

Friends of Parklands Wood and East Suffolk Greenprint Forum

Looking After Our Community Woods

Approximately 50 people attended the walk around Parklands Wood and subsequent interesting talks on community woodland management.



Key immediate outcomes:

- Additional thoughts on managing Ufford Woodlands were captured and further connections made.
- Seven people joined the East Suffolk Greenprint Forum

Actions to follow up:

- Organise an East Suffolk Greenprint Forum visit with Gary Battell to Staverton Park, Suffolk. A Designated Special Area of Conservation due to: ancient Oaks, rich invertebrate and epiphytic lichen assemblages and old holly Ilex aquifolium trees.
- Check who the official contact is for Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Tree Wardens now and what support is actually available for interested and new Tree Wardens.
- Share link to children's activities to help inspire others – if you use or share please credit West Bank Park Leaders Group – [the resource](#)
- All to share key messages via community newsletters, meetings and contacts.

Key messages

From the walk:

- Opening up areas within the woods by cutting down trees is important but emotive. Good and continuous communication about the management plan, the approach, what it will mean and why it is needed, when it will happen and who will carry out the work is essential. There still will be storms of opinion to weather but it is easier to stand firm when it has been clearly communicated.
- Parklands Woods in Ufford has a fascinating history. Once meadow land and woodland it was sculpted into grand Parklands in the early 1900's for the Brooke Estate. In WWII it was requisitioned by the army for maintaining and storing tanks and guns. Concrete bases of Nissan huts used as

barracks/workshops can still be seen in the woods on this area. (**Note it was suggested that information boards with snippets of social history would add value**)

- Now the lines of Lime, Sweet Chestnut and Oak have infilled with Ash and Sycamore creating dense cover in some parts which is limiting understory growth and natural regeneration. A management plan has been developed by local people with the support of the Greenlight Trust and others and through consultation with the various users of the site.

<http://ufford.onesuffolk.net/assets/Home/Woodlands/Management-Plan.pdf>

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

- There are lots of exciting thoughts for action in the group that has kindly volunteered to look after the site for the benefit of all. These include space for wildlife and activities for children, but wisely a slow, inclusive approach has been adopted to engage as many people as possible in a positive way. There are still hiccups – as with all projects as different people have different views on approaches and techniques for managing woodlands but this is clearly a group that is listening and really doing its best to keep people on board.

Gary Battell - <http://smallwoods.org.uk/about-us/board/>

- Individuals can achieve when they are determined – he has planted 100,000 trees so far. Groups can achieve even more – he provides support and advice to a group that seeks to empower communities in Ethiopia with the ultimate aim of ending child poverty. <http://www.pfcethiopia.org/who-we-are/>
- All groups managing and planting woodland need to adhere to the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs>
- There is a need to avoid monoculture within woods to reduce the impact of diseases and pests. Examples of trees that could be planted for diversity are:
 1. Small Leaved lime
 2. Field Maple
 3. Hornbeam
- There is a lot of research being done on the management of PAWS – Plantations on Ancient Woodland sites - the aim being to retain remnant features of ancient semi-natural woodlands and restore the site to woodland comprising site native species info can be found on:
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-5Z5GJ8>
- A key is to find ways to make the woodland pay towards its upkeep – as there are always costs associated with managing one. Coppicing, cutting down large trees and linking with local users such as The Log House Company <http://www.theloghouse.co.uk/> and Traditional Oak Carpentry

<http://www.traditionaloakcarpentry.co.uk/index-team.php> were mentioned. As purchasers we can close the loop and buy these goods.

Peter Ross

- Old trees have stories associated with them and the land they sit in and we need to treasure them for this as well as their intrinsic value.
- Ancient Trees that are easy to spot are those with a large girth, say 3 or more adult hugs for an Oak, progressive hollowing, bark loss, water pools and fungal fruiting bodies. However coppicing, pollarding, growing conditions and species can mean that some trees are older than you may think. Examples of some notable Ancient Trees:
 1. An Alder Ring of 8 – 10 trees in Spring Wood TM145413 – they are all part of an ancient tree that was continuously coppiced.
 2. [The Arthur Hugh Clough Oak](#) in Boars Hill, England (5 km southwest of Oxford)

Others can be found on <http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/discoveries/interactivemap>

- Woodlands need slow management as standing deadwood is critical for wildlife – have experts carry out safety checks every two years and only take out when absolutely have to.
- Where there is a significant gap between standing deadwood and trees that are to become standing deadwood to replace them – consider aging some trees to ensure sufficient habitat for the species that rely on them.
- When planting trees don't plant too close together – while you may expect some losses often they are not as great as you would expect. Between 3 to 5 meters between trees where it is not a commercial timber woodland.
- When clearing trees do the northern side first to reduce shock and slowly take out over the years rather than clear felling large areas.
- When doing any works that might damage a tree's roots (development, cutting into the ground, compaction) remember that the roots can go out as far as 3 times the height of the tree (depending on the species).

Kevin Rogers

- The UK has just 13 per cent woodland cover, far less than almost every other European country. We need to value our woodland areas and we need to manage them for people and wildlife.
- Why do woodlands need to be managed? To ensure there is sufficient light for them to regenerate within the existing footprint (as we have developed all around

them) and to allow other species to grow in the understory, to ensure there is sufficient diversity to limit impacts of pests and disease, and to support wildlife.

- Examples given of species that rely on woodlands: Jays, Nuthatches, Tawny Owls, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Lesser Red Polls, Speckled Woods, Purple Hairstreak, and White Admirals.

From questions

- Ivy is a valuable habitat – if on a tree or other structure subject to high winds it can present a risk. Ideally it would be clipped to 6ft – 8ft depending on height of tree to reduce the sail effect but it may need to be removed all together in a high risk area.
- Bat boxes – make sure only untreated wood is used and use brass or aluminium screws or nails when putting in trees. Put on many trees as bats are social creatures. Don't disturb once in place - Bats and their roosts are fully protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act so it is illegal to disturb them.. Information on bats <http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/node/4932> and <http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/suffolkbatgroup> and bat homes http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bat_boxes.html
- What causes tree dieback? Disturbed roots, physical injury to trunk and crown, exposure to the elements, water – too much and too little, disease and pest. Needs a trained arboriculturist to really identify problems and solutions with a site visit although an experienced eye can help.