

Tree Warden Newsletter

Dear Tree Warden,

Welcome to the new-style newsletter. I know that many of you do not have email in which case I will be sending this Newsletter to your Parish Clerk. Hopefully it will give you a chance to draw the attention of the Parish Council to the tree warden activities. If there any problems do please let me know. In any case I would appreciate it if you would all let me know if this has arrived safely so that I can track down any omissions.

Meanwhile, 2009 has been a busy year and there follows an update of our activities:

Dutch elm disease morning at Seven Sisters Country Park

Six Tree Wardens joined elm wardens and rangers to learn about elms, disease control methods After a number of power point presentations, we went out in the South Downs Joint Committee land rovers and looked at some problem sites where e.g. the owners were unknown or unco-operative, or the disease was running through the roots. We finished the outing with a visit to see the magnificent collection of elms in the Friston valley, where thanks to vigilance, natural isolation and good luck there is a magnificent collection of large wheatley, wych and Huntingdon elms.

Tree Warden Forum



Adrian Allaway (Hamsey) Lynnette O'Halleron (Litlington) and Mary Parker (TW Co-ordinator) attended and enjoyed an excellent day out. Ted Green was on form and regaled us with information on the management of "working" trees for the production of firewood, fence posts, ships, buildings etc worldwide. There were enlightened presentations on hedgerow management and the up-to-date strategies of the Forestry Commission. In the afternoon we strolled around the grounds of Windsor Great Park where the trees seemed even more outstanding than ever.

Trees and Power Lines

Two good speakers and some dramatic photos turned what might have been a boring subject into one of excellent interest. One extra ordinary bit of information was that thieves often try to steal the copper wires from the transformers and get electrocuted as a result!!

Trees and Planning

A good crowd of tree wardens, parish councillors and local government officers attended and Chris Hannington certainly presented us with plenty to think about. It seemed to me amazing that with so much legislation to protect trees, they can still so often be chopped down in a blink of an eye!

Chris will be taking up the post of Head of Conservation and Education (Oxon) at the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust in January. He tells me that the trust is huge in Wildlife Trust terms (60 staff, 50,000 members, £3.5M budget, 80+ reserves, etc). His job will be pretty challenging: 11 staff, large budgets, some great ancient woodland sites and some challenging landscape scale 'living landscapes'. I am sure Chris will be missed in Wealden as I know he has always been very supportive – From all of us - good luck.

Another tree disease

A new disease is taking hold of mature oak trees - Acute Oak Decline (AOD)



Symptoms consist of extensive stem bleeding. Both pedunculate oak (Quercus robur) and sessile oak (Q. petraea) are affected. The fluid may dry and cake on tree stems at certain times of the year.

Some of the affected trees die within 4 to 5 years of the onset of symptoms. In the early stages of the disease no changes in canopy health are noticed but as trees approach death, canopies may be visibly thinner.

The incidence of AOD in Britain is unquantified at this stage but estimates put the figure at a few thousand affected trees. The condition appears to be most prevalent in the Midlands and investigations to determine the extent of the disorder are underway.

Unless there is immediate concern about safety, infected trees should be left in place and monitored. If possible cordon the trees off to prevent access to them. It is unknown how the causal agents spread, but several potential agents have been found in the bleeds pouring from the trees so this could be a source of infection.

Goodbye Sussex branch of the International Tree Foundation.

I was saddened to learn recently that this branch, formerly Sussex Men of the Trees, is to cease. The aims and objectives of the national body appears to be diverging from those of the local branch and the hardworking committee members who have all been in post for many years, have, in the absence of younger people prepared to take on the demanding work of organizing the branch, decided to retire.

Over the years numerous local schools, groups and charities have obtained advice and financial assistance with tree planting projects while the money raised in support of the Community Tree Nurseries in Rwanda has dramatically improved the lives of many people in that far off country.

The latest News of Ruanda and the training programme for the next few months are attached

I do hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I am looking forward to meeting many of you in the coming months