

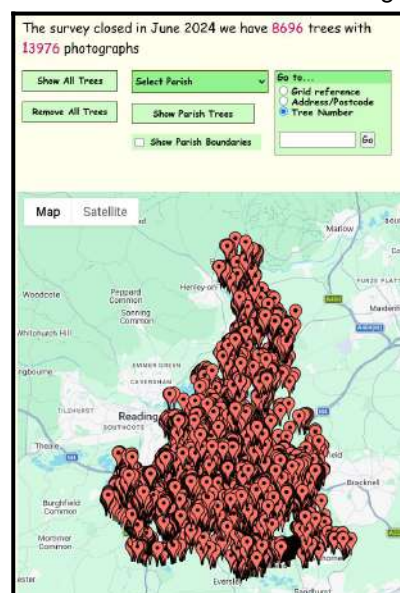


Our Veteran Tree Database was closed in June 2024. The **8,696** trees and **13,976** photos are detailed on our [map](#).

Welcome to the latest issue of Tree Watch.

What a wet winter we are having this year. At least we don't have to water our trees. Some might even become too water-logged.

Next month, on Thursday 19th March at 19:30, we have our AGM. As usual, it will be in St. Paul's Parish Rooms on the Wokingham Road. It's a very convenient venue, with free adjacent



parking. Do come if you can. This year is rather special as we're marking the completion of our veteran tree survey and looking forward to new activities in the future. See page 2 for details. As you can see in the screen shot (left) the mapping of all our database trees mirrors the outline of the borough. The photos here are of the Walter Oak (MRN **5297**) in Sindlesham, the 5,000th tree recorded, and the very last tree surveyed (MRN **9457**) in Hurst – just two of the 4,097 maiden English oaks (*Quercus robur*) we've surveyed.



The next issue of Tree Watch will be May 2026 and the copy deadline is 30th April. If you have any comments or responses to anything in this issue or contributions for future issues please send them to: **Elaine Butler - TreeWatch @ wdvta.org.uk**

Don't forget words underlined in dark green are links to further details (obviously not when printed).

Main items in this issue:- (click on title)

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Events – March - May 2026

- ❖ Thursday 19th March - 19:30 - St Paul's Parish Rooms - AGM - Completion of our veteran tree survey and what's next for the association. Free (donations welcome); free car park adjacent.

Non-WDVTA events:

- ❖ Saturday 25 April - 10:00-13:00 - 'The Secret World of Trees' [Burnham Beeches](#) (booking required).

For up-to-date information - see the events page on our website – wdvta.org.uk/events.php

AGM

Barbara Stagles

Our AGM is on 19th March at 19:30 in St Paul's Parish Rooms (marked on Google Maps as St Paul's Parish Hall – red marker on the Google map below right). It's on the Reading Road opposite Holt Lane.

The meeting will start with a short AGM, followed by refreshments and at 20:00 a summary of our veteran tree survey and a talk by Sam Village, the National Tree Warden Scheme Coordinator.

As you all know the association was set up because of concern about the loss of mature trees. The veteran tree survey started in Wokingham Town and was extended to the borough in 2007 (when Wokingham was still a District). We eventually closed it in June 2024, having recorded over 8,000 trees with nearly 14,000 photos of them. In 2017 we published a 10th Anniversary [Report](#), with a description of each town/parish as well as an overall summary. With the closure of the survey, we have produced a brief report as an update to that report. Copies of the 10th Anniversary report (for anyone who hasn't already got one) together with the update will be available at the AGM. Our website will have an extended version of the printed update after the AGM. We particularly hope anyone who has helped with the survey will come along.

Having completed the survey, we need to plan for the future. We hope this meeting will encourage ideas and suggestions about what we do next. We joined the Tree Warden scheme in 2007, and whilst we have pursued several activities beside the veteran tree survey since then, our main concern has been the completion of that survey. Now we can change our focus and concentrate on other tree-related activities.



THE VETERAN TREE SURVEY

It's rather appropriate that we are holding our AGM and survey completion report at St Paul's because that's where the first training session for volunteers was held. An old oak tree was used to demonstrate where and how to measure the girth. That oak tree is MRN [177](#), an English oak (*Quercus robur*) with a girth of 5.22m in September 2008 and 5.43m when re-measured in May 2017. In August 2012, a lower branch was removed when a 12" split appeared near its base. Another large limb was lost in August 2023, leading to concerns that further limb loss could cause serious damage, especially since the tree was so close to the busy Reading Road. After much discussion and press coverage it was heavily pruned in December 2023, with the Reading Road being closed for 2 days for the work to be completed. The photos below were taken in June 2009, December 2019, September 2023 (from a feature in ['Wokingham Today'](#) with the heading "Church is sad but resolved: ancient Wokingham oak cannot remain as it is") and then in December 2023 after the pruning.



