



## In the Newsletter this Month

For yet another year we seem to have gone straight from winter to summer without the spring bit—with record temperatures at the end of March. Large areas of the country are already in drought, and more being declared as I write—we have seen under 30% of our average rainfall so far in 2012, our ponds did not fill this winter, our well is dry, and the ditch has not flowed since March 2011! Please keep us up to date with what happens in your woodlands in the drought year.

If you are researching the history of your woods, we've got some tips, as well as a great new online resource featuring the original drawings the Ordnance Survey made when creating the first maps—thank you to Steve Peek for this!

Anybody buying a woodland through woodlands.co.uk is offered a contribution towards a training course, and lots of us go on courses to increase our skills and knowledge. This month, we have two course reviews, and we hope to run a series on courses according to their type: what to look for, what to expect, and reviews of courses that you have been on. So, if you have recently been on a course and would like to review it, please send it to us, as we'd love to pass your experiences on to others.

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The usual news round-up includes the publication of some important documents including the revised National Planning Policy Framework, that is now in operation. There has also been a review of Habitats Directives, Environmental Regulations and a report regarding the separation of children from nature. And another plant disease to watch out for, this time affecting Sweet Chestnut.

Thank you again for your wonderful contributions. Please keep them coming. And please try and get along to one of the brilliant forthcoming SWOG meetings in woodlands near you!

Sarah Walters (sarah@swog.org.uk)

## Researching the History of Your Woods

Steve Peak wrote about a new resource that has become available for people researching the history of their woods, which got me thinking about how we have researched the history of our own woods.

Here's what Steve said

*“Anyone researching the history of their woodland should look at the Ordnance Survey's original large-scale drawings made for the first edition of their famous one-inch-to-the-mile maps. These preliminary drawings were made between the 1780s and 1840, and, being significantly larger in scale, they show much more detail than the printed maps. The 351 drawings cover most of England south of a line between Liverpool and Hull.*

*They can be seen on the British Library's website: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw/index.html>.*

*On that page there is a box on the right headed “Search within this collection”. Type in the name of the nearest village or town. The next page to come up headed “Ordnance Survey Drawings search results” and this will show one or more map titles (the surveyors were given specific areas to survey, which often overlapped with neighbouring surveys). The next page shows the drawing*

in small scale. Next to it is the option “Interactive zoomable image (needs Flash)”. Click on those words and the drawing comes up much bigger, and you can zoom into it.

You are now looking at the original surveyor’s drawing (or drawings, if there is more than one) from which the first one-inch-to-the-mile map was redrawn. Unfortunately, they do not print as sharply as you can see them on screen.

This site is definitely worth a look. We have been researching the history of our woods since we took ownership in 2007, and we still learned something. We knew the woods took their present, rather unusual shape, in 1874. However, looking at the original Surveyor’s drawings, we learned they had been this odd shape since 1805. We had thought from the age of the trees that the woods were clear felled at around this time, possibly for ship timber.

However, they were marked as woods more or less throughout the 19th Century, so this felling may have been sequential, with wood used for pit props and other local industry, and the current almost uniform age of the trees is accounted for by grazing, which prevented regeneration.

If you are interested in researching the history of your woods, these are some of the resources that we have found to be useful.

**Domesday Book online** - <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/>

This is invaluable if you have ancient woodland, but may be useful if your wood is more recent too, as it may tell you whether there was previously woodland on the site. It nearly always fails to give a precise location, but we are fortunate in having a Priory and the historic site of a mill close by, and these are described as being in wooded land, so we can be confident this included our wood. You need to know the Parish in which your wood is located. Ancient woodlands on Parish boundaries (such as ours) are likely to be truly ancient, and as modern Parishes can trace their history back to Saxon times, they may well be over 1000 years old.

There are two sites offering **older versions of maps online**, in addition to the Surveyors’ drawings that Steve discovered. Old Maps <http://www.old-maps.co.uk/index.html> - is rather a slow site, but have patience, because it is worth it! This shows old editions of the Ordnance Survey from 1st Edition in the mid 19th Century onwards. It shows the outlines of woods and how things have evolved since then. There is also OldMapsOnline at <http://www.oldmapsonline.org/> (thank you to Andy M from the forum for this link). This works more quickly, and has scanned copies of maps produced for a variety of purposes, from OS 1st Edition, to Boundary Commission reports (interesting if your wood is or was on a boundary), land use maps and others. We learned that the arable land near us was previously a mixture of arable and pasture, for example, and this may account for the differences in plants growing there now.

#### Local histories

Get down to the local library (if you still have one!) as they may have a history written by local enthusiast. We found the “Green Book” – a small pamphlet published in 1960’s by a schoolteacher, giving a history of the Parish of Alvecote and Shuttington, with a



#### Course Directory

##### Institute of Chartered Foresters

Forthcoming events are on

<http://www.charteredforesters.org/default.asp?page=33>

##### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

A large range of courses for woodland owners

For *BTCV Short Courses*

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level3/536/level>

For *BTCV long courses*

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level3/561/level>

##### Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

To see upcoming courses for 2012 visit

<http://www2.cat.org.uk/shortcourses/>

##### Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To see courses for the coming year visit

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/events/courses.aspx>

##### LILI Courses

For the full range of courses from the Low Impact Living Initiative, please see

<http://www.lowimpact.org/courses.htm>

##### Wildlife Trusts

All 47 UK Wildlife Trusts run events of potential interest to woodland owners. For further details please see

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/whats-on>



huge amount of interesting material. There may be local archaeological society, or local history society, and it is worth seeking them out and asking what they might know about your wood.

**Church/Parish records** will obviously be of use if your wood is glebe land or attached to an Abbey or Priory (as ours once was), but they may have old maps, or records of old landowners in the area, including the Manors.

**County Museum and Archaeological Records** – your County Museum may have old maps of the area, and records of archaeological finds in the area. We used the online facilities provided by Warwickshire Museum to discover that several caches of Roman coins had been found in or near our woods, as well as a bronze age flint arrowhead. They were lodged with Tamworth Museum but they lost them in the 17th Century, and we don't know where they are now. Your local museum may be less absent-minded, and have artefacts from your wood! The County Archaeologist visited our site when we sought planning permission for a barn building (on a World War I concrete base), and they can give you brilliant advice about what to look for in terms of human-influenced landscape structures.

**Habitat inventories (ancient woodland) on MAGIC** <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic/> - this is a Government database of habitats, and will tell you if your wood is ancient, or likely to be on an ancient site. The first thing you need to know before you do anything to your wood!

**Local Residents**—Talk to residents, particularly older ones! We found out a lot from older residents of the village, and also the grandson of a shepherd who lived in our derelict building in the 1920's. The locals call our wood “The Piggery Wood” which gives you a clue as to its previous use, as do the plants now growing there on soil enriched by manure! But we had no idea sheep were there until we met this elderly gentleman. Neighbouring farms have often been in the same family for generations, so talk to the farmers—they often know a lot about your wood. Our neighbour's grandfather used to own our wood, he grew up playing in it as a child, and it was grazed by cattle. So we have built up a history of grazing by sheep, cattle, pigs and goats (in the 1990's), accounting for its features.

**Legal Documents**—when you take ownership of the wood, you may be able to ask for the legal documents that surrounded previous sales to previous owners. We were offered a pile of papers by our Solicitor, and very interesting they were too! They covered the whole of the 20th Century, and showed how the land has been divided and ownership changed during the last 100 years.

**Names and what they mean**—a lot can be deduced from the name of a wood, and there are good guides relating to ancient names and what they mean for the origin and use of the wood e.g. <http://info.sjc.ox.ac.uk/forests/Place-Name-Elements.htm>. This site covers Celtic as well as Anglo-Saxon terms.

