



# SURREY TREE WARDENS

## Newsletter Spring 2015

### ASH DIEBACK

The newly reappointed Environment Minister, Liz Truss, has one huge new problem in her in-tray – Chalara, or Ash dieback: how to deal with it, and how to fund the response to it. The statistics are frightening. There are hundreds of millions of ash trees and saplings in UK woodlands, all of them potentially at risk of dying. There are miles and miles of hedgerow where ash predominates; thousands of ash trees on Network Rail land; and millions along roadsides throughout the country. Thousands of ancient ash trees, some of our best loved trees, are at risk too, and many trees with TPOs. There is a risk that developers may use the threat of disease to push planning departments for wholesale felling.

The potential costs are enormous. A mature tree in a private garden for instance can cost upwards of £700 to fell. That cost is likely to rise for trees on public land or alongside a road. Kent County Council has estimated there are 20,000 ash trees along its highways. Tree replanting and after-care costs another estimated £175 per tree. And what to replant: national policy and guidance are urgently needed.

Surrey has the highest percentage of land covered in ash, at 2.5%, more than any other UK county, but so far has done little planning to cope with the consequences of dieback.

Tree Wardens in Surrey, however, have been at the forefront of the volunteer efforts to help track the disease. More data is needed, so if you would like to undertake a Parish, or local area survey, contact either Chris Pead, Secretary of the Surrey Tree Warden Network, or Jon Stokes at the Tree Council, who is spearheading efforts to get the severity of the problem recognised. Contact details are on the back page. Above all, keep your eyes peeled this summer. Ash dieback has well and truly arrived in Surrey: the only question is how fast it will spread, and how fast trees, mature trees in particular, will succumb.

#### **Diary Dates    Diary Dates    Diary Dates    Diary Dates    Diary Dates**

**6 June:**        **Surrey Tree Warden Network AGM at Great Bookham and Polesdon Lacey. For details see overleaf.**

**14 June:**     **Willow Day at The Ranges, Towpath, Shepperton TW17 9NT. Contact Sally for more details: 01932 227679 / 07778 370571**

**20 June:**     **Visit to Colesbourne Arboretum, Gloucestershire, with the Cotswold Tree Wardens.**

**Autumn 2015:**     **South East Tree Warden Forum at Wakehurst Place. Date to come.**

**November 2015:** **Training Day – Dealing with Ash Dieback: Felling the dead and replanting the new. Date to Come.**

## THE AGM: BIZARRE TO BATTY

Nik Knight, leader of the Hampshire Bat Group will be the keynote speaker at the Surrey Tree Warden AGM on Saturday June 6. His subject: Bats and Trees. This will be a special meeting as the Surrey Network celebrates 25 years of tree wardening in the county. There's a raffle, and a competition too for Surrey's best loved trees. The ones you vote for will feature in a book to be produced later this year. There's still time for you to nominate your favourite – see below.

The AGM is to be held at The Harrison Room, Old Barn Hall, Church Road, Bookham, by Leatherhead, KT23 3PQ. Registration begins at 9.30. Jon Stokes, of the Tree Council, will open proceedings with a talk entitled "Britain's Heritage Trees: The Big, the Small ... and the Frankly Bizarre". From bizarre to bats with Nik Knight.

Lunch: bring a picnic, and weather willing, it will be held in the grounds of Polesdon Lacey, the National Trust property close to Bookham. There's a cafe there too if you prefer. Then in the afternoon, a guided walk with one of the National Trust rangers through the beautiful grounds. You will have to pay entry if you are not a National Trust member. The day should end around 4.30. Thanks to Tree Warden Laurence Hole for organising this event.

## 25 YEARS: 25 FAVOURITE TREES

You still have time! If you have a favourite tree in Surrey now is the time to nominate it for a competition to find the 25 best, oldest, biggest, most characterful, most famous, perhaps just best-loved trees in Surrey. The competition is to celebrate 25 years of the tree wardens in the county. So far there are 35 nominations. Photos of the trees and a brief description will be on display at the AGM on June 6 at Bookham, and everyone will have a chance to vote for their favourites. The 25 winners will be included in a special book to be produced later this year. So get thinking. Send a photo and some details to Liz Ramsay: [lizramsay@aol.com](mailto:lizramsay@aol.com). Or by post to Liz at Little Priory, Sandy Lane, South Nutfield Surrey RH1 4EJ. Entries must be in before Thursday 4 June.

## RARE TREES: A RARE INVITATION

The Cotswold Tree Wardens are holding a conference on June 20<sup>th</sup> at Colesbourne Arboretum in Gloucestershire. This is a unique opportunity to see some of the best and rarest trees in Britain, in a collection that was started in the 19C. The conference takes place in the morning, and the visit to the Arboretum is in the afternoon with an introduction from the owner, Sir Henry Elwes. Surrey Tree Wardens are very welcome to attend. For more details: [www.cotswoldtreewardengroup.wordpress.com](http://www.cotswoldtreewardengroup.wordpress.com), and click on Forthcoming Events.

### EMAILS PLEASE

Have you given us your email? The Surrey Tree Warden network is a very small charity with limited funds, and one way we can save money is on postage.

If you have an email, and would like to receive the Newsletter this way, give the details to Sue Henderson, the Membership Sec at [marchharecottage@gmail.com](mailto:marchharecottage@gmail.com)

### TWO HOURS A MONTH!

That's all the time it takes to be **TREASURER** of the Surrey Tree Warden Network. Our current treasurer, Don Henderson has announced he is hanging up his calculator, and a successor is needed. There must be someone who could take on this easy book-keeping job. Contact our secretary Chris Pead.

**The newsletter is to keep you in touch with us, and us in touch with you. So send us your news.**  
There is also the STWN website: [www.surreytreewardens.org.uk](http://www.surreytreewardens.org.uk).

Chris Pead: [secretary@surreytreewardens.org.uk](mailto:secretary@surreytreewardens.org.uk).

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