

Friends of Pelaw Wood 2016 Secretary's Report

When I wrote last year's report I really hoped that by the time I wrote this one the landslip would finally be behind us, but sadly not quite yet. Hopefully it won't be too much longer! 2016 has certainly seen a lot of progress on that front, and the wood has gained some new railings, matching a truly beautiful new seat.



The group has grown during the year, with 63 members on our email distribution list (up from 52) and we have undertaken some varied work, from filling in holes created by bottle-mining to installing bat boxes. As ever, *Durham University Conservation Volunteers* have provided us with many hands and much enthusiasm, which is greatly appreciated.

This year we obtained our first photographic evidence that the wood is visited by a wide range of mammals, including badgers and roe deer, and on our bat walk we discovered that it is home to at least one large bat roost. Hopefully 2017 will bring more such discoveries.

Sarah Wheeler, Secretary

Publicity

- David Crutcher has done a great job of keeping the website up to date throughout the year, including photos of our activities and write-ups of events
- Our Facebook group now has 65 members and we have 42 followers on Twitter.
- We have publicised work sessions in *The Durham Times*.
- Jenny Zass-Ogilvie produced some flyers that have been useful to give out to visitors passing through the wood

Liaison with other groups

- *Durham University Conservation Volunteers* have supported us on a several occasions during the year
- *The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)* through our affiliation and their website support
- *Community Woodlands Group* attended by Ian Zass-Ogilvie on behalf of the group

Liaison with the County Council

- John Bragg as the landowner's representative
- *Parish Paths Partnership* for funding
- Rights of Way officers about the landslide

Members' activities

- New Year's Day stroll
- Clearing paths of leaves and mud to make them less slippery
- Filling in the large holes created by bottle-mining near the silver link bridge
- Removing motorbike trails to prevent further damage to the wood
- Badger survey with Durham Badger group
- Wildlife camera used in the wood
- Dawn Chorus Walk
- Repairs/improvements to existing steps and building of new ones
- Litter picking
- Himalayan balsam pulling
- Putting up bat boxes across the wood with Durham Bat Group
- Bat walk
- Cutting back fallen trees
- Scything brambles in the hockey field
- Caring for trees we planted
- Celebrating bonfire night
- Relaxing in the *Queen's Head* after working in the Wood

Acknowledgements & thanks for their practical and financial support

- John Bragg for his active support & encouragement
- *Parish Paths Partnership* for funding
- *Durham University Conservation Society* for their enthusiastic help
- Jimmy Charlton of *Charlton Fencing* for materials used to maintain steps
- Tony & Barbara for the bonfire & refreshments
- The *Queen's Head* for all those plates of chips!

www.pelaw-wood.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofpelawwood

www.twitter.com/PelawWood