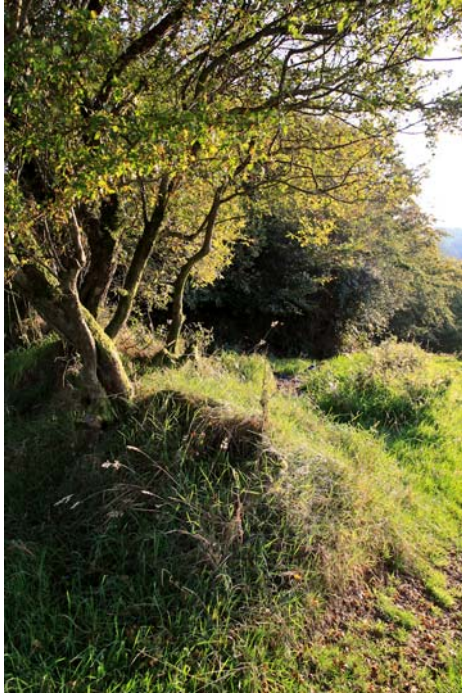
The RFS also has a good section on their web site <http://www.rfs.org.uk/news/topical-topics>

*“On the High Weald in Kent and Sussex, the ending “denn” or “den” comes from the old English for a woodland pasture, especially for swine. The ending “holt”, or its corruption to “hot”, originates from the old English for a wood or thicket and “hyrst” was a wooded hill and is normally written “hurst” nowadays.*

*“Thwaite” derives from the Norse for a clearing in the forest - and the ending “ley” or “leigh” meant the same in Anglo-Saxon.*

*The names of woods themselves often reveal their past. If a wood is named after a parish and adjoins a parish boundary, it is likely to be very old indeed. Woods with names such as Spring, Cuts, Coppice or Copse are often ancient woodlands whereas Plantation, Covert, Belt, Furze and Scrubs are more likely to be 19th century in origin.”*

We learned that if your woodland is called Wood, this is Anglo-Saxon, therefore likely to be ancient, (although Woodhouse likely to be post conquest, and there is a Woodhouse Farm just along the road from us). However if it is called Woods, then this is likely to be more recent. A subtle but important difference.



Landscape Features—such as banks, hedge-banks and lynchetts, can be important in determining the age of your woodland, and the use of the land around it. A brilliant source for this is a book called “*The Living Landscape: How to Read and Understand It*” by Patrick Whitefield (<http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Living-Landscape-Read-Understand/dp/1856230430>), which I will review in a future newsletter. Suffice to say that reading the landscape can tell you a lot about the history of your wood in the absence of any documentation.

These are the resources we have used to build up the history of our own wood, a chequered history involving the Earls of Leicester (pre and post Conquest), and briefly, Queen Elizabeth I, the Earls of Essex and Tamworth Colliery Company. *But we would love to hear from you about the history of your own woods. Please write in and tell*

*us what you have found out, and the resources you consulted. Knowing your land is the best way to learn how to manage it, and the history is key!*

### Course Review—Introduction to Green Woodworking, York Wood Crafts

*Tony Buy wrote*

My wife and I attended a course at the weekend. It was an "Introduction to Green Woodworking" and was run by James Bower and Ben Chester, York Wood Crafts. The pre course info was good and the website is good. The course took place in the grounds of the National Trusts' Beningborough Hall near York. The location was great. Ben and James were excellent and patient instructors and interesting to listen to. We would certainly recommend the course to others.

The course was good value for money £155 each for 2 day course. But it was also a lot of fun and there was plenty of tea and cake to keep us going. There are not many courses in the North of England and I found this one from their Web Site. They deserve some support and a bit of exposure.

*York Wood Crafts can be found on <http://www.yorkwoodcrafts.org/> and they run a full range of green woodworking courses, including bow-making, making a shave-horse and pole lathe, making a Viking bowl lathe, tool-sharpening, green oak framing, and hedge-laying. Definitely worth a look if you live near York.*

### Greenwood Days Open Day

On Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> March, Greenwood Days, based just outside Ashby-de-la-zouch on the Derbyshire/Leicestershire border, held an Open Day. People were invited to turn up and have a go at a wide range of green woodworking and other crafts and get tasters of the courses that they run. Based in a lovely birch wood, courses are run mainly by Peter Wood, but other tutors are brought in for specialist courses.

Peter is a great tutor: he came to our own woods to teach us green woodwork and pole lathe turning in November 2011, but since I have not had a chance to do any green woodworking since then, I was keen to have another go. Peter had a number of pole lathes set up with roughly cylindrical

The Greenwood Centre offer a range of courses of interest to woodland owners

<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/WoodlandCourses.htm>

Phil Hopkinson of Malvern Coppicing offers practical coppicing courses

<http://www.malverncoppicing.co.uk/>

Yorwoods offer courses for woodland owners and managers in the Yorkshire area

<http://www.yorwoods.org.uk/training>

Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

offer a wide range of courses, some of which are of interest to woodland owners

<http://www.ieem.net/otherevents.asp>

Royal Forestry Society Divisional Events

The programmes for February 2012 can be seen at

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2012/04/01/month/all/all/1>

Bat Conservation Trust

Run a number of training courses. The full brochure is available at

<http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/training.html>

There are special courses for arborists, on use of bat detectors and bat surveys

pieces of wood ready to go, and I quickly got back into the swing of things – and decided I must get my own pole lathe as it was such great fun!

Peter makes some great greenwood furniture too – and runs courses in making traditional ladderback chairs, complete with bending the wood to make the frame, making the seat and turning and working all the legs and the back of the chair. Impressive stuff, although beyond me in terms of time commitment at the moment, but there are simpler items you can make too, including rustic stools, and turned rounders bats, rolling pins and garden dibbers. This was enough to get me to sign up on another course to refresh my skills and learn to make a rustic stool.



#### **Ben Law**

Runs a wide range of woodland management and woodcraft courses in Sussex

<http://www.ben-law.co.uk/education.html>

#### **Brighton Permaculture Trust**

Run a number of courses of potential interest including courses on pruning old fruit trees, introduction to permaculture and building with straw bales.

<http://www.brightonpermaculture.org.uk/>

#### **Bulworthy Project**

The Bulworthy project run courses including guided walks, as well as one day introductions to charcoal burning

See <http://www.bulworthyproject.org.uk/>

#### **Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre**

Run a wide range of courses on wildlife, livestock and lifestyle management. See their web site for more information.

<https://www.kingcombe.org/courses/intro.aspx>

#### **Plantlife**

A charity dedicated to wildflowers and wild plants, run a programme of educational activities

[http://www.plantlife.org.uk/things\\_to\\_do/activities/](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/things_to_do/activities/)



There are also courses by other tutors: in particular I was attracted to the idea of making a mountain dulcimer. This simple musical instrument is easy to make and play (relatively easy...!), and I was enchanted by the idea of making one of these. The courses teaches you to make one using plywood, as it is cheap and easy to work, but there is no reason once you have learned how to make a dulcimer, that you could not make one from planed wood from your own harvest. So I signed up for another course.

Another fantastic course deals with making rustic furniture with minimal working – that is, using the pieces of wood almost as sculptural elements to make a chair – making use of natural branching and split slats for the seat and back. These pieces are astoundingly pleasing, and I signed up for that one as well.

Peter runs willow weaving courses, and we were encouraged to have a go at this, making a willow fish as a preliminary to making a basket, which we would learn on the course – I didn't have a go at this as I was absorbed with the pole lathe, but it is

definitely something on the list for the future. Willow sculpture courses are also on offer.

There are also painting and drawing courses run by a local artist, teaching people how to capture the beauty of the woodland using pen, pencil and oil pastel. And a coracle-making course, where you can build and test a traditional coracle.

The whole site is lovely – there are rustic shelters with a lovely log fire, which provided visitors with coffee and soup, and a built-in steamer to bend your chair backs. There is a lot of good equipment, and you can even attend a course on how to care for your equipment, and sharpen your tools like you have never sharpened them before. On a misty and rather cold day, the woods were rather magical, and it is easy to get lost in time, working away on your project.

The Open Day was a great idea and gave me confidence to try out a number of things I would not have considered before. Peter clearly has a lot of clients who come back again and again for more and more, and he obviously loves his work, and has a gift for showing people how to make things from wood. Inspired by this, I have gone back home and made some tea light holders, but this is only the start, and once I have the tools, I am sure there will be more woodworking from Alvecote Wood.