PARISH/TOWN ACTIVITY – MEMBERS’ REPORTS

ARBORFIELD & NEWLANDS

For National Tree Week in 2024, Gabriella Eöry created the ‘[Nightingale Fields Tree Trail](#)’ on the ‘[Go Jauntly](#)’ phone app. For Tree Week last year, she produced a pdf version, available on our [website](#). Incidentally the creator of the free Go Jauntly app was talking about it in a recent episode of Radio 4’s [Ramblings](#) (12th Feb).

CHARVIL - Sarah Swatridge

Tree planting on 29.11.25 was postponed due to bad weather. A Covid Memorial Tree, a horse chestnut, was planted on 14.12.25 in the area of the veteran lime trees. One of these was felled last year but has now sprouted. More planting of apple trees as originally planned took place in the community orchard. This year a Medlar was also planted.

The row of young lime trees near Vale View on the old football pitch are being monitored by the parish council as at least two need replacing. The ‘Water Me’ labels have survived, which is pleasing.

The Anniversary Elm ([W119](#)) on the mound over-looking the recreation ground and the Spanish Elm ([W141](#)), planted with the help of Peter Cuss, is thriving in the East Park Farm car park (near the school and tennis courts).

Hicks built 25 houses on Canberra Lake Way and have planning permission for 75 more on the same plot. The remaining land has now been sold to another builder who has submitted similar plans for the building of new homes and landscaping. I’ve been monitoring this site including whether Hicks continue to honour the maintenance of the trees they have planted so far. They have replaced a number of Himalayan birches which had snapped in half. I will continue to monitor the site.

FINCHAMPSTEAD – Gordon Veitch

One oak tree and two London planes have been planted.

Finchampstead Parish Council, now own the freehold of Moor Green Lakes (*photo left*), thanks to the generosity of a local benefactor. The Parish Council is setting up an independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) the ‘Moor Green Lakes Trust’. This charitable body will oversee the relationship between FPC as freeholders and the existing Moor Green Lakes Group ([MGLG](#)) as lessees. The newly established Trust with its charitable status, should enable and facilitate access to new sources of funding and it is hoped that more land may be acquired. Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (the rangers) will continue to perform an important role supporting the management and maintenance of the reserve. Hedge laying has been taking place on the site.



HURST – Dennis Bryant

A major appeal for housing at Broadwater Lane has been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Inspector concluded that, apart from the harm to the setting of four Grade II listed buildings and moderate harm to Hurst Village Centre Area of Special Character, there was a risk from the proposed access arrangements to 2 veteran oak trees which are irreplaceable habitats. These trees are recorded in the WDVTA veteran tree survey as MRN [6710](#) and MRN [6712](#).

I also measured and recorded another veteran oak tree, MRN [9457](#) on 7/2/24, in the corner of a neighbouring garden to this site. This was requested by the neighbour over concern that the tree roots would be affected by a proposed road/footpath on the proposed development.

At another major appeal at Lodge Road, the Inspectors concluded that public benefits, including contributions during a period of significant housing land supply shortfall, did not outweigh the harms identified as flood risk development outside settlement limits and the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

There is a new detailed planning application for 23 houses on a site between School Road and Orchard Road. The site has already been allowed in outline on appeal. Objections have been submitted by the New Hurst Village Society and Hurst Parish Council. The application includes a Tree Survey and Tree Protection Plan for construction. No veteran trees are

listed on the site. All boundary trees/hedges are protected by TPOs.

The orchard site at Dinton Pasture has now been remediated following the departure of the circus and contact with the WBC Exec Councillor for Environment. Strong guards and netting have been erected around the young trees and they have also been well mulched. We had a very encouraging and reassuring meeting with Richard Westwood WBC in January at Dinton to discuss this and other matters.

Michael Rea and Stephen Loyd have continued to look after hedge trees in Forest Road, Hurst. They are preparing a series of photos to illustrate their development (*see page 8*). Similar projects could will be carried out in other areas.

Reported in [Wokingham Today](#) and reproduced here with their permission, this lovely carving is in the grounds of St Nicholas Primary's School. It's in the corner of a playing field (SU 79619 73439), with a footpath running alongside the playing field from School Road. It's carved from an old oak (too small for our database). It's so great to see a school ground tree, that had to be felled, repurposed with a carving. [There's another example in the grounds of the [Hawthorns school](#) in Woosehill. Do you know of any others?]



RUSCOMBE – Stephen Loyd

A new oak, sourced by the Parish Council from an area free from infection, has been planted at the cross roads to be a second succession tree for the old declining oak (*see page 8*).

SHINFIELD

A new playground, Aldergrove, was opened recently in Shinfield and it was pleasing to see trees planted on the top of a slide mound and in the centre of seating. Not all such plantings are successful! At the nearby Fulbrook Avenue play area the dead sapling and seat are currently surrounded by water! (*photos right*)

TWYFORD – Stephen Loyd

Six new trees have been planted at Stanlake Meadows.

