

**New Notice Boards** - During the past year the FSW have renovated the notice boards at the six entrances to the wood. Most of the boards had been subject to vandalism, some information was out of date and some wooden frames had rot and were coming apart. Although the boards belong to Croydon Council they were unable to undertake the work in the current financial climate so, in early August 2013, the FSW took one board apart to see if we could take on the task. We concluded that replacement was the only option and David Malins took on the job of designing a new poster and coordinating the project. The first step was to produce a draft design and cost the renovation process. It was decided that a new poster should be designed around an updated map of Selsdon Wood that had been produced for a Council leaflet.

By February 2014 David had produced a draft design for the poster and during subsequent months the FSW Committee and Council helped to detail the copy and pictures. Croydon Council had obtained a quotation of £4,572 for dismantling, taking away, renovating, printing 6 posters and reinstalling the 6 boards. With the origination of artwork costing £520 and 8 gate name boards £167, the total would have come to £5,259.00. The FSW was convinced that the project could be completed cheaper. During subsequent months David refined the design and copy and looked at alternative printers and board materials. By July 2014 we estimated that we could renovate the frames for less than £350, which would include 6 polycarbonate sheets. Neale Fox volunteered to act as foreman with Jim Dunning's assistance. This meant that with additional cost of origination of artwork (£520), printing of posters (£339.60), printing 'YOU ARE HERE > signs (£70), and gate name boards (£166.80) the total FSW estimate for the renovation was £1,500.00



FSW presented their proposed design, action plan and cost estimates to Croydon Council who agreed to allow the FSW to negotiate with the suppliers direct, subject to Council approval and thanked FSW for funding the project. David submitted his brief to the artist and ordered the gate name boards. At the beginning of October 2014 the artist completed her first artwork proof and the posters were printed by the end of November. Neale & Jim with some assistance continued the long job of dismantling, repairing and treating the wooden frames. The rot in the frames was stabilised with wood hardener and then painted with preservative. We were able to produce 'YOU ARE HERE >' labels on John Bickerstaff's label machine. The new poster and polycarbonate sheets were sealed together with metallised tape before being mounted back in the frames with silicone sealant. The completed frames were then bolted back onto their legs and their backs repainted.

By the end of February 2015, the first complete Info board was put up by the car park. The project had taken 18 months.

The project cost the FSW £1,310 (£190 under estimate). To cover some of this our treasurer, Sandra Crapper, made submissions for grants to Selsdon Residents' Association and Croydon Council. Both came up trumps and the FSW is very grateful for the donations of £520 from the SRA and £500 from the London Borough of Croydon thus covering £1,020 of the total. By taking on the renovation work ourselves the FSW saved nearly £4,000 as compared to the original quotation to the Council.

As the FSW had budgeted to pay for the complete project, funds can now be freed for our next Project – 5 new benches in Selsdon Wood. We have already begun work on this and hope to have further news next month.

**A full report of this project with more photographs is available on the History page of the FSW website.**



**This Month's Walk - a Spring Walk with the Friends on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April @ 2pm** - Join us to look for Anemones, Early Purple Orchids, Primroses, Cowslips and even possibly a few advance Bluebells and Cowslips. We also hope to see spring butterflies and birds and the trees as they begin to burst into leaf. Meet in the car park on Old Farleigh Road for a gentle stroll for about 2 hours.

**Our spotters' guide this month shows some of the signs of spring seen in our wood this year.**

<p><b>Signs of Spring!!!</b></p> <p>Fresh leaves, catkins, flowers and bursting buds all show that spring is on the way. Here are a few of the signs of spring we have spotted in Selsdon Wood so far in 2015.</p> <p>For more see the Home page of the FSW website.</p>	<p><b>Bluebell Leaves</b></p>  <p>Pushing through leaf litter in Farleigh Border. First seen on the Tree Walk on 10<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	<p><b>Honeysuckle Leaves</b></p>  <p>Bursting buds on the vines trailing amongst the trees in all wooded areas. Seen on 10<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	<p><b>Cow Parsley Leaves</b></p>  <p>Bright green growth in paths along field edges especially Vale Border. Seen on 10<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	<p><b>Hazel Catkins</b></p>  <p>Widespread throughout the wooded areas. Now are swelling and yellowing. Seen on 10<sup>th</sup> January.</p>
<p><b>Holly Flowers</b></p>  <p>Holly has separate male and female plants. These male flowers were seen on 10<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	<p><b>Cuckoo Pint Leaves</b></p>  <p>Fresh new leaves of Cuckoo Pint (Jack of the Woods) - seen in Langford's Way on 26<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	<p><b>Horse Chestnut Sticky Buds</b></p>  <p>Horse Chesnut buds swelling and very sticky. Seen in Beech Grove on 27<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	<p><b>Primroses</b></p>  <p>Primroses at their usual site near the north-western corner of David's Crook. Seen on 7<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	<p><b>Crocuses</b></p>  <p>A pretty clump of Crocuses behind the dog poo bin by the Courtwood Lane Gate. Seen on 7<sup>th</sup> March.</p>
<p><b>Ladybird (7 Spot)</b></p>  <p>Still rather sluggish but warming up in the sunshine in David's Crook. Seen on 11<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	<p><b>Common Daisy</b></p>  <p>First Daisies of the year in the grass overflow car park in Field 1. Seen on 11<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	<p><b>Daffodils</b></p>  <p>Beside Millie Dinnick's bench at the top of Field 2. Seen on 19<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	<p><b>Cherry Blossom</b></p>  <p>First of the year at the top of Field 2. Seen on 19<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	<p><b>Frogspawn</b></p>  <p>Large masses in the Jubilee pond. Seen on 20<sup>th</sup> March.</p>