For more information, please see <http://www.greenwood-days.co.uk/greenwood-days-courses.html>

## National Planning Policy Framework—Final Version



The new National Planning Policy Framework was implemented on 27<sup>th</sup> March, becoming effective immediately. This replaces all previous planning guidance, and forms a new framework for development directed by local plans. Following considerable concern expressed by conservation and heritage bodies, this guidance has now been substantially revised, addressing many of the concerns that were raised.

There is now a definition of Sustainable Development that aligns with the definition of sustainable development

under the UN General Assembly Resolution 24/187, and the UK Sustainable Development Strategy with its five principles of living within the planet's environmental limits, ensuring a strong, healthy and just society, achieving a sustainable economy, promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly. However under this definition, a presumption in favour of sustainable development remains, underpinned by the Local Plan, which becomes key: if development accords with the plan, it should be approved, if not, it should be rejected.

Local plans are now tasked with a number of potentially conflicting priorities including identification of land for development (for housing and economic development as well as minerals extraction), transitioning to a low carbon future and protecting the natural environment and heritage.

A number of new safeguards appear in the document: development of brownfield sites, (such as the abandoned car park pictured above) ahead of greenfield are encouraged, although targets will be locally set, and there is also encouragement for change of use of existing buildings to meet local needs (e.g. commercial to residential). Protection from out of town development is beefed-up: town centres will be defined, and development will be expected to take place there first, then edge of centre, with out of town being allowed only if the former cannot be achieved.

Of interest to woodland owners is the fact that environmental protection gets a good boost here too: Local plans must set out a plan for creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. The aim is a net gain in biodiversity, and planning permission in designated areas will usually be refused. It is expected that authorities will collaborate to produce landscape-scale plans. They will have to "*identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them, and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation*" – so they will need to know what is there, how they are connected and how to protect them. Locally designated sites get a mention for the first time, albeit at the bottom of the hierarchy of protected sites. Development on or adjacent to and impacting upon SSSI must only occur in exceptional circumstances.

Planning permission should be refused for loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland, and veteran trees outside of woodland areas unless need for and benefits of development clearly outweigh the loss. This stops short of absolute protection for ancient woodlands, but since these are likely to be designated as areas for biodiversity in Local Plans, development is unlikely to be permitted on those sites.

**Staffordshire Wildlife Trust** – Forest Schools/Delivering the Curriculum Outdoors, a full range of courses for those working with children in their woods

<http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/files/documents/1258.pdf>

**The Sustainability Centre** offers lots of courses around the theme of sustainable living. Upcoming courses include Festive Willow Craft and Coppicing.

[http://www.sustainability-centre.org/courses\\_adult.php](http://www.sustainability-centre.org/courses_adult.php)

**Bishops Wood Centre** at Stourport on Severn, offer a wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners including bushcrafts, photography, pole lathe and other woodland crafts, as well as offering forest school leader training and CPD

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/education-and-learning/be-healthy/outdoor-education-centres/bishops-wood-centre/training-and-courses.aspx>

**British Dragonfly Society** run a programme of field visits and educational events.

<http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/diary-field-trips-and-other-bds-events>

There are likely to be conflicts: but there are better protections for the countryside, and for woodlands, than in the draft document. Those of us with designated (SSSI or Local Wildlife Site) woodland are likely to see little change, and are likely to see protection from development strengthened. If you have plans for your woodland – perhaps the development of a rural enterprise such as training, camping, small scale forestry – then it is wise to get involved in the development and revision of the local plans, as if such development is not mentioned in the plan, then it is unlikely to be approved. It will be almost impossible to get permission to build a house in your woods, unless you meet the criteria of exceptional and innovative design introduced for isolated rural houses.

Local Plans in existence will need revision, and those that do not exist must be completed within 12 months (provisions from 2004 will remain to guide decision-makers until they come into effect). It is worthwhile engaging in this process to ensure that the level of protection for your wood is considered, and any business plans you have for it are also considered in the final plan, otherwise you may find yourself thwarted by the Local Plan. Talk to your local council, parish council, or local councillors and see what their plans are, and how they may affect your woodland. To read the full report see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>

## Forestry Regulation Task Force—Government Response



The Government have responded to the recommendations made by the Forestry Regulation Task force in a document published on 27<sup>th</sup> March, and have set out the way in which they will do things differently for forestry regulation. Although this applies to forests of all sizes, some elements are of potential interest to owners of smaller woodlands.

One of the over-arching principles is the aim of a major increase in the area of woodland in England, and

in particular to better enable landowners to choose woodland creation and management.

One of the problems highlighted by the task force was the lack of coherence between Natural England (NE) and Forestry Commission (FC), requiring multiple permissions for woodland management, particularly in relation to tree-felling. The FC and NE are now to work together to develop joint permissions within management plans. The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) will be promoted when dealing with other codes that relate to forest management, and the FC will develop a series of standard UKFS compliant management plan templates for a range of forest types. This could help small woodland owners in developing management plans and accessing the grants on offer for them. This is to be developed by a sub-group, including woodland officers and MyForest during 2012 in time for the new suite of rural development grants available from 2014.

Another principle is that of earned recognition: owners and managers who show compliance and achieve desired outcomes should feel a lighter regulatory touch, although it is not yet clear how that will operate.

The FC is expected to develop partnerships with the private sector to deliver a lot of active woodland management, freeing up technical staff to concentrate on under-managed woodlands – the FC will identify owners of unmanaged woodlands and understand what would best enable them to manage the woodland. This pro-active approach may help small woodland owners who are deterred from managing their woodlands by finding out

**Woodcraft School** have published their timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses

<http://www.woodcraftschool.co.uk/woodcraft-courses.htm>

**Acres Wild Woodland** have 2012 timetable of woodland and woodcrafts courses available on

<http://www.acreswildwoodlands.co.uk/courses/index.shtml>

**Willowcraft and Woodlands** is a social enterprise doing woodcrafts and woodland management based in Worcestershire. They run a number of woodland management and woodcraft courses of potential interest to woodland owners including courses on Living Willow structures, coppice management and treebog construction.

<http://www.willowcraftandwoodlands.co.uk/>

**John Waller, Underwoodsman** has an extensive programme of courses available. Lots of green woodworking, coppice management, charcoal making, living willow and introductory blacksmithing. See [http://www.underwoodsman.co.uk/html/at\\_a\\_glance.html](http://www.underwoodsman.co.uk/html/at_a_glance.html)

**Shift Bristol** are running a year long practical sustainability course as well as a seasonal programme of workshops. See

<http://www.shiftbristol.org.uk/index.html> for further details.

**FloraLocale** run a wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners [www.floralocale.org](http://www.floralocale.org)

what the barriers are. There are also to be preliminary talks between FC and NE regarding an integrated land management grant scheme i.e. combination of English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) and Higher Level Stewardship (HLS).

Regarding grants, the FC will be considering whether eligibility to claim Woodland Management Grants should be dependent upon certification under the next rural development programme starting in 2014: there will be an applicants' focus group looking at how the scheme can be redesigned which includes the above scoping for combination of EWGS and HLS. They will also consider the threshold of size at which certification is required – it has recently risen to 100 ha from 30 ha, so small woodland owners are unlikely to be affected by this unless the decision is to require certification for all woodlands. It may be worth getting involved in the consultation if you can as certification can be quite burdensome for small woodland owners, and it would be sad to see this come into force as a requirement for a management grant.

Felling licences are to be retained as particularly useful for the owners of small woodlands not under management plans. The FC are also to develop a web-based system for reporting illegal felling – something of potential interest to owners of small woodlands that form part of a larger area, where they are concerned about the actions of neighbours, but may also result in legitimate felling in small woodlands being reported by neighbours!

Online resources are to be improved. As well as the woodland management plan templates to be produced, mentioned above, the FC will produce a Quick Start guide to the UK Forestry Standard by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. They will also work to harmonise the UKFS and UK Woodland Assurance Standard. The Quick Start guides will produce checklists for use of practitioners, and should be available as smartphone apps as well as for computers, so they can be used in the field. Free mapping resources are also being developed for woodland owners wishing to develop management plans.

