woods later in the summer.



Jon about to plant the beech  
Photos by Pauline.



Pauline beside the rowan.

## Trees and Woodpeckers – Paula Chatfield

On Thursday 4th February, Chichester RSPB group held a fascinating Zoom talk presented by Ken Smith who is an expert on woodpeckers through years of study.



Do keep your eyes and ears peeled for Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers on calm dry days through until the leaves are on the trees in March. They are sparrow-sized, secretive and difficult to spot, so listen out for drumming (a softer sound than the Great Spotted Woodpecker) and a call similar to a kestrel and then try to identify possible nest cavities nearby.

Left: Lesser Spotted Woodpecker at nest hole.

I was struck by the essential tree content of Ken's talk – it was explicit - birds and trees are inseparable. We don't have any nest sites recorded and monitored locally, so Ken's Woodpecker Network would love to hear of any candidates we find.

The talk was a keen reminder of ecological connectedness, looking at the abundance of food sources (primarily caterpillars) linked to timing of leaf emergence, nesting/breeding success and spring temperatures and noting a distinct shift to earlier/warmer springs from about 1980.

For more about the woodpecker project see: <http://www.woodpecker-network.org.uk>

Membership of the Chichester RSPB group is £10 a year. There's a weekly online chat/meet-up, for bird-related social, as well as talks and, when possible, walks and activities.  
<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/groups/chichester/>

Ken, Rob Yarham, who hosted the talk, and I volunteer as Chichester Tree Wardens  
<https://www.treesinchi.org/>

The next closest RSPB Member Local Group is the Portsmouth Local Group  
Contact Gordon Humby: 02392 353949, or e-mail [PortsmouthRSPB@gmail.com](mailto:PortsmouthRSPB@gmail.com).  
<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/groups/portsmouth>

Right: Adult male Great Spotted Woodpecker with juvenile (note red crown). Photo: Paul Lewis (The Woodpecker Network)



My Facebook post unexpectedly produced this response from a chap who lives out Funtington way: "We have them in our garden quite regularly and green ones too, and great spotted."

Responding to my slightly incredulous, but hopeful, "if he knows what a GSW is, he's unlikely to mistake a LSW" reply, he added:  
"Not sure where they breed. We have large cedar tree and lots of feeders. It is infrequent."

I am trying not to get too excited by the prospect of a "local" breeding site!

Four or five years ago, BBC Radio 4's Book of the Week was a series of extracts from a book about the effects of climate change on nature. One chapter discussed how the food source for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker chicks (caterpillars) was determined by temperature while LSW nesting was triggered by the hours of daylight. Caterpillars were hatching three weeks earlier and were no longer available when needed by the LSW, contributing to the decline in numbers.



I saw a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in Gosport Wildgrounds many years ago. I was told a few weeks ago that all three species are in Johnston's Coppice; I have seen a GSW and heard a GW there.

The HBIC survey (November 2001) of The Queen's Inclosure in Cowplain stated that all three species of woodpecker were present.

I saw a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in Bere Copse, Soberton Heath (next to the Meon Valley Trail - disused railway line) the year before last. It's good to know there are still some around. (Ed)

Left: Green Woodpecker (Photo: wikiwand.com)

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## Going Peat-Free

Now we are into spring, some of you may be thinking about gardening. If you buy compost, don't forget to check it is peat-free.



Photo: Northumberland National Park

Our peatlands store more carbon than the forests of the UK, France and Germany combined, they provide clean drinking water and are habitats for some of our rarest species. It takes ten years to create one centimetre of peat which is being consumed 200 times faster than it forms. As a result, we have lost 94% of our lowland bogs in the UK and there are just 6,000 hectares left in good condition. Yet, every month gardeners in the UK use enough peat to fill 69 Olympic swimming pools.

There are many alternatives to peat and some suggestions were included in the February issue of About Trees.

Take the peat-free pledge. <https://seedball.co.uk/conservation/peat-free-pledge/>

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## Blossom Gardens

The National Trust commissioned a report that showed 68% of people agreed that noticing the nature around them had made them feel happy during lockdown. It also highlighted inequalities in access to the natural world with 295 deprived neighbourhoods of 440,000 people described as 'grey deserts', with no trees or accessible green space.