WARGRAVE – Stephen Loyd

An English oak has been planted in Kings Field to celebrate 50 years of the Wargrave Festival. Wargrave Cricket club planted 400 hedgerow saplings in Kings Field. Both these events were reported in the "[Wargrave News December 2025](#)". See pages 5 and 41.



WOKINGHAM TOWN

Fox Hill Woods Conservation Group – Stephanie McKay

The seasonal cycle of work in the woodland has continued. Volunteer attendance at conservation sessions is consistent, averaging 16. More younger people have shown an interest. Work is supported by WBC Countryside officers although communications with different officers may be needed in future. The Countryside Service give help with fallen trees and chipping rhododendrons and applications to coppice. They have recently repaired a couple of public entrances, removing stiles and repairing pathways. WBC have put up signs in the council owned area of the woods. Digging or altering the ground is not permitted in this area. This woodland is protected by a TPO. Digging, cutting roots, moving soil or altering the ground levels around trees is not allowed and can cause long term damage or tree failure. Carrying out works in a TPO area without permission is illegal. The council has a duty of care towards visitors. Unauthorised digging creates serious safety risks, including hidden hazards, unstable ground and risk of falls. Unauthorised jumps and trails within the

council owned area of Fox Hill woodland will be removed.

Redlands Farm Park & Viking Field – Cathy Boddy

A walnut tree was planted in Redlands Farm Park during National Tree Week last November (see page 6).

The plan to plant a community orchard in Viking Field, off Evendons Lane, has been delayed until the Town Council officer, now on maternity leave, has returned to work in April.

Woosehill Meadows and Emm Brook Community project – Juergen Adam

❖ The first of a spring programme of working parties was held at the end of January. We will continue with pollarding willows along the Emm Brook. All welcome. For details contact woose.emm.eco@gmail.com.

❖ There has been winter storm damage to mature oaks in Woosehill Meadows with a mature oak at Kingfisher Bridge suffering major crown and trunk damage and another being uprooted at the Emm Brook along Riverside Walk between Kingfisher and Ripple Stream Bridge.

❖ Freely Fruity is supporting us with the preservation of a heritage apple tree, Lord Derby, from the former Emmbrook House in Woosehill. On 17th January, Matt Knight from [Freely Fruity](#) helped us to take cuttings for grafting on root stock in March with the aim to plant the established grafted trees in the Woosehill Community orchard by the end of 2026. [See the Freely Fruity [facebook](#) report for their description of the day and photos of Juergen and Matt - Ed]

❖ The SERT project to redirect the Emm Brook in its old paleo channel in Woosehill Meadows is progressing. The plans for the bridge construction for the Riverside Walk crossing the redirected Emm Brook have been submitted for planning consent to WBC. Enabling work may start already this year.

❖ During November and December, several drone surveys were completed to support a 3rd year Earth Sciences project at Royal Holloway University of London, led by student Katlyn Law. The project uses drone mapping, LiDAR, and ground-based surveys to better understand the shape of the river channel, how the floodplain works, and how water is stored and moves through our local green spaces. I have shared some LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) results. LiDAR uses tiny laser pulses to create highly detailed 3D maps of the ground and vegetation. Flying this technology on a drone allows us to “see through” tree cover and capture the true shape of the stream channel and surrounding land. The Digital Terrain Model (DTM) derived from the LiDAR data clearly reveals both the current Emm Brook channel and an older (palaeo) channel.

WOKINGHAM WITHOUT – Cathy Boddy

Advice is being sought from WBC about how to manage a small piece of land bought by the Parish Council - heathland surrounded by trees.

WOODLEY – Ed Snook

Elms resistant to Dutch elm disease planted in Headley Road East continue to do well. There are four young elm trees, 8-9 years old of which three are fastigate.

OTHER LOCAL NEWS

Wokingham library had a display for National Tree Week in November.

As reported in [Wokingham Today](#), the Arts Society Wokingham has funded pupils at High Close School in Wiltshire Road, Wokingham to work with a local potter to create a tree mural to adorn their school wall. Do send me a photo if you've seen it.

The [Covid memorial wood](#) should open this year.

Veteran Tree Survey in Warfield - Warfield is a Bracknell parish NE of



Bracknell Town. The Warfield Environment Group (WEG) [website](#) includes a [map](#) that shows “all the veteran and notable trees we have surveyed. Over 200!”

Greenham Common was chosen as one of the first places to receive a [sapling](#) grown from seed collected from the felled Sycamore Gap Tree. There were 500 applicants for the 49 saplings – one sapling for each foot of the old tree’s height. These saplings, 3-6’ tall, are being called ‘Trees of Hope’. The Greenham one was planted in an official ceremony on 22nd November last year in the grounds of the control tower. Another one has been planted by the [Thames Valley Police](#) at their Sulhamstead training centre.