There is to be some work looking at how Habitats Directive implementation and sustainable forest management can work hand in hand without undue burdens on the industry, in line with DEFRA's Habitats Directive Implementation Review (which has concluded that in fact, the UK does not apply these directives over-enthusiastically).

A review of the Rural Payments Agency and Rural Land Registry treatment of woodland is also to be carried out. The National Planning Policy Framework retains a strong level of protection against development on woodland sites, particularly ancient woodland, and local authorities need to take account of advice provided by FC and NE as at present in their decision-making. It is not clear what role the FC and NE will have in development of local plans, but it is likely that they will be involved along with other stakeholders.

Overall, it looks as if small woodland owners are likely to be encouraged to manage their woodland, and it may be made easier for them to access the grants available to do this, particularly if their land holding is complex, and includes wooded and non-wooded areas, currently covered by different grant schemes. It remains to be seen how much money will be available under the 2014 rural development plans, and how easy it will be for small woodland owners to access these funds. *To read the full report, please see [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/GovernmentResponseFRTE.pdf/\\$FILE/GovernmentResponseFRTE.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/GovernmentResponseFRTE.pdf/$FILE/GovernmentResponseFRTE.pdf)*



**Courses from The Mammal Society** – a wide variety of courses, at various venues and dates. 2012 dates now announced.

<http://tinyurl.com/69l76s7>

Courses in forthcoming months include mammal identification and radio tracking.

**Dorset Centre for Rural Skills**

Run a range of courses of interest to woodland owners including hurdle-making and green woodworking.

<http://www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk/courses.htm>

**Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses**

Include grassland management and drystone walling. Details on.

<http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/?page=cotswolds-rural-skills>

**Acorn Ecology** in Exeter run a range of courses including a Phase 1 habitat survey course, and courses on surveying and handling bats, otters, water voles, dormice and other protected species

[www.acornecology.co.uk](http://www.acornecology.co.uk)

**Forest Garden Show-elstrode**

Practical woodland courses and yurt camping. Upcoming courses include green woodworking, hurdle-making, beekeeping for adults and children.

[www.forestgarden.info](http://www.forestgarden.info)

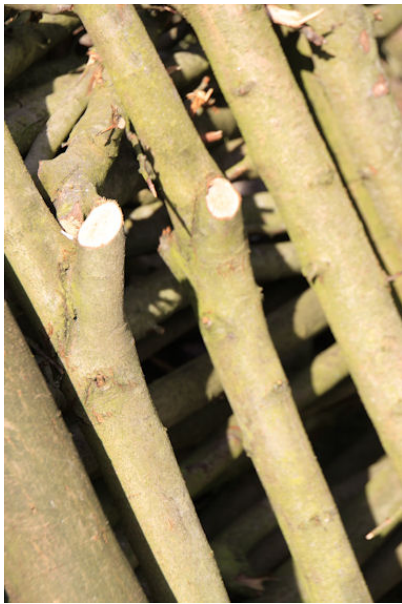


## News for small woodland owners

### Don't fell trees without a licence prior to development

The Forestry Commission advises developers to check before felling trees as outline planning permission or land allocated for development does not permit felling without a licence. This obviously applies to any developments in your own woodlands that will require trees to be felled.

If you think trees are being inappropriately felled by developers, please report this to the Forestry Commission. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/WebNewsReleases/B7A950B07ADFC4CC802579BB003B0DEF>



### Air Quality and Wood-Burning Stoves

Breaches of European Air Quality Standards in urban areas are becoming more frequent, and this is not helped by the use of wood-burning stoves. All wood-burning stoves in smoke-control zones (that is, most towns and cities in the UK) have to be designed to have low emissions, and have a certified exemption for use in smoke control zones. But exempt appliances can still affect levels of particulates and nitrogen dioxide, and guidelines must be followed. The quality of fuel can greatly affect performance, particularly the extent to which it has been properly dried. Performance is also affected by operating temperature.

Camden Council have produced some very good guidance here <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/air-quality-and-pollution/air-quality/guidance-on-wood-burning-stoves.en;jsessionid=A3948AACFB1310193B1A1875DF7DABAE>

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/air-quality-and-pollution/air-quality/guidance-on-wood-burning-stoves.en;jsessionid=A3948AACFB1310193B1A1875DF7DABAE>

The Environmental Protection Agency state the following (<http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/air-quality-and-climate/air-quality/solidfuel/>) “Emissions of local air pollution from a modern wood fuelled appliance are, however, usually higher than those of an equivalent gas fired appliance. The environmentally friendly choice therefore really depends upon where you live. If you live in a rural area where the air is relatively clean a wood fuelled system may be the best option, whilst if you live in an urban area with poor air quality a gas-fired system may be the best choice environmentally.”

It is very tempting to want to burn wood, particularly if we have a sustainable source available, but this may not be the best thing if you live in a city—it may be better to sell wood to rural householders and use gas for heating instead. A difficult balance to strike.

### New FC Publication: Greenspace Design for Health and Wellbeing

A new best practice guide has been published for those designing outdoor spaces, where health and wellbeing are an important consideration—places such as schools, residential homes, NHS estates and places enjoyed by the public. It deals with the concept of therapeutic landscapes. See [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/publications.nsf/searchpub/?SearchView&Query=\(fcpg019\)&SearchOrder=4&SearchMax=0&SearchWV=TRUE&SearchThesaurus=TRUE](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/publications.nsf/searchpub/?SearchView&Query=(fcpg019)&SearchOrder=4&SearchMax=0&SearchWV=TRUE&SearchThesaurus=TRUE)

The Field Studies Council run a wide range of courses for individuals, families and professionals at their centres around the UK. Courses of interest to woodland owners include tree identification, woodland management and woodland ecology, and wildlife surveying and recording techniques. See their web site for details of all courses

<http://www.field-studies-council.org/>

#### AJS Crafts

Offer a wide range of courses covering many different woodland-related crafts. Upcoming are courses on spoon making, charcoal burning, willow basketry and sweet chestnut gates and hurdles.

<http://www.ajscrafts.co.uk/courses/CourseList.aspx>

DWWP offer a range of woodland activity and traditional woodcraft courses in Yorkshire

<http://www.dwwp.co.uk/Woodland%20Skills.asp>

#### Coastal Survival and Bushcraft Courses

Available from the Coastal Survival School in North West Wales. Courses include 1-day, 2-day and 5-day survival skills courses for individuals and families. See web site for more details.

<http://www.coastalsurvival.com/>

Permaculture Courses from Patrick Whitefield, including how to read the landscape

<http://www.patrickwhitefield.co.uk/reading-the-landscape-info.htm>

## Wildlife Surveys—another site looking for contributors

The Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre are looking for folk to submit data. The Centre provides training on how to record, as well as lots of information on the recording schemes that they run. See <http://www.kmbrc.org.uk/aboutus/index/index.php>

## New Rural Economy Grant scheme from DEFRA announced—Deadline 30th April

The deadline for outline applications under the new Rural Economy Grant scheme is 30th April. This grant is available for “game-changing” transformational performance in farming, forestry or rural business. Applicants for businesses of all sizes are invited, but they should demonstrate how a step-change will be achieved e.g. opening new markets or providing new employment. Woodland owners and forestry contractors can apply, as well as not-for-profit companies. Details are on <http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/rural-economy-grant>

## Welsh Government Opt for Badger Vaccination rather than cull

In contrast to England, Wales have come to a different conclusion based upon the same scientific evidence, and opted for badger vaccination rather than a cull. This has met with a mixed response, but if you have a woodland in Wales, you may now be involved in a vaccination programme, rather than a cull. The announcement is on the Government of Wales web site at <http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/environmentandcountry-side/2012/120320vaccination/?lang=en>



## Habitats Directives Review Report Published

In a report published on 12th March – in essence the UK does not “gold-plate” implementation, but the lack of a coherent national plan means infrastructure projects and development sometimes lose out. Recommendations as to how to proceed are in the report. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2012/03/22/pb13724-habitats-wild-birds-directives/>

## Sweet Chestnut blight found in UK

If you have sweet chestnut in your woods, you may want to get up to date on the emergence of a new blight which has made its way to the UK.