To help improve access to nature for people living in towns and cities, over the next five years the National Trust is planning to plant dozens of blossoming trees, including cherry, hazel and plum, at different sites in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The first of the blossom circles is being created at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Newham, east London, close to the temporary NHS Nightingale Covid-19 hospital, an area that has seen some of the worst impacts of the pandemic. A total of 33 trees, including cherry, plum, hawthorn and crab apple will be planted to represent the city's 32 boroughs and the city of London. The local community has been involved in the creation of The London Blossom Garden which is due to be finished in spring, will commemorate lives lost from coronavirus and honour key workers and is designed as a place of reflection to enjoy nature.



Above: The design for "The London Blossom Garden" in Newham

Designs are being finalised for groves in Nottingham, Newcastle and Plymouth and other sites will follow. The project, part-funded by the People's Postcode Lottery, and supported by Historic England, aims and to try to create a UK equivalent of Japan's concept of "Hanami" - the annual celebration of flowers, and the coming of spring.

According to conservation group WWF, the UK is one of the most "nature depleted countries in the world". The blossom gardens are part of a commitment by the National Trust to plant 20 million trees during the next decade, as part of its work to tackle the climate crisis.

Blossom is one of the first signs that spring is well and truly on the way, and last year a #BlossomWatch campaign was launched to encourage people to share images of blossom across the country. During the in the coming weeks, the National Trust will share blossom displays around the country. There is also a guide to identifying spring blossom and information on why blossom is a vital habitat for wildlife. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/blossom-watch>

Could we do something similar in this Borough? We already have a number of street trees that provide colourful blossom in the spring.



Above: Crab Apples – Timber Lane, Purbrook

Left: Crab Apple - Sovereign Lane, Purbrook  
Photos: Terry Smith (April 2020)

## Diary Dates

The Tree Council urges Tree Warden Networks and other volunteer groups NOT to organise planting events which would include more than one family group/support bubble during the current time, until restrictions are lifted or changed. In line with that request, work parties organised by Havant Borough Tree Wardens have been postponed until further notice.

### **Sunday 14th March 6:30 – 8:00pm Mini-Rewilding & Encouraging Urban Nature**



This talk by the Habitat People outlines how with even just a couple of metres of garden you can support a vast range of species, from butterflies to plants and everything in between! So, if you're interested in building a space for your wildlife or are looking for ideas to build on what you have, there should be something here for you!  
Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mini-rewilding-and-encouraging-urban-nature-tickets-136621948927>

### **Tuesday 16th March 7:30pm Climate Change: The View From Space**



Hosted by the Science Museum. Free, but donations welcome.

Register here:

<https://my.sciencemuseum.org.uk/245154/245163>

### **Tuesday 30th March 7:30 - 8:30pm Nature Recovery with Tony Juniper**



Tony Juniper CBE is a campaigner, writer, sustainability adviser and a well-known British environmentalist. He has worked towards creating a more sustainable society for 35 years in a number of roles and is currently the chair of Natural England. Amongst many other activities, he has orchestrated international campaigns for action on rainforests and climate change. His books include the 'Ladybird Expert Guide to Climate Change', co-authored with HRH the Prince of Wales and polar scientist Dr Emily Shuckburgh OBE.

This talk is part of the Transition Cambridge 'Transition to a better future talk series'. All talks are free, with donations welcome. Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talk-nature-recovery-with-tony-juniper-tickets-136450235327?aff=erelexpmit>

### **Wednesday 31st March 7:30pm Our Planet: Global Greenhouse Gas Removal**

Hosted by the Science Museum. Free but donations welcome.

Register here: <https://my.sciencemuseum.org.uk/245154/245164>

## Newsletter Contributions

Please submit newsletter contributions to [hbctreewardens@gmail.com](mailto:hbctreewardens@gmail.com)

**Deadline for next issue:** 24th March 2021

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 250KB or less.

If you embed images in documents, please also send the images as attachments.

Please let us know if you have ideas for future articles or subjects you would like to see included.

## Would you like your own copy of this newsletter?

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to request your own copy, please send an e-mail to [hbctreewardens@gmail.com](mailto:hbctreewardens@gmail.com)

## 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](mailto:hbctreewardens@gmail.com) or download it from our website. <https://groups.tcv.org.uk/havantboroughtreewardens/>

## Donations

If you would like to make a donation to Havant Borough Tree Wardens, payments can be made into our bank account.

Account No: 84937017

Sort Code: 55-70-34

Please include your name as a reference.

## Havant Borough Community Lottery

You can also support us through the Havant Borough Community Lottery. You have the chance to win up to £25,000, plus additional prizes in special draws, and we receive 50p from every £1 ticket. A further 10p is paid into a community fund and grants for specific projects are distributed from the fund to eligible good causes every six months.

<https://www.havantlottery.co.uk/support/havant-borough-tree-wardens>