REDLANDS FARM PARK PLANTING

Cathy Boddy



In another great joint project between Wokingham Rotary Club and Wokingham Town Council, I coordinated the planting of a 4.7m (15.4’) walnut tree in south Wokingham on 28th November last year, during The Tree Council's National Tree Week. Mike Saynor from the [Holt Copse Conservation Volunteers](#) gave the benefit of his decades of tree planting experience, including overseeing installation of a tree anchor and watering tube. Mike Hayward has committed the 1st Wokingham cubs to water the tree through its first year, which is key to it's healthy establishment. Town Mayor, Councillor Louise Timlin was kind enough to attend and lend a hand. Barbara Stagles and Denise Tolan of WDVTA also popped along to witness the event and give it their blessing. The photos here show Cathy standing by the tree, the tree anchor and watering tube being installed and the official planting as shown in the photo below with (L to R) - Cathy, Mike Saynor (Holt Copse CVs), Louise Smith of WTC, Karl Boddy, Lou Timlin the Town Mayor, Ben Wade (Rotary), Mike Haycock (cub leader of 1st Wokingham) and Leigh Welham (Rotary).



This followed on from Rotary and friends planting a native species hedge in Howard Palmer Gardens in February last year, which was faithfully watered through that hot dry summer by the Friends of Howard Palmer Gardens and is now well established and thriving as the photo (right) taken in July, shows.



*“Berkshire affordeth abundance of trees of all kinds,
though her Oakes in Windsor Forest come only under commendation.”*

Fuller's “Worthies”, 1672

HEDGE TREES

Michael Rea

From an idea put forward by the Tree Council in 2012, our tree wardens set out to identify tree saplings within hedgerows that were subject to regular cutting. The aim of the project was to rescue these trees from the repeated damage done by the flail. The chosen saplings (four identified in Cantley Park Wokingham) were marked using the Tree Council's blue labels and an agreement made with the land management to omit flailing at those marked locations. Initially recovery was found to be slow, so a practice of cutting away the competing vegetation was adopted so as to give the tree a halo of space, light, air and particularly visibility.

The photo immediately below shows the forlorn appearance of one of these trees, with its ragged and split stem, when originally found in 2012. Following the initial work described, it was only necessary to make an

annual visit in the autumn to prune away competing growth and brambles. The

four close-up photos below (taken in 2015, 2018, 2022 and 2025) show the way that this tree has dealt with the split stem by healing itself as its girth increased. It's now magnificent as shown above and is featured in the veteran tree survey completion report to be presented at the AGM next month.



Another example is in Binfield. In 2017 Karen Beaney identified six small oak saplings hidden in a roadside hedge near where she lived on the Forest Road. Since these trees were considered to have potential, permission was obtained from the owner of Stokes Farm to manage the hedge. Karen had moved away after the first year and so the hedgerow was adopted by us (Steve and Mike) and we have maintained it by making annual autumn visits up to the present.

Above right: Flail damage of an oak tree residing in the hedge November 2017

Below left: Early general view of the hedge - 7 years ago.

Below right: Up to date view of hedge showing the patient's progress above hedge height



SUCCESSION TREES

Alison Griffin

One of the messages I always include in any talk about WDVTA to an outside group is the need to plant succession trees. For this I have used this May 2007 photo (*below top left*) of the veteran oak at the crossroads in Ruscombe (MRN [2273](#)).

At the recent combined Committee and Tree Warden meeting, Stephen reported that a new young oak has been planted – a succession tree to the succession tree! I drove passed the crossroad recently and took these photographs.



The first (*bottom left*) is from a similar angle to the 2007 photo and shows how the veteran tree is declining with the succession tree developing very well over the 19 years. You can just see the new succession tree on the right of the photo.

The second photo (*right*) shows the newer succession tree in the foreground with the veteran tree behind and the original succession tree in the mist on the left.

Ruscombe parish council is to be commended for this excellent new planting.



STUDLEY CASTLE

Studley Castle in Warwickshire is now a Warner Hotel. It was originally built in 1834 and amazingly was finished in 1836. It's a large and impressive building and to complete it in such a short time, and without the equipment we have these days, is incredible.

The land, at the time was owned by Sir Francis Lyttleton Holyoake and his budget was £120,000. For the next 70 years his family lived in the property as a family home but, unfortunately, they didn't live within their means and eventually went bankrupt.

In December 1903, Lady 'Daisy' Warwick bought Studley Castle for £25,000 and developed it into '*Studley Agricultural College for women*' to provide horticultural training for the daughters of the gentry. Lady Warwick campaigned for improvements in children's education, women's rights and poor law reform.