The disease is caused by a fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica*, and has caused two outbreaks, in Warwickshire and East Sussex, and has not been seen in the UK before, although it has been spreading northwards on the European continent. Both outbreaks stem from recently planted trees from the same source. Spores spread from wood and bark, as well as seedlings, and can persist for many months after cutting. Symptoms include a girdling canker of sunken bark of a different colour to the normal bark. If you suspect an infection in your woods, please contact the Forestry Commis-

**Moelyci Environmental Training Centre** offer a wide variety of courses of interest to woodland owners, including courses on Phase 1 habitat surveys, national vegetation classification and wildlife surveys. <http://www.moelyci.org> for further information.

**Monkton Wyld Court** in Dorset offer a wide range of courses in sustainable living. See <http://www.monktonwyldcourt.co.uk/> for more information.

**BTCV London** are running courses on woodland management and coppicing.

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level4/19/level>

They also run a wide range of other courses on wildlife and conservation including practical and certificated training.

**Woodlandskills.com** Based in Sussex, they offer a variety of courses in the field of woodland living, survival and traditional wood crafts.

**Abbots Living Wood** offers a range of green woodworking courses

[http://www.living-wood.co.uk/2011\\_course\\_dates.html](http://www.living-wood.co.uk/2011_course_dates.html)

**First Responder Course** from Emergency Life Support Team—as reviewed by Tracy and Mike. Learn first aid in the outdoor environment and get HSE accreditation as a First Aider too.

<http://www.elst.co.uk>

sion via the link <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-8s5qbf>, which also gives more information about this disease. Gabriel Hemery has also written about this new blight on <http://gabrielhemery.com/2012/03/22/sweet-chestnut-blight-found-in-britain/>

## Offcuts Newsletter available for download

The newsletter of the Oxfordshire Woodland Group (Offcuts Newsletter) is now available for download. Definitely worth a read once you have finished this one!

<http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Offcuts-53-Feb-2012.pdf>

## Natural Childhood—a new report from the National Trust

On 29th March, the National Trust released new report entitled “*Natural Childhood*” which highlights the problems resulting from a disconnection from nature among children, the benefits of wild play and learning in natural environments, and the way forward to ensure that another generation does not grow up without knowledge and experience of nature and wild places.

To read the report see [http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/servlet/file/store5/item789980/version2/natural\\_childhood.pdf?campid=NT070051M1-link&aff=78888](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/servlet/file/store5/item789980/version2/natural_childhood.pdf?campid=NT070051M1-link&aff=78888)

## DEFRA Red Tape Challenge – Results of Consultation and Proposals

The result of a consultation on streamlining of Environmental Regulations has been published on the DEFRA web site. They say

*“Of 255 regulations, 132 will be improved, mainly through simplification or consolidation; 70 will be kept as they are, to uphold important environmental protections; and 53 obsolete regulations will be removed”*

35 of these obsolete regulations that will be removed relate to environment, landscape, countryside and biodiversity. As yet there are no exact details of how this will be achieved, but if you would like to see which regulations may be affected, please download the full report from <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13728-red-tape-environment.pdf>



## Wildlife Trusts take UK Government to European Commission over HS2

Led by Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, the wildlife trusts charge the UK Government with ignoring rules over environmental impact assessment when approving HS2.

<http://www.warwickshire-wildlife-trust.org.uk/home/news-and-events/2012/march/warwickshire-wildlife-trust-raises-complaint-with-european-commission-over-uk-government%E2%80%99s-decision-on-high-speed-rail.aspx>

## Forthcoming Courses and Events

### FloraLocale training programme for 2012

The Flora locale training programme is created for people involved in the design, management and restoration of wild plants and landscapes for biodiversity, whether on a farm, smallholding, village green, city park or garden. Each event is led by an individual with practical experience and provides an informal opportunity for participants to learn from an expert and each other. For further details of individual events, and to book your place, please see [www.floralocale.org](http://www.floralocale.org). Here is a summary of the courses available, with dates and locations. For more detail, please see the FloraLocale web site.

#### SCOTLAND

**Woodland flora ecology and identification**, Tuesday 8 May, Auchincive, Ayr, (Ref SC1)

This will cover the identification of woodland wildflowers, ferns, sedges and other ground flora in different woodlands

#### EAST ENGLAND

**Woodland wildflowers for new woods**, Wednesday 18 July, Marston Moretaine, Bedfordshire (Ref E1)

This day will be useful for landscape professionals, those working on community projects, for parish or town councils and owners and managers of amenity woodland.

#### SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

**Woodland ground flora in new and established woods**, Thursday 24 May, Leith Hill, Surrey (Ref SE1)

Learn how to acquire sound baseline information so that you can recognise what is already valuable in particular ancient woodland indicator species before you start a management regime.

#### WALES

**Restoring native woodlands and managing open glades**, Tuesday 25 September, Carmarthenshire (Ref W6)

A field based event looking at the restoration of native broad leaved woodland, from a conifer plantation, using sensitive management.

#### MIDLANDS

**Restoring and managing old orchards**, Wednesday 26 September, Bewdley, Worcestershire (Ref M2)

Learn how to maintain and care for the veteran trees in a traditional orchard to provide a vital habitat for rare wildlife, including the Noble Chafer beetle. Look at how to conduct tree surveys for wildlife interest.

#### SOUTH EAST

**Good practice in managing ancient trees**, Wednesday 17 October, Burnham Beeches, Slough (Ref SE7)

Ancient trees are irreplaceable parts of our living heritage. This day is aimed at owners, site managers and tree workers who may be called in to advise on tree management.

#### SOUTH WEST

**Restoring and managing old orchards and fruit trees: Orchard Pruning**, Wednesday 31 October, Malmesbury, Wiltshire (Ref SW3)

This course seeks to teach practical skills to contractors, volunteers, team leaders and parties who are tasked with or interested in restoring, managing or promoting old/heritage orchards.

For further details about any of the above events, please see <http://www.floralocale.org/>

## Coed Phoenix

Coed Phoenix are running a series of wildlife discovery days at their nature reserve in Ceredigion. Aimed at beginners and amateurs, you will learn about wildlife, and how to record it. Workshops are available covering moths (29th and 30th June), butterflies (14th July), reptiles (7th April), amphibians (28th April), bats and dragonflies (16th June), birds (12th May) and wildflowers (15th July). Further information is available on their web site at - <http://www.thegreenphoenix.co.uk/page3.htm>

## Royal Forestry Society Events

From Woodland Economics to Walking Sticks – that is how the RFS describe their forthcoming programme of events, which include site visits as well as events covering specific topics. Here is what they say about their programme

*“Are you wondering about Woodland Landscape Economics, in a quandary about the Genetic Quality of Seeds or simply fond of Fungi, Mosses, Birds and Forestry?”*



All are featured as Royal Forestry Society's (RFS) 21 Divisions launch one of their most exciting and diverse programmes of woodland visits and talks.

The visits and talks are held in England, Wales and Northern Ireland throughout spring, summer and autumn, and can count towards Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for a number of organisations. They are open to all members, and, by arrangement, to visitors.

RFS Chief Executive Dr John Jackson said: "These events offer a unique opportunity to meet with other professional and amateur woodland owners and lovers, to discuss issues of common interest with experts in their field and to understand how others are tackling the issues that interest you."

Other topics being covered are as diverse as bio-energy, the Welsh Wood Chain, management of SSSI lime woods, restoration on mineral workings/mining sites, elm tree conservation, wooden ships at Chatham dockyards, ancient monument protection, and growing and manufacturing walking sticks!"

The full programme is available on <http://www.rfs.org.uk/> - please take a look and see what is going on near you.

