

Tree Warden Activity Report 2020-2021

Not a lot of activity this year, I'm afraid. The Covid restrictions have prevented me taking parties on guided walks and I was temporarily out of action following the fitting of a pacemaker just before Christmas. You have a bionic Tree Warden now!

Eucalyptus at Little Hoaths Wood

Late in January last year I had a phone conversation with the Forestry Commission's Woodland Officer for East Sussex to find out what was being done about the landowner's non-compliance with the felling licence to clear-fell this ancient woodland. The licence stipulated replanting with native broadleaves but instead the woodland was replanted with Eucalyptus and Norway Maple.

The FC's Woodland Officer confirmed that the matter had been passed to their enforcement team to get the non-native plants removed from the ancient woodland site. But, despite follow-ups by the Parish Council during the past year, no further action appears to have been taken and no information has been supplied to us. Other avenues are now being explored.

Black Poplars

Following the very successful planting of 27 whips of the rare Black poplar tree in the two parishes last Spring, a further 6 from Wakehurst Place were planted this Spring, 3 in Brightling and 3 in Dallington.

Details of the locations and clone numbers are being put in reports to both parish councils.

I've been advised that further planting in the parishes should now be delayed for about 10 years so that the area isn't saturated with trees all of a similar age. Rather, a succession needs to be planned so that a population of varied ages is built-up over time.

More Tree Wardens Needed

There's no limit to the number of Tree Wardens a parish can have. There's more 'Tree Wardening' needed in the two parishes than I can possibly do on my own and I'm not getting any younger. I'm keen to hear from anyone who would like to be involved in championing the tree stocks of their parish. You don't need to be a tree expert (I'm not), only enthusiastic, because there is so much information and support available to you.

Future Plans for 2021-2022

Covid restrictions permitting, I hope to re-start the guided walks in Dallington Forest, extending them into other local woodlands such as Rounden Wood, and doing talks in the Village Halls. And I would love to start working with fellow wardens.

Doug Edworthy