

# The Surrey Network

The Surrey Tree Warden Network is here for you. Quite simply, without Tree Wardens there is no Network. We are a small committee who put together events, training and information. Our aim is to give you the tools you need to be an effective Tree Warden.

We can put you in touch with other Tree Wardens or other organisations who may be able to help you. We can tell you who to contact at your local council; where to go for grant funding for projects; help with specifications for tree and hedge planting, or if you are working on a larger project provide contacts for specialist advice.

That said, we need you to give us local news, updates on projects, photographs, in fact anything which you think may be of interest to other Tree Wardens. For example, we can publish your local events or the records of any finds you may wish to share.

## **A brief history**

Until 2004, Surrey's Tree Warden scheme was run through local councils and funded by Surrey County Council. Although local groups like those in Spelthorne and Nutfield thrived, this was not a universally successful arrangement. The steering committee, with the guidance of the Tree Council, set out to make the Surrey network stronger and more independent. It created a constitution and sought registration as a charity.

At the 2004 Annual General Meeting, in March, members unanimously voted for the new constitution and for a change of name to the Surrey Tree Warden Network. They also approved the pursuit of charitable status. Registration as a charity was completed in November 2004. We are now Registered Charity No. 1106731.

We are the first network in the country to achieve this. The Tree Council are now using our constitution as a model for new groups and for groups looking to restructure themselves.

## **Tree Wardens nationally**

The Tree Council, a countrywide organisation set up in 1974, runs the Tree Warden scheme. Over 200 national and local organisations support the Council, whose aims are to:

- improve the environment in town and country by promoting the planting and conserving of trees and woods throughout the United Kingdom,
- spread knowledge about trees and their management, and
- act as a forum for organisations concerned with trees, to identify national problems and to provide initiatives for cooperation.

After the great storm of 1987, in which around 15 million trees were lost, The Tree Council saw the need for a network of local groups. These groups would help coordinate and take action for trees. It based the new national Tree Warden scheme on two existing local schemes, in East Sussex and Leicestershire.

The four basic tasks of a Tree Warden were set out then and have remained constant since. They are to:

- act as eyes and ears,
- collect data,
- be a local contact, and
- carry out practical projects.

Local networks and individual wardens interpret these tasks to suit their own purposes and abilities.

By 1993, the Tree Warden scheme had reached 65 local authorities, with nearly 4,000 Tree Wardens across the country. Today, there are over 8,000 Tree Wardens nationally. There is even one in the village of Ambridge in BBC Radio 4's *The Archers*!