Many women worked in the college's greenhouses, vegetable gardens and dairy. They learnt about poultry, bee keeping, horticulture, fruit bottling and preservation, marketing and business.

Studley Castle's neighbours are sheep farmers and there are numerous stables in the area.

You enter Studley Castle along an avenue of Wellingtonia redwoods (Giant Sequoia). These are impressive. I assumed that Sir Francis Lyttleton Holyoake had them planted when he'd built Studley Castle, but the National Trust claim that William Lobb brought giant redwoods to the UK and planted them at Tredegar House, but not until 1853.

I made enquiries at Reception about the trees, but they didn't have any information.



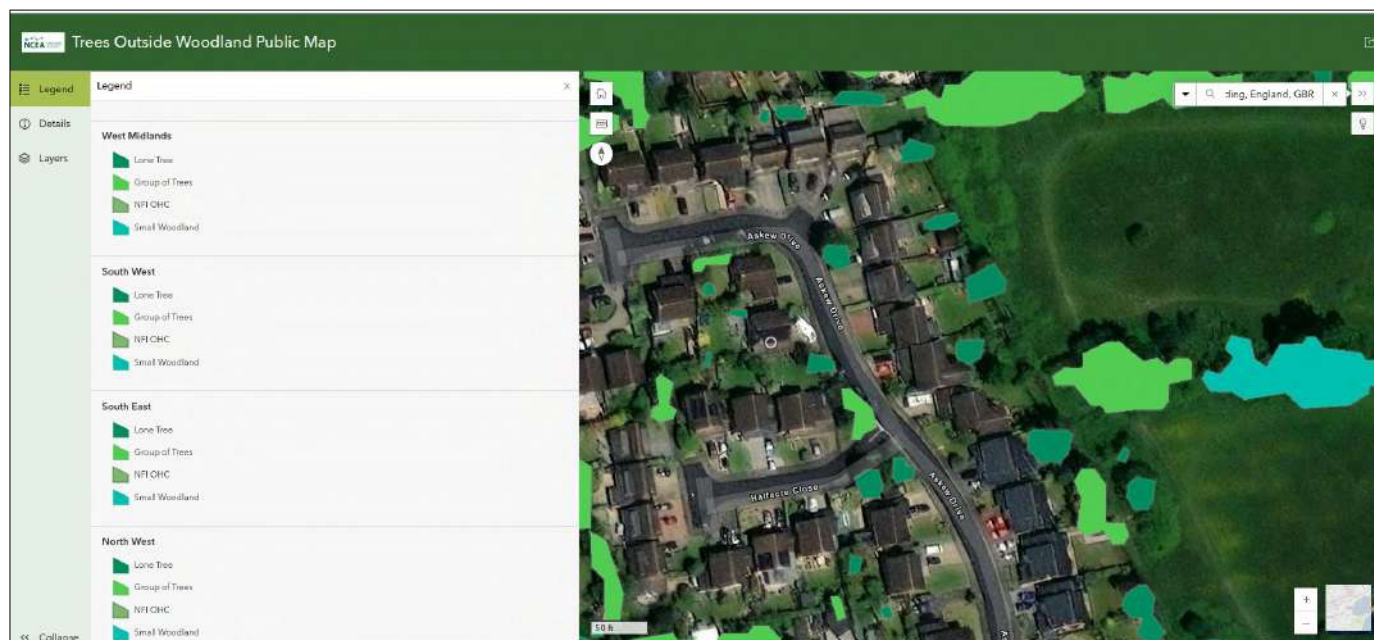
In the parking area there was a beautiful ancient oak (*photo left*) which looked all the more stunning because it had been given plenty of space around it to flourish. I do hope other oaks weren't lost in the creation of the large parking areas.

I suppose I was expecting to find large cedars and yews but the only other notable tree was a decent sized London Plane on the edge of the grounds. In hindsight, Studley Castle looks grand, but it's basically a Victorian house built on farmland. In fact, the Warner hotel really only uses the façade for bars and afternoon teas. All

the main activities – theatre, restaurants, spa and the vast majority of rooms are all found in a modern extension. Having said that, it is worth a visit.

LIDAR MAPPING

This method of mapping is becoming increasingly accessible and used for a variety of purposes. Jurgen Adam used it to map the older (palaeo) channel of the Emm Brook, as described above ([page 5](#)). In March 2023, Matt Disney gave us a talk '[Weighing trees with lasers](#)' about his use of LiDAR to examine tree canopy and his work has been mentioned in previous issues of Tree Watch. Janet Firth alerted me to a very interesting article in the October issue of the BARG newsletter '*In the Field*' (not available online). [BARG is the 'Berkshire Archaeology Research Group' not to be confused with BARG, the 'Buckinghamshire Amphibian and Reptile Group'.] The article is "*Seeing the Wood and the Trees?*" by Steve Clark (pages 10-14). It describes their use of publicly accessible maps identifying tree species and trees outside woodland – using LiDAR.



Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

See the [Tree Species Map England](#) and the [Tree Species Mapping Methodology](#)

With the [Trees Outside Woodland Public Map](#) you can see where lone trees are, but this map doesn't attempt to identify species. A lone tree is identified as such if it has a minimum height of 3m and area between 5m² and 350m². The screen shot here is the area around my house. It identifies one lone tree in my back garden, placing it between two tall trees, a ginkgo and an ash. Why don't you check what it "says" about trees near you.

Incidentally one of BARG's project is '[The Berkshire Hedgerow Survey](#)' which aims to use hedgerow surveys to investigate the past landscape of Berkshire. They have conducted a large survey in Barkham, building on work previously done in Cookham.

TREES IN ART

It was the 50th anniversary of National Tree Week last November and as part of the celebrations, The Tree Council worked with various artists to produce tree art '[Bringing tree-inspired art to UK billboards](#)', with tree art flashing up on digital billboards. In this month's [newsletter](#), they confirmed the displays will continue throughout 2026. I wonder whether we'll have any locally.

The photos below are from our 2024 [art project](#) - MRN [7780](#), English oak in Waingels School grounds by Peter Tickn



Veteran Tree Survey snapshot

8696

trees recorded

42

genera

94

species

71%

maidens

18%

multi stems

6%

coppices

3%

pollards

2%

stumps

NEW TREE HEALTH FORUM ESTABLISHED

A new panel of experts from across the sector has been convened by Defra and The Tree Council. The 'Tree Health Operations Forum' will meet three times a year to assess the ongoing challenges facing tree health and establishment, and the effectiveness of any interventions used to combat these challenges. In the January issue of '[Tree Talk](#)' they describe the problems facing our tree-scapes from climate change, particularly:

- Summer 2025 was the warmest on record. Mean temperature and sunshine hour were above average for all three summer months.
- The UK had 62% of its average annual rainfall in August last year.
- 2018, 2022, 2023 and 2025 all rank among UK's top 10 warmest summers since records began in 1884.

They stress the need for monitoring newly-planted trees (as we do) suggesting these should be rated as excellent, good, poor, or dead (and not merely as alive or dead).

The other major risk is from pests, including the potential threat of *Ceratocystis platani* (canker stain of plane) to London plane trees, particularly in urban environments. It is an aggressive fungal pathogen found in mainland Europe, having reached as far north as Paris. It kills most plane trees within 2-10 years, spreads rapidly and there is no known chemical or biological controls or resistance.

TREE WARDEN BOOK CLUB

The Tree Council have launched a book club called 'Through the Leaves' just for Tree Wardens. Every two months they will choose a tree-themed book, announce it in their '[Branching Out](#)' [newsletter](#) and [Facebook](#) group and then host an informal online book club. To make the conversation work online, places will be limited and must be [booked](#). The first one is on Tuesday 24th March 1300-1400 and the first book is 'Wildwood: A Journey Through Trees' by Roger Deakin.

DID YOU KNOW?... Grey squirrels only strip tree bark in the UK?

Perhaps not just in the UK, but they don't strip bark in their native USA or in northern Italy, which has the other main introduced population. The reason is unknown as yet, meaning the only way to stop them bark-stripping is to reduce their numbers.

Grey squirrels are a big problem for foresters. Stripping bark can kill trees, but even if they don't die, they are often deformed, reducing their timber value. Foresters are reluctant to plant broad-leaved trees, especially oak and beech, known to be susceptible to grey squirrel damage.

The government has just issued a new [policy statement](#) on managing grey squirrels in England. It encourages a more collaborative approach to controlling their numbers, including financial incentives and advice to help landowners take action.

Of course it's not just foresters who want them controlled. They are often referred to as 'tree rats' and disliked as such and they cause serious ecological problems too. They are responsible for spreading the pox disease which kills native red squirrels. High population densities have impact on some woodland birds, since squirrels take their eggs and nestlings. Bark-stripping damages a wide variety of native trees and became particularly evident after the 1990 storms, when large areas were being replanted and the loss of saplings was noticeable. In response, The Forestry Commission produced a policy document on their control, but squirrel numbers have continued to increase. Perhaps this new policy will be more effective.

