

MAY 2021

NEWSLETTER

BRIDPORT TREE PLANTING

Let's help double tree cover

We reached the end of the tree-planting season by helping at Burton Bradstock, pictured below.



That means we planted, helped others plant or gave away 1,200 trees in the season plus distributed through Lucy Rowland another 500 oaks. Well done everyone and thanks for your help. We are already targeting our biggest planting site yet in the autumn - and are also looking at smaller sites around town. We want to find and help farmers who are going to plant hedges and trees, too. Do you know any?

This bi-monthly newsletter is received by 180 people. Do please pass it on.

Here is another in our series “Me and my Trees”. The owner describes the process of felling and replanting a storm-damaged wood.

As we came out of a long Covid sleep, tree planting was top of our list for our 14-acre woodland. The northern third is mainly Beech and the southern end consists of Norwegian Spruce densely planted in the 70s as a crop by the Forestry Commission.

These trees were coming to the end of their lives when we took over and were falling victim to every south easterly wind that hit - (see first photo below) The woodlands needed management, without destroying the very unique landscape beneath them.

With no vehicle access, it meant for the first years we were only able to trouble-shoot the issue, by chain-sawing fallen trees. Often inaccessible, the Spruce timber was left stacked for environments to encourage hedgehogs, wrens and amphibians. Traditional methods of getting the wood out with horses proved to be impossible due to years of fallen dead wood that was stacked like pick up sticks across this boggy landscape.

We finally got a grant to build an access track through the Spruce. The ground sucked up hardcore. Would we ever have a firm enough surface to get machines onto the site? We dug drainage channels and took huge care to not destroy moss and fern filled glades and imaginary fairy lands that our kids spent hours exploring. In amongst the inevitable destruction, nature soon returned, bringing for the first time fox gloves, woodpeckers and birds into the sun mixed clearings. Then came the sound of water flowing through dug channels. As nature responded we planted the track with wild flowers.

Last winter we pocket felled the Norwegian Spruce, which meant leaving areas of standing trees, while creating clearings for replanting.

After the cost of felling and selling the wood the profit margins were minimal, depressing even, but leaving just enough funds to build a small lake and replant 800 mixed native species of trees this spring. With the generous donations from ‘Bridport Tree Planting’ and ‘Stump Up For Trees’ in Wales as well as buying some stock in, we managed to reintroduce 25 species of trees back into the area. We also planted fruiting and nut trees like Rowan and Crab Apples, Hazel and Walnuts, Silver Birch, Aspen, Bird Cherry, just to name a few.

With a brilliant and weather hardy team, the trees were planted in five days, using Tubex guards. We had hoped to be one of the first woodlands to trial their biodegradable tubes, however the biodegradable material is still to be perfected, which was disappointing news. We had over the years explored different guard options, but none withstood the biggest and long-term challenge we really face, **Fallow deer**.



More about
deer
management
in the next
issue

Have you heard about the Dasgupta Review? One of our supporters thinks it's the most important eco document of recent years. Here's a quick link to get you started.

<https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/dasguptareview>

Here's another link, showing the value of trees - **dead trees!**

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/may/05/secrets-of-dead-wood-how-old-trees-hold-key-to-new-life-aoe>

and here is a little film from the Woodland Trust about the Hawthorn, or May, tree - to celebrate our month.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/a-z-of-british-trees/hawthorn/>

.....

Some of you will know that Bridport's Mayor, Ian Bark, is campaigning to gain Bridport "Plastic Free" status. He writes:

On May 30th the **From Street to Sea** mass litter pick will take place. On the day Litter Free Street Champions will be joined by West Bay Beach Clean Volunteers and Kayakers, canoeists and paddle boarders. At the same time there will be street, river and beach litter picks taking place. Not only will this result in a much cleaner and tidier town but it will also make an obvious connection between what people drop and the impact on the wider environment.

IF you would like to become a **Litter Free Street Champion** for your street or take part in the **From Street to Sea** mass litter pick please e-mail bridportlfs@icloud.com with your contact details to find out more.

.....

(This newsletter is pretty strictly about trees only but in this case we felt the need to give publicity to a very closely allied local cause)

Lost

by David Wagoner

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
Must ask permission to know it and be known.
The forest breathes. Listen. It answers,
I have made this place around you.
If you leave it, you may come back again, saying Here.
No two trees are the same to Raven.
No two branches are the same to Wren.
If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you,
You are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows
Where you are. You must let it find you.



Finally, The origin of the term "Tree Hugger."

The first tree huggers were 294 men and 69 women belonging to the Bishnois branch of Hinduism, who, in 1730, died while trying to protect the trees in their village from being turned into the raw material for building a palace. They literally clung to the trees, while being slaughtered by the foresters. But their action led to a royal decree prohibiting the cutting of trees in any Bishnois village. And now those villages are virtual wooded oases amidst an otherwise desert landscape. Not only that, the Bishnois inspired the Chipko movement (chipko means "to cling" in Hindi) that started in the 1970s, when a group of peasant women in the Himalayan hills of northern India threw their arms around trees designated to be cut down. Within a few years, this tactic, also known as tree satyagraha, had spread across India, ultimately forcing reforms in forestry and a moratorium on tree felling in Himalayan regions.



Photo: The village women of the Chipko movement in the early 70's in the Garhwal Hills of India, protecting the trees from being cut down.

Joe Hackett - Bridport Tree Planting Co-Ordinator

joe@thehacketts.uk