## Patrick Whitefield Permaculture Courses

Patrick Whitefield is a well-respected author, tutor, and mentor in the field of Permaculture. He offers a variety of courses for people interested in managing the land sustainably. This is a great introduction for woodland owners looking to establish a forest garden, manage their woods sustainably. Courses include

- Reading the Landscape (based on his great book on this subject)
- Permaculture Design Course
- Sustainable Land Use Course
- Permaculture in Five Days

He also plan to put a Sustainable Land Use course online. Please see his web site for more information—<http://www.patrickwhitefield.co.uk/reading-the-landscape-info.htm>

## SEWAF Meeting 13th April

This message from the South East Woodland Archaeology Forum. "The next SEWAF meeting will be at Faygate Village Hall, West Sussex. We will have various speakers during the morning session which will run from 10:30 to 12:30 which will be followed by an afternoon walk in nearby St Leonard's Forest to have a look at some of the archaeological features found there during a recent survey. We are being joined by the Horsham and District Archaeological Group and members of the Friends of St Leonard's Forest"

<http://www.swog.org.uk/events/sewaf-meeting-13th-april/>

## Woodland Art Days with Mark and Isabel Fisher

A tutored, painting based, art project day inspired by nature and the setting. Suitable for all abilities, materials provided and a delicious alfresco lunch. The day costs £45. More information can be found at Mark's website [www.markfisherart.co.uk](http://www.markfisherart.co.uk) along with more about Mark and his work.

If your group, 8-10 people, want their own day other dates can be booked.



### Greenwood Centre

The Greenwood Centre offers a wide range of woodland management and wood craft courses the whole year round. Based in Shropshire.

<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/index.htm>

### Black Country Living Landscape –

courses including wild-flower plug planting and rustic fence-building  
[http://www.bcll.org.uk/whats\\_happening/events.html](http://www.bcll.org.uk/whats_happening/events.html)

### The Bulworthy Project

These SWOG members offer a range of courses to suit your own needs on the subject of charcoal burning.

<http://www.bulworthproject.org.uk/>

### Greenwood Days

Offer courses to public and corporate groups on green woodworking and a wide range of creative arts in Leicestershire

<http://www.greenwood-days.co.uk/>

### Woodland Skills Centre

Courses in coppice and greenwood crafts- Woodland management, basket-making, Chair-making, timber-frame building, Wood carving, coracles, oak swill baskets, Make and use pole-lathe and shave-horse, Charcoal, home chain-saw, hedge-laying. Bushcraft courses and Family Holidays.  
[www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk](http://www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk) or 01745710626

Mark Fisher Art

Woodland-based art days for all abilities

[www.markfisherart.co.uk](http://www.markfisherart.co.uk)

Dates for 2012 are

- Friday 27 April
- Saturday 19 May
- Monday 28 May
- Friday 29 June
- Saturday 7 July
- Friday 7 September
- Saturday 29 September



## Open Day at Ravenshill Woodland Nature Reserve

On Saturday 21st April there is a Bean Pole Sale and woodland open day at Ravenshill Woodland Nature Reserve, Alfrick, Worcestershire. from 10AM till 3PM. There will be an opportunity to see a charcoal burn taking place and have a go at cleaving and shaving in our woodland workshop. There will be guided walks led by the woodland owner. There will be an opportunity to purchase products produced in the woodland such as bean poles, pea sticks and obelisks.

Further details are on Phil Hopkinson's Malvern Coppicing web site at [http://www.malverncoppicing.co.uk/latest\\_news.html](http://www.malverncoppicing.co.uk/latest_news.html)

## Courses at the Box Moor Trust

The Box Moor Trust in Hemel Hempstead runs a variety of craft-based courses. They also run Forest Schools Training at Levels One, Two and Three. Dates and courses so far announced are

28th April - Green Woodwork - an introduction to skills and techniques by Robin Fawcett, a well-known local green woodworker.

5th May - Keeping Bees - join our bee keeper, Diane Randall, for an introduction to keeping bees. Honey will be available to buy.

26th May - Weaving - join Maggie Stearn, a local weaver, to learn about setting up and using a heddle loom. There is a charge of £7 for the woven item.

30th June - Driving horses - Join George Tite for a chance to learn the basics of long reining.

28th July - Pottery - run by the Dacorum and Chiltern Potters Guild - a chance to work with clay and use our on-site kiln. There is a charge of £5 for the finished item.



## Forest School Leader Courses in Suffolk

The Green Light Trust offers Forest School leader training at levels one, two and three, as well as running an educational programme for children designed to immerse them in nature, and natural processes. For more information, please see <http://www.greenlighttrust.org/forest-schools/>

## New photography and bushcraft courses at Alvecote Wood

Introduction to photography—22nd April, 21st June, 7th October and Macro/insect photography—22nd June

For details, please see [www.alvecotewood.co.uk](http://www.alvecotewood.co.uk)

We are also offering bushcraft and green woodworking courses, in association with [getoutoftheclassroom.com](http://getoutoftheclassroom.com)—if you are interested in these, please see [www.getoutoftheclassroom.com](http://www.getoutoftheclassroom.com)

Basic Green Woodworking Skills—**Fri 18th May**

How to prepare and manage a campfire—**Sat 16th June**

The arts of whittling—**Sat 14th July**

Family Bushcraft—**Sat/Sun 11/12th and 18/19th August**

## Forthcoming SWOG Events

### Note from Tracy

If you do book a place, please actually turn up! We have rather a large number of 'no shows' at meetings which is very disheartening for those running them and means that others might have been able to go in your place.

### SWOG Meeting, Clan Wood, April 14th 2012

Many thanks Howard and Shirley Symonds of Clan Wood, who have kindly offered to host a meeting at their wood in April. They first mooted the idea whilst attending a meeting last year at Julian Evans' wood in Hampshire. Howard has sent us a nice introduction to the wood and some great photos.

Clan Wood is part of the East Hyden Wood and is part of a range of woodlands which is now in the South Downs National Park. It slopes gently to the south and is on clay with flint over chalk. The wood contains hazel, ash and some mixed broadleaves. The west side consists of a grass valley which has in the past been used as a shooting ride. The remainder of the wood is oak plantation and un-thinned mixed broadleaves. The area we are currently coppicing and forms part of our Management Plan is part of an area totalling 1.5ha. It is seriously overstood hazel and ash coppice with too many hazel, ash and birch standards and is being restored and managed on traditional lines. The objective is to maintain the valley as grassland, bring the coppice into rotation and thin the plantation to improve the mix of trees. Some mature beech trees will be retained to become veterans.



### SWOG Meeting, Hendall Wood, Heron's Ghyll, East Sussex, April 21st 2012

Two adjacent parts of Hendall Wood are open, courtesy of Duncan & Bridget Ferns and Penny and Rich.

Duncan & Bridget Ferns family bought their 52 acres in two-halves, the first in 2004 and the second in 2006. It is Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) with a seasonal stream, carpets of anemones and bluebells, areas of orchids and many archaeological features surveyed by Wealden Iron Research Group (8 pits, 15 or so charcoal platforms and a couple of likely sawpits). The east end of the wood is coppiced sweet chestnut, split into 8 cants. We are now in the fourth year of coppicing cants of 0.5-1 acre. Extraction has been by the low-impact 'Iron Horse' machine with caterpillar tracks, and mowing we use a BSC power-scythe, both of which we hope will be demonstrated. Deer browsing is a serious issue, despite fencing, and deer management has started during 2011-12. The majority of the woodland is being left as 'wildwood' of mature ash, hornbeam with beech and oak standards.



Richard and Penny's adjacent wood is the northern spur of Hendall wood and about 11 acres in size. The woodland shares a lot of the features and history of the main part of the wood (charcoal platforms and a sawpit) and is slowly being restored to a working wood. We have found mention of the wood as far back as the 1500's, Hendall was one of the gateways to the Ashdown Forest, and derived from the word for a 'hind' presumably a hind deer.

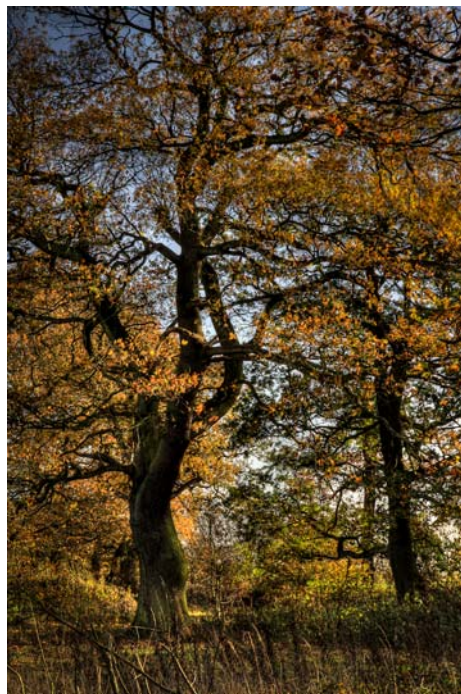
We have been actively managing the wood for about 4 years now, coppicing and opening up a ride. The main problem as with anywhere close to the Ashdown Forest is the pressure of deer numbers. These have proved almost impossible to keep out of the newly coppiced cants, however they definitely have an order of preference for certain species. Oak, hornbeam and hazel tends to get browsed the hardest, whilst chestnut and alder is left relatively

unscathed.

