

Welcome to Foxburrow Wood



Welcome to our February 2012 update on Foxburrow Wood, the Wychwood Project's new woodland on the edge of Witney. A lot has happened since our last update, the highlights of which are below.

Our first trees were planted in January 2011 and we have just finished our 2012 planting with a further 1300 trees and shrubs going in to the ground. The hedgerow on the western boundary, which is over half a kilometre long, is establishing well. 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.

Fencing of the boundaries continues. The main deer fence around the whole perimeter of the site has recently been completed and there remains some temporary deer fencing around the 2011 plantings. The location of the temporary 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 has been replanted where ground conditions proved particularly difficult.



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

Many thanks to everybody who has helped with the planting so far –ranging from Wychwood Project members, to cubs, Dedicate a Tree sponsors, a cricket team, the Cotswolds Voluntary Wardens, staff from the local branch of HSBC and students from Oxford Brookes University and the Abingdon and Witney College STEPS programme.

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)



Fund raising

As well as planting and site works there has been a great deal of activity on fund-raising.

Nearly 380 people have dedicated trees raising over £8000. Thank you so much to all who have joined up. 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. For further information contact Sally Jeffery in the Project office – 01865 815423 or visit the web site www.wychwoodproject.org



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 also been successful with fund raising from the Landfill Communities Fund. 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 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 work over the next three years.

Proposed new access from Foxburrow Lane

At the same time as raising funds we have been working hard on plans for an entrance 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 have just finished submitting a bid to Community Spaces (part of the Big Lottery fund) for a grant towards the cost of the work. 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 slightly 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 'Welcome Trail' entrance from Foxburrow Lane



The Forest Fair

Foxburrow Wood will again play host to the Wychwood Forest Fair in September 2012. Last year the weather was kind to us and nearly 4000 people visited over 160 different exhibitors, including a new Woodfuel Expo.

Other news

During last summer the site was 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). With the support of the Wychwood Project members and his



Eric's bench

former 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.

Work has been taking place on restoration of the Milking Lane hedge. This will involve a mixture of hedgelaying, coppicing and gapping-up with new plants. The work has uncovered the footings of an old wall at the base of the

hedge which will make gapping-up harder. In the next few weeks we will turn our attention to finishing a proper pedestrian access off Milking Lane.



Dedicate a Tree became Plant a Tree for one family this year

Nick Mottram, Wychwood Project Director (Tel 01865 815424)

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