SPECIES IN FOCUS – KARRI (*EUCALYPTUS DIVERSICOLOR*)

12 miscellaneous facts about Karri

1. *E. diversicolor* is endemic to SW Australia and the tallest tree growing there, reaching heights of 70-80m. Its range is limited to areas with high rainfall (35-50" per year).
2. Some karri trees were thought to be up to 300 years old, but in 2012 karri collected from a timber mill was carbon-dated to nearly 600 years.
3. It takes 4-5 years for its white flowers to release the seeds. Germination rate is excellent.
4. Many of the karri are named, with the tallest being the Riverside Karri (77m / girth 10m). The Hawke tree has the maximum girth (11.9m / height 66m), but The Tyrant is considered the largest by estimated volume or weight (girth 11.6m / height 69m). A karri in Coimbra, Portugal, called Karri Knight (height 72.9m / girth 5.7m) is reputed to be the tallest reliably measured tree in Europe.
5. Between 1937 and 1952, eight of the tallest karri trees were used as fire lookouts. Three of the lookout trees became big tourist attractions when they were pegged for climbing, but all three are closed for climbing now. The Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree in Warren National Park (named after a local politician and 75m tall) was pegged to celebrate Australia's bicentenary in 1988. To reach the lookout platform you had to climb 165 metal spikes hammered into the trunk (centre photo).
6. Karri have always attracted tourists. There's a 1901 postcard with a photo of a 73.8m tall karri, girth 11m. It fell during a severe storm in 1900 and the photo was taken after that. It grew in Karridale, an area now almost devoid of karri.
7. Karri forests have a unique ecosystem. The dense understorey comprises 2,000 plant species, a large variety of invertebrates and 150 bird species, including nectar feeders, especially the purple-crowned lorikeets, assumed to be karri's main pollinators. The massive wedge-tailed eagles use the many giant crowns for their large nests. The soil, classified as karri loam, produces excellent pastures. It lacks some nutrients, but is deep, several metres in places, and water retentive. It mainly comprises karri bark, rich in tannins and shed annually as large plates, short ribbons or small flakes, coloured yellow, orange and pink. The shed bark accumulates as large mounds at the base of old trees. Karri is a fire-sensitive species. Unlike many other eucalypts, karri are killed by severe fires, but after fires, their seeds germinate quickly in the karri loam.
8. Karri has been logged since the settlement of Western Australia. Logging towns appeared throughout the range of the tree, producing hardwood timbers, mostly for construction purposes in the first 150 years after settlement and resulting in about 80% of karri forests being lost, leaving less than 2,000km² (772miles²). Some of the main streets of early Sydney were paved with blocks of karri, although vulnerability to white ants made it unsuitable for fence posts and railway sleepers. However it was used in England for railway sleepers, telegraph poles and shipbuilding timbers, as well as paving blocks. The wood is a beautiful mahogany colour and used for the manufacture of indoor and outdoor furniture and flooring.
9. There are karri plantations in South Africa, with the timber being marketed worldwide. However, it's an invasive problem in the Western Cape (where it is locally called karie). Australian sourced timber is apparently mainly from old growth forests.
10. Karri honey is widely sought after for its clarity, light colour and delicate flavour.
11. Karri is the Noongar name for the tree. The Noongar are a group of 14 different indigenous peoples native to the region. The specific name, *diversicolor* from the Latin *diversus* meaning to turn apart and *color* or 'separate colours', apparently refers to the difference between the glossy dark green upper leaf surface, and its paler underside (and not as might be expected, to its multi-coloured bark).
12. Joe Webster, one of the artists contributing to the Tree Council's 'Bringing tree-inspired art to UK billboards' project, had a two-week residency in SW Australia painting karri trees.

Karri trees in the Boranup Forest



By Boyup - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0 (centre photo).



By Chrislorenz9 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

The Walk-Through-Karri in Beedelup National Park



By JAW at the English-language Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0

RECOMMENDED READING, VIEWING AND LISTENING Just click on the green links

[Trees in Unexpected Places](#) - Harriet Rix, Jon Stokes and Paul Wood – an enjoyable Tree Council webinar

[Lost Elms & The Trees and Shrubs Online Resource](#) - Arboricultural Association webinar – describing an online database of cultivated tree species and varieties, allowing searches for common names

Veteran Trees

Recognising and Categorising Ancient and other Veteran Trees ([Woodland Trust -2024](#))

Veteran trees - navigating too many definitions - Arboricultural Association [webinar](#) (1hr - 1.5hrs including questions)

Managing veteran fruit trees, which are often small and overlooked. - Arboricultural Association [webinar](#)

Tree Plantings

The [Hebridean Tree Project](#) - an episode of Radio 4's 'On Your Farm'

Two new [national forests](#) in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor backed by £1 billion investment

More than 110,000 trees [to be planted](#) on Dudmaston Estate near Bridgnorth in Shropshire

How ambitious 'forest city' plan for England could become a reality

Planting of first new [national forest](#) in decades starts - across Bristol, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire

New 7,000 tree Loughborough [woodland](#) set to be planted

Christmas trees replanted to [boost sea defences](#)

Tree Care Manual - Tony Kirkham and Kenton Rogers - Arboricultural Association [webinar](#)

Fellings

Controversy over tree-felling in [Bracknell](#)