If you would like to attend the meeting, please email: [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk), full details will be sent out nearer the time.

### **SWOG Meeting, Alvecote Wood, North Warwickshire, 28th April 2012**

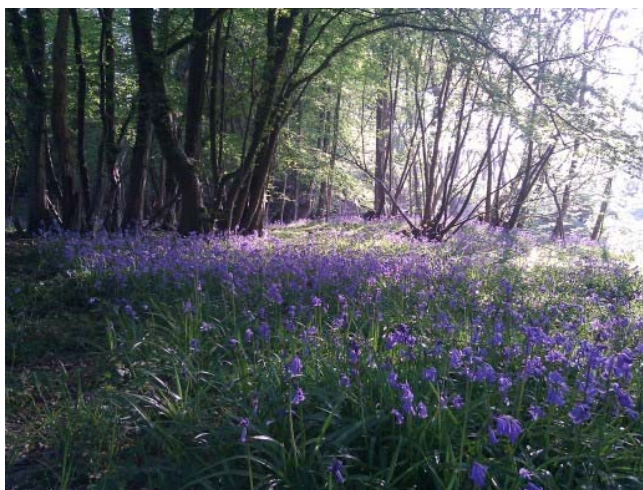
Sarah and Stephen are pleased to invite SWOG members to their woods again in 2012. Alvecote Wood comprises 11 acres of ancient oak woodland, together with 9 acres of newly-planted woodland, wildflower meadow and ponds. **Gina Rowe, Director of Living Landscapes at Warwickshire Wildlife Trust** will be coming along to discuss landscape-scale conservation and how small woodland owners can work together with each other, with farmers and other organisations to provide the best environment for wildlife across a whole landscape. This can be demonstrated at Alvecote Wood by looking at the newly-planted Betty's Wood and the way in which the site is being managed for wildlife in itself, and in conjunction with neighbouring wildlife areas. Warwickshire Wildlife Trust can also talk about other landscape-scale conservation initiatives in the area. Camping will be available on site, and Stephen and Sarah will also happily provide a walk and talk through the woods, discussing the management issues that have arisen since they took ownership in 2007.



There will be a public Open Day at Alvecote Wood on Sunday 29th April, and visitors are welcome to stay and make a weekend of it, and see what we do on our Open Days. Please contact [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) for more information, and to book a place!

### **SWOG Meeting – Ferriby Wood, Yorkshire, 27th May 2012**

Mike is kindly offering to host a meeting at his woodland on the edge of the Yorkshire Wolds. Parking is available for 6 or 7 cars so make sure you book with Tracy. Mike says it's an easy walk or he will ferry people with his Land Rover. Please bring a mug and packed lunch, there will be a fire and trivet for those who want to cook.



Suggested topics for discussion include:

- thinning of young beech
- healthy market for ashpoles
- coppicing/market for products
- new rainwater system
- ride cutting regime
- flora/fauna diversification

Tracy will be sending out full instructions nearer the time so please email her if you are interested in attending [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk)

### **SWOG Meeting Rainham, Kent, 17th June 2012**

Andy has offered us a SWOG meeting with a difference! This one involves his Alpaca farm (and lots of newly planted trees) There will also be a guided walk by Peter from Butterfly Conservation and a short talk from a bee-breeder.

More details to follow, please keep the date free in your diary!



## Woodfairs in 2012

The season of woodfairs is about to start, so here are the dates for your diaries. More information is available on [woodfairs.co.uk](http://woodfairs.co.uk)

### Woodfairs in Scotland

#### Royal Highland Show

Edinburgh

21st - 24th June 2012

<http://www.royalhighlandshow.org/visitors/tickets>

#### Peebles Wood Market

21st and 22nd October 2012

Tweed Valley

<http://www.peebleswoodmarket.co.uk/>

### Woodfairs in Wales

Dates for 2012 yet to be confirmed, please check [woodfairs.co.uk](http://woodfairs.co.uk) for more information.

### Woodfairs in England

#### Live crafts and festival of woods

Nr Reading, Berkshire

Variety of dates through the year.

[http://www.livecraftslimited.co.uk/live\\_crafts.html](http://www.livecraftslimited.co.uk/live_crafts.html)

#### Capel Manor Gardens

20th - 21st April

<http://www.capelmanorgardens.co.uk/events/celebration-of-trees-and-the-countryside.html>

#### Silk wood fair

5th - 7th May 2012

Venue - Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury Gloucestershire, GL8 8QS

[www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt)

#### Weird and Wonderful Wood

12th and 13th May 2012

Haughley Park, Wetherden, Nr Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 3JY.

<http://www.weirdandwonderfulwood.co.uk/>

#### Devon county show

17th - 19th May 2012

Westpoint, Exeter

<http://www.devoncountysshow.co.uk/home>

#### Horse logging demonstration

27th May 2012

Scottish borders TBC

<http://www.bordersfestivalhorse.org/>

#### Roydon Woods Woodfair

Hampshire



27th May 2012

<http://www.hwt.org.uk/events.php/1836/roydon-woods-woodfair-and-local-produce-market>

#### Blackdown Hills Woodfair

7th July 2012

Park Farm near Wellington

<http://www.woodbiz.co.uk/freepage.asp?ID=9>

#### Great Yorkshire show

Harrogate

10th - 12th July 2012

<http://www.greatyorkshireshow.com/html/home/>

#### South Downs Woodfair

21st and 22nd July 2012

Queen Elizabeth Country park, South Downs National Park

<http://www.woodlandcrafts.co.uk/woodfair.html>

#### New Forest and Hampshire County Show

Brockenhurst, Hampshire

24th - 26th July 2012

<http://www.newforestshow.co.uk/index.htm>

#### National Forest Woodfair

26 and 27 August 2012

Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire

<http://www.leics.gov.uk/woodfair>

#### Stock Gaylard Estate Oak Fair

Near Sturminster Newton, Dorset

Saturday 25th August 2012

<http://www.stockgaylard.com/oak-fair/oak-fair-at-stock-gaylard.html>

### **Festival of the Tree, Westonbirt** Treefest

25th - 27th August 2012

Venue - Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury  
Gloucestershire, GL8 8QS

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt>

### **Woodworks**

1st and 2nd September 2012

Forest Centre and Millennium Country Park

Marston Mortaine

Bedfordshire

MK43 0PR

<http://www.marstonvale.org/woodworks/>

### **Lincolnshire Firewood fair and auction**

Revesby Estate, Lincolnshire

2nd September 2012

<http://www.lincolnshirefirewoodfair.co.uk/>

### **Wychwood Forest Fair**

Sunday 2nd September 2012

<http://www.wychwoodproject.org/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Wychwood/Events/Forest+Fair/>



### **APF 2012**

Ragley Estate, Alcester, Warwickshire

13th - 15th Sept 2012

<http://www.apfexhibition.co.uk/>

### **Wild about Wood**

15th and 16th September 2012

Castle Howard Arboretum Trust, Kew

<http://www.wildaboutwood.org/>

### **Bentley Weald woodfair**

21st - 23rd September 2012

Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum, Hal-  
land, near Lewes, East Sussex

BN8 5AF

[http://www.bentley.org.uk/#/](http://www.bentley.org.uk/#/woodfair/4525168793)

[woodfair/4525168793](http://www.bentley.org.uk/#/woodfair/4525168793)

