

Welcome to Foxburrow Wood



Welcome to our third update on Foxburrow Wood, the Wychwood Project & Friends of Wychwood's new woodland on the edge of Witney. A lot has happened behind the scenes since our last update, the highlights of which are below.

Planting this winter – see the end of this update for further details

Last year's planting

Our first trees were planted last winter as we started to define the structure for the future entrance from Foxburrow Lane. We also completed planting the hedgerow on the western boundary, which is over half a kilometre long. Hawthorn and hazel make up the majority of the hedgerow complemented with a range of native shrubs. We also planted a range of native trees at intervals within the hedge, to create a mini arboretum. The hedgerow was planted with the help of a grant from the Tree Council's Stella Artois Real Hedge Fund, the trees and shrubs were funded from our first year's Dedicate a Tree income.

Some temporary deer fencing has been erected to limit browsing of the new trees. The location of the fencing will change as the next phases of work take place. Tree survival has generally been good despite the dry summer with only the occasional loss which will be replaced this winter. A short section at the southern end of the hedge will be replanted where ground conditions proved particularly difficult.

Many thanks to everybody who came along to help with the planting –ranging from Friends of Wychwood members, to cubs, Dedicate a Tree sponsors, a cricket team, students from Oxford Brookes University, and Abingdon and Witney College STEPS group.



Past and present Friends chairmen, Ken Betteridge and Michael Drew plant the first tree – an oak - on the 15th January 2011

Site Design

We continued to refine the layout for the woodland over the summer with much use of marker posts to plot-out compartment boundaries, followed by a day with a tractor and rotavator to sketch the design in the soil so that we could measure up the areas accurately. The compartments have been laid out so that they reflect the natural contours of the land as well as creating interesting paths and views. The general layout is shown over the page.

Foxburrow Wood – Proposed Layout (Nov 2011)



Note: Site plans have been compressed to improve download times. If you would like a higher resolution copy please email the Project office.

Fund raising

The greatest area of activity over the summer has been on fund-raising. Our successful Dedicate a Tree programme continues to attract supporters. To-date 376 people have dedicated 738 trees raising over £8000. Thank you so much to all who have dedicated a tree. We have also benefited from a number of substantial private donations, as well as £1500 from RAF Brize Norton. There are still plenty of tree dedication opportunities available.



Young trees already making their presence known

We were pleased to receive an offer of grant aid from the Forestry Commission under their Woodland Creation Grant Scheme. This will contribute towards the cost of tree planting and also give us a small annual payment for the next 15 years which will go towards maintenance costs during the establishment phase.

We have been successful with fund raising from the Landfill Communities Fund. This has come in two forms. The Veolia Environmental Trust (www.veoliatrust.org) have given a grant towards

tree planting, the cost of the remaining boundary deer fencing, laying of the hedgerow along Milking Lane and some other access improvement work around the site. This has been supplemented by a transfer of funds from TOE – the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment when they wound-up their initial grant programme. We are very grateful to all these funders for their support. Having secured these three sources of funds we are well placed to roll-out the programme of tree planting and site works over the coming three years.

Proposed new access from Foxburrow Lane – Your support required!

At the same time as raising funds we have been working hard on plans for an access from Foxburrow Lane that will do credit to the whole site. We are now at the point where our ideas are well developed and we will shortly be submitting a bid to Community Spaces (part of the Big Lottery fund) for a grant to get the work on the ground. We have already passed through the Stage 1 application process and hope to know the results of the final Stage 2 bid early next year.

Any messages of support for the entrance proposals would help our chances of success and can be emailed to the Project Director at nick.mottram@oxfordshire.gov.uk, or posted to the Project Office at the address at the end of this update. The main elements of this scheme are shown overleaf (again at reduced resolution) and include:

- a small area of car parking just inside a new gate off Foxburrow Lane;
- an area for overflow parking which we will use for events, group visits and the like;
- a surfaced path that winds through areas of tree and shrub planting;
- a view point which will have some rustic benches and log-tables, from which people can look down the valley and over the new woodland.

Proposed layout of 'Welcome Trail' entrance from Foxburrow Lane



The Forest Fair

Foxburrow Wood played host again to the Wychwood Forest Fair in September. The weather was good and nearly 4000 people visited over 160 different exhibitors, including a new Woodfuel Expo.

Other news

Over the summer the site has been grazed and a hay crop taken. A student from the Department of Zoology at Oxford University made a survey of ground dwelling insects (results still awaited) and, with the support of the Friends of Wychwood and his former



Eric's bench

colleagues, an oak log bench was placed in memory of Eric Dougliss who died shortly after retiring, after nearly four decades as Oxfordshire County Forester. Eric helped to found the Wychwood Project and has been one of its strongest supporters over the last fourteen years. Without him Foxburrow Wood would not exist.

A more substantial piece of site works starts shortly with restoration work on the Milking Lane hedge. This will involve a mixture of hedgelaying, coppicing and gapping-up with new plants. After the hedge has been laid a new

boundary deer fence will be erected and we will be able to create a proper pedestrian access from Milking Lane.

Dedicate a Tree

The opportunity to dedicate a tree for Foxburrow Wood is still available and has evolved since it was first launched. If they wish people dedicating a tree receive a gift card and certificate; any message they wish to leave is recorded in the Foxburrow Wood Book of Dedications for the future. Trees can be dedicated from £15 for one tree, £40 for three trees and £100 for ten trees. For further information contact Sally Jeffery in the Project office – 01865 815423 or visit the web site www.wychwoodproject.org

And Finally...Planting this Season

Preparations are being made for planting this winter in the main body of the woodland. The planting of the whole site is being phased over 3 years. This year we are starting off with a relatively small area of approximately 1500 trees. Numbers of trees to be planted will increase in each of the following two years.

People who have dedicated a tree, Friends of Wychwood members and the public are invited to come and help with the planting.

At present we have one weekend date the 14th and 15th January and two week-days Thursday 19th January and Tuesday 24th January. Last year the weather caused all sorts of problems being either too cold or too wet, so these dates are provisional. Please keep an eye on our web-site for updates closer to the time.

If you anticipate coming along it would help with organising the events if you would email or 'phone the Project office with your name, which dates you expect to come and if you are bringing other people with you; email: wychwood@oxfordshire.gov.uk tel: 01865 815423. If you can't make these dates, don't worry. There will be plenty more opportunities in the future.

Nick Mottram, Wychwood Project Director (Tel 01865 815424)

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