Meeting over 'what went wrong' with tree [felling along rail line](#) near Higham, Derbyshire

Trees infected with [ash dieback](#) felled along Cumbrian roads

Shotton Colliery Christmas Tree - Durham:

- [Cut down](#) after lights switched on
- Man [arrested](#)
- Attempts to [restore](#) felled tree

Climatic Effects

[Sinking trees](#) in Arctic Ocean could remove 1 billion tonnes of CO₂

China has planted so many trees it's changed the entire country's [water distribution](#)

Amazon trees are getting [fatter](#) from rising CO₂ in the atmosphere

Australia's rainforests are [releasing more carbon](#) than they absorb

Rising [temperatures](#) are threatening UK trees - but resilient species could save our forests

Tree species for the [future](#)

World's largest natural [walnut forest](#) thins away

Storm Goretti

- We might never know the [tree toll](#)
- Trees [decimated](#) at St Michael's Mount
- Graves disturbed by [uproots trees](#)

Miscellaneous

Christmas trees get a second life [feeding goats](#)

'[Frankenstein trees](#)' offer safe haven for wildlife -

Trees in [Art and Winter](#) near Abergavenny - an episode of Radio 4's 'Ramblings' - with Richard Shimell discussing his [tree prints](#)

The tree that shoots its seeds at [150mph](#)

Woodland Trust: [Ancient forgotten forests](#)

Kew's [top 10 new species](#) - including (at number 7) *Plagiosiphon intermedium*, which grows up to 34m (112') tall, is estimated to weigh about 5 tonnes, but, with a girth of 2.07m, wouldn't qualify for our database! [125 plants and 65 fungi species new to science were discovered last year]

Fun, but informative, although definitely not David Attenborough standard!! YouTube videos: [Why are there no holes around trees?](#) (11mins)

[Six of the world's weirdest trees](#) (13mins) [The 15 most weird types of fungus](#) (28 mins)

A ROOM AROUND A TREE

One of the 78 buildings on the [shortlist](#) for the RIBA London Awards 2025 was '[A Room Around a Tree](#)' by Tikari Works. It's a garden room designed around a mature cedar tree. The clients had "a desire to create a multi-purpose space to the rear of their large garden for their growing family."

[Incidentally, nothing to do with trees, but I know some of you are admirers of the work done at the Knepp Estates and the '[Knepp Wilding Kitchen and Shop](#)' was one of eight winners of the RIBA South East Awards for 2025.]

.... *And..... stop press:*

The February 23rd on-line issue of 'Wokingham Today' published a piece about the survey completion and our AGM, with the heading "[Wokingham association celebrates completed survey of 8,500 borough trees](#)".

You will have noticed articles from 'Wokingham Today' featuring in most issues of Tree Watch and I have permission to use their published photos where they own the copyright. Don't forget that as well as going to their [website](#) and checking articles there, you can [sign up](#) for a daily selection of their news 'The Latest news from Wokingham Today' to be sent to your email.

The article here was written by Emma Merchant and her column 'Naturally Speaking' was mentioned in a previous issue of Tree Watch when it was launched. You can obviously access that from the main website or you can go [directly](#) to her column.

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**Some sources used in this issue:** all web pages accessed 19-02-2016 (unless stated otherwise) Links embedded in the text are not repeated here. Email me if you want a list of them.

Species in Focus: <https://treetalk.substack.com/p/bringing-tree-inspired-art-to-ukJoe>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucalyptus\\_diversicolor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucalyptus_diversicolor)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noongar>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloucester\\_Tree](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloucester_Tree)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coimbra>

[https://anpsa.org.au/plant\\_profiles/eucalyptus-diversicolor/](https://anpsa.org.au/plant_profiles/eucalyptus-diversicolor/)

<https://www.westernaustralianagianttrees.com/karri.html>

Did You Know?: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002qryc> (Farming Today 3/2/2026 - available for 8 days - but still available 24/2/2026)

'News of the Woods' Autumn 2003 (Newsletter of the Chiltern Woodlands Project)

Images may be subject to copyright, so please do not reproduce any without checking first.

The views and opinions expressed in Tree Watch are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or the official policy or position of the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association.

**Don't forget:** You can download a pdf version of our 10th anniversary report from our website - but you can also access an extended version of it, with links to the trees mentioned:

[wdvta.org.uk/report10.php](http://wdvta.org.uk/report10.php)

Details of all trees in our database are available via the web map pages: [wdvta.org.uk/WDVTS](http://wdvta.org.uk/WDVTS)

The inventory of commemorative and special trees can also be accessed via our website:

[wdvta.org.uk/commem.php](http://wdvta.org.uk/commem.php)

Finally, and most importantly,  
THANK YOU to everyone who has recorded our trees.  
We wouldn't have a database without you.