### **Derbyshire County Council Woodland Festival**

22nd and 23rd September 2012

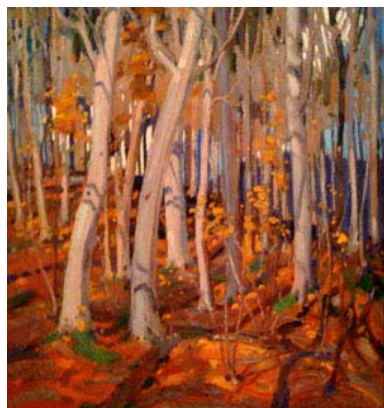
Elvaston Castle Country Park, Borrowash Road, El-  
vaston, Derby. DE72 3EP

10am - 5pm

08 456 058 058

[countrysideservice@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:countrysideservice@derbyshire.gov.uk)

## On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk and woodlandsTV



*These are the latest blogs from Woodlands.co.uk and videos on woodlandsTV. Please have a look and comment upon them, as they make very interesting reading.*

### **Signal Crayfish by Lewis**

An invader from North America, this

threatens the survival of native crayfish species in the UK.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/signal-crayfish/>

### **Painting Woodlands and Wildlife by Angus**

Angus recently attended an exhibition of paintings of woodlands made by Canadian artists in the 1920's. Read about this group of seven landscape painting pioneers.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/art-and-craft/>

[painting-woodlands-and-wildlife-landscape-painting-pioneers/](#)

### **The invasion of the land – mosses, bryophytes and climate change by Chris**

We are talking long-term climate change here, not recent anthropogenic climate change. But we aren't the only species to have influenced the climate – the mosses and bryophytes played a key role in creating our atmosphere as well as establishing the carbon cycle on which land life depends. <http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/invasion-of-the-land-mosses-bryophytes-and-climate-change/>



### **Hockney, Trees and Woodlands by Margaret**

David Hockney is better known for his paintings of famous people in the 1960's, but this exhibition attended



by Margaret at the RA recently was about woodlands, and the landscape of his native Yorkshire.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/art-and-craft/hockney-trees-and-woodlands/>

### The Harlequin Ladybird by Chris

Another alien invader is explained in this blog entry. This comes from Asia, and has affected numbers of native species of ladybird in the UK

and Europe. Read more here, and find out how you can help with a survey here [http://www.harlequin-survey.org/downloads/Ladybird%20descriptions\\_Info%20pack\\_NEW\\_v.5.pdf](http://www.harlequin-survey.org/downloads/Ladybird%20descriptions_Info%20pack_NEW_v.5.pdf)

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/the-harlequin-ladybird/>

### My Wood by Matt

Matt writes about his own wood, so we can share his

experience. A lovely post about his ash wood close to his home.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/my-wood/>

### Creating a Woodland Pond by Angus

Angus tells us about a project to create a large pond in his woodland, complete with an island for nesting birds. There are some great tips here about how to maximise the benefit of the pond for wildlife.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/creatin-a-woodland-pond-and-encouraging-pond-life/>

*And not for the squeamish...on woodlandstv*

### Butchering and cooking a squirrel by Sean Collins.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2012/03/butchering-and-cooking-a-squirrel/>



## Woodlands.co.uk in the news...

### One Million Viewers on the WoodlandsTV Channel

On 23rd March, WoodlandsTV celebrated their one millionth viewer. Originally created to help people thinking of buying their own woodland make an informed decision, Woodlands TV has expanded its offer to a huge range of topics. Filmed live out in the woods, the films cover wildlife, bushcraft, forestry skills, survival basics - every aspect of woodland life. Skills such as flint knapping, horse logging, campfire cooking and coppicing are taught step-by-step by [Woodlands.co.uk](http://www.woodlands.co.uk) experts. Many of the films also have a humorous take on living a woodland life (if only for a weekend) and offer light-hearted and practical suggestions. A few films are not for the squeamish, featuring how to survive in the wild and live off local plants and animals.



Producers Josef Pitura-Riley and David Riley of Dulwich Studios say: "Our videos take people straight out into the woods to learn from outdoor experts some of the oldest and most practical skills known to man. The content is live, it's often raw and above all, it's educational and inspiring. For most people, they may be the easiest way to reconnect with nature from the comfort of their homes."

Please have a look at these entertaining and instructional videos on [www.woodlands.co.uk/tv](http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv)

### Small woodland ownership getting press coverage

Articles have recently been published featuring small woodland owners in Be Happy Magazine, Home Farmer Magazine and the Evening Standard.

## On the SWOG Forum

### Newsletter - April 2012

#### About SWOG

The Small Woodland Owner's group has been formed to aid the enjoyment, diversity and conservation of British Woodland. As Woodlands.co.uk is sponsoring the group there will be no annual fee for members, and events are free of charge unless otherwise stated.

Anyone can join in, (you do not need to own a woodland) just send Tracy your details (name, address, email) to be put on the list. We will not pass your information to anyone else.

Please do join with us and share your wealth of knowledge and experience with others, as well as your joys and moans. We have members from all over the country. We are also on Facebook if you like to communicate that way! See [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=61487332523](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=61487332523)

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[www.swog.org.uk](http://www.swog.org.uk)

*It has been a very busy couple of months on the forum, so this section is a bit longer than normal. Please feel free to join the forum, and join in the discussions. Here is a flavor of the most recent threads.*

**Tommy** is a student at Plumpton College, and is undertaking a survey about dead wood management in coppiced woodland. If you can help, please visit his SurveyMonkey site and take part <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/coppicedeadwood>

**Tracy** wants you to send in reviews of any courses you have attended. Please see the forum, and write a review for other SWOG members.

**Stephen1** replied to the Scottish Hutting thread—bemoaning the fact that people are encouraged to manage woodland to make it conform to the NVC11 template, rather than managing it sensitively. Do you think you should be allowed to build a holiday home in your wood? What impact do you think it will have? Visit the forum and have your say.

**Munch** is a beekeeper looking for a woodland in which to site beehives in the Hampshire/South East area. Can you help? Please visit the forum.

**Neil** is worried about the spread and density of wild garlic in his wood. Lots of useful information in this thread regarding the relative behaviors of bluebells and wild garlic—their preference for different soil types and levels of light in particular.

**Jillybean** reviewed a wilderness first aid course she attended, and found to be very helpful. **Tracy** pointed out that this course is being re-run in her own woodland in July—discounts for SWOG members. Please see the forum for more details.

**School of storytelling** posted an interesting piece about their work in honouring and promoting the art of storytelling. They tell us of a geomancy course they will be running at their centre in June. If you don't know what geomancy is, then visit the forum to find out more!

**Greyman** posted a warning about chain flail attachments to strimmers—they can

wear out, the chain fly off and hurt people. They have been banned in most of Europe. Check out the post for reasons why these tools aren't a good idea.

**Neil** also asked about inheritance tax and woodlands—are they exempt? There is an exemption for commercial forestry, but few of us can say we are commercial foresters. There are different rules for the land and the trees on the land—if you want to find out more, please look at the forum.

**Rich** has posted about a project for Channel 4 tv, in which producers are looking for people about to complete an innovative and transformational project on their land, including tree houses. If you are going to start such a project in May, or soon after, check the forum if you are interested.

**WoodyAlan** asked whether you can transplant saplings after the growing season has started? Advice on how to protect and keep the root-ball intact was provided. If you want to do this, check out the forum.

**Rich** wants to rent a water bowser (*don't we all!*). If you can help, please see the forum.

**Jamieinness11** is looking for coppicewood in Cambridgeshire for hurdle-making. Can you help?

**Meadowcapse** raised the issue of firewood theft, which is on the increase, having noticed his stacks shrinking recently. Advice to leave it in 10ft lengths until ready to use was suggested. Have you had firewood stolen? Do the thieves bring and use chainsaws or is it small scale and opportunistic? And how helpful are the police? Please see the forum.

**Keith Williams** alerted woodland owners in Kent to the presence of Asian Longhorn Beetle—you may be contacted by FERA to co-operate with its eradication.

**Hobby** asked how he can increase the yield of hazelnuts in his wood. Coppicing is one way, but varying success levels on old hazel are reported.

**Peter Randall** is a new member, a woodland manager looking for sites to manage, and make wood-based products. Can you help him? *Check the forum!*