

Gunton Woodland Community Project

NEWSLETTER

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August/September/October/November/December 2021



A Christmas Message from the Chairman (David Briggs)

Seasonal Greetings to all members and friends.

We in the Work Parties have been extremely busy in the wood. Turn out for the Work Parties has increased over the last few months mainly due to attendees having had their Covid jabs. We have been able to attend to all the seasonal jobs in the wood, cutting the wild flower meadow then raking off all the grass, and trimming the path edges.



Now, after our annual tree inspection, we are cutting the dead and dangerous trees to keep the public safe. This will be ongoing through the winter months. There are several large sycamores that have succumbed to sooty bark disease which quickly takes hold and the tree dies within a matter of months. Work has progressed in Foxburrow Wood with the aid of a grant from the Councillors to purchase materials to replace the board walks within the wood. This work will carry on into the winter months and we hope to finish by the end of January. After a spate of vandalism during the summer we asked the local Police to put a watch on areas within the wood particularly during the early evenings. This proved very successful and several groups were dispersed. But they left some damage to our picnic tables, 3 of which were beyond repair. We again sought help from our local councillors who gave us money from their grant scheme to purchase 3 new tables made from recycled plastic. These have now been installed at various locations in the wood.



Work still continues, with fencing in some areas being replaced around sensitive areas, the pond, the B&B area and the Secret Garden.

Maintenance work in the ditch and on the pond pipeline is under way with clearance of the sump that was installed to stop sand and gravel from entering the pipeline. Now sandbags have been put in place around the sump to increase the flow of water into the pond.



A grant was obtained from our local Councillor to purchase a new trailer as the old one was beyond repair. This has now been obtained and is in service to transport chippings around the wood. Thanks to SCC for this.

Best wishes to you all. We wish you a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.
From all the Woodland Committee.

Events. Rosemary Briggs.

We had been able to organise our annual trip to the Snape Christmas show this year and a full coach went on the 4th December.

The show was excellent and possibly the best ever and as usual enjoyed by everyone.

It is hoped to hold the usual events throughout 2022 and with the possibility to hold the AGM in April.

What to look out for - by Janet Field

We are used to seeing honey bees on garden plants and fruit blossom. We've also heard the warnings of their decline. Over 90% of wildflower habitat has been lost since WW2. A recently recorded bee (2001) in this country is the ivy bee, now found in Wales, southern England and the Channel Isles and one may expect they might eventually spread further north. They look like honey bees but have a hairy ginger thorax. You may see them on ivy between September and November. If you have ivy growing over a dead tree trunk or similar it will reward you by attracting butterflies as well as bees. One can help all the bees by planting chives, lavender, oregano, rosemary and other bee attracting plants.



A further assistance could be something we are trialling at the moment by clearing a patch of ground and then scattering Beebombs onto the area. These are wildflower seeds mixed with soil and protective clay and should be introduced in Spring and Autumn. We have carefully chosen a patch of ground which gets both sunshine and rain. Hopefully some will bloom in the first year with the perennials taking two years. As this is a trial and we have a lot of competition from grasses, dockweed, etc. the seed sown area is regularly monitored and recognisable grasses and weeds are removed.

Nature Notes

Fabulous Fungi and Fairy Rings (by Barry Shimmield)



5 years after planting, most of the 6000 odd trees in the Gunton Burial Park have suddenly found their feet and the forest of plastic tubes has now transformed itself into a proper woodland. Perhaps the most distinctive species, due to its almost perfect shape, is the sweet chestnut and, on a mid October walk through the Park, after a period of rain, another noticeable feature was the presence of a *Fairy Ring* around every sweet chestnut tree. What lies behind this quirk of Nature?

The mycellum, an underground network of fungal threads, grows outwards from the tree roots and reacts with the surrounding soil in a symbiotic relationship to form fruiting bodies which appear on the surface as mushrooms. Every year the ring expands as the old mycellum dies off in the centre.

There are many stories and a great deal of folklore associated with Fairy Rings. Many believe that if you step inside one you become invisible. But I have to say, when I tried it, nothing quite so exciting happened to me!

There is a fungal species which is actually called a *Fairy Ringed Mushroom*. Its skin does peel, and it smells right so it is possible that it's edible. But don't forget the sound advice from our long standing friend Alan Beaumont..... ***You can eat all the different kinds of mushroom that you find in the woods, but some of them you can only eat once !!***

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