

Friends of Selsdon Wood Newsletter

April 2024

Please renew your membership for 2023 if you have not already done so.

Our Latest Project – Have you seen our Owls? Or the mysterious Green Man?

Last November it was proposed that we should commission some interesting carvings around the wood. Before we approached a carver, we chose some possible tree stumps and in January we met at the car park with Alasdair Craig, from Essex Chainsaw Carving, to take him for a walk to look at these sites. He could see potential in five of them and submitted quotes for the first three. At the Committee Meeting in February, it was agreed that we should initially commission the first two. On March 11th Alasdair spent a day creating the Owl carving on a stump at the junction of Leafy Grove and The Wend, and on March 13th he spent a further day making the Green Man on a large stump in Farleigh Border. Both look wonderful and the praise and delight from those who have seen them is evident on the FB group. We shall commission a third on a big tree stump in Courtwood Grove.

Full details can be seen on the Project page of our website <https://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk/projects.php> .

If you would like to see more carvings in the wood, please donate through JustGiving to help us pay for them - <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/selsdonwoodcarvingsproject> . Further if you sign up to EasyFundRaising that will cost you nothing. Instead, whenever you purchase something from a supplier who has signed up to help (eg Sainsbury's, M&S, Robert Dyas, Mountain Warehouse etc) THEY will make a donation to us and also enter us into the draw to win an extra £500! A link to that can be found on our Projects page. Examples of Alasdair's work can be seen at <https://essexchainsawcarvings.com>



Please donate your Unwanted Gifts – Plans are already underway for our Open Day. If you have any unwanted gifts etc., please let us have them for the Tombola/White Elephant stall. No CDs, videos, cassettes, or books please as these are no longer saleable.















March Work Sessions – Work continued using the ballast delivered in February to fill the muddy puddles in Farleigh Border. Drainage channels have also been cut. The area now is much improved with a clear route more-or-less free from mud.

Work has also continued on the repair of the Linden Glade Pool. With the pool now filled and fenced, the current task is to restore the area around it by moving some of the grass and adding some plants around the edge of the pool to immediately give it a more natural look and attract more bees and other insects. For details see <https://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk/linden-glade-pool-development.php>

New planting has also taken place in a small area of the Butterfly Bank. We have been disappointed with how it has become very overgrown with grass with few of the original plants thriving. An area of the chalk has been fully weeded by two Friends and some new plants have been set in that in pockets of potting compost to encourage better root development. The area will be regularly watered and weeded during the summer. It is hoped the plants will then survive better and successfully provide an attractive display with plenty of nectar for butterflies and bees. This work is described fully on the Butterfly Bank page of the website <https://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk/butterfly-bank.php>

The FSW AGM was held on Monday March 25th at 8pm at the Forestdale Forum - The minutes of the meeting and all associated papers can be found on the AGM page of the website <http://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk/agm.php> .

Our Walks Programme Starts This Month - with our Spring Walk on Saturday April 6th followed by our annual Bluebells and Birds Walk on Sunday 5th May. We would love to see you there. There is a splendid carpet of Wood Anemones to see at the moment and many Bluebells are already peeping through. In the March Newsletter we showed some of the earliest signs of spring and overleaf are those spotted in late February and March. It is definitely coming!!

<p>More Signs of Spring</p> <p>All these signs of Spring have been first spotted on the dates shown. Look out for them on our Spring Walk on Saturday 6th April @ 2pm.</p>	<p>Wood Anemone – 23rd February</p>  <p>Now making a beautiful carpet in the northern woodlands by Broad Walk & Avis Grove.</p>	<p>Primrose - 27th February</p>  <p>In David's Crook. Several bushy plants including one with pink flowers.</p>	<p>Lesser Celandine – 28th February</p>  <p>First spotted by the Courtwood Lane gate. Now dotted throughout woodland areas</p>	<p>Dandelion – 4th March</p>  <p>Now widespread in many of the fields</p>
<p>Dog Violet - 10th March</p>  <p>One among many on the eastern edge of Field 2 near the top.</p>	<p>Bluebell – 16th March</p>  <p>Now popping up everywhere. The first leaves were seen on 2nd January – much earlier than usual.</p>	<p>Lilac Ivy-Leaved Speedwell – 21st March</p>  <p>The smallest Speedwell and usually the first to flower.</p>	<p>Toothwort - 24th March</p>  <p>A rare and strange little parasitic plant which recurs each year in the same place in East Gorse.</p>	<p>White Dead-nettle - 25th March</p>  <p>Growing in the usual place beside the car park</p>
<p>Wood Sorrel - 25th March</p>  <p>Mixed in among the Anemones this flower can easily be missed, but it has a very distinctive trefoil leaf</p>	<p>Brimstone Butterfly - 14th March</p>  <p>This is usually the first butterfly to appear.</p>	<p>Comma Butterfly - 16th March</p>  <p>A second one was spotted on 20th March. In spring and summer this is one of the most common butterflies.</p>	<p>Peacock Butterfly - 16th March</p>  <p>Perhaps the most striking butterfly in our wood. Look out for them in the summer months</p>	<p>Blackthorn blossom – 25th February</p>  <p>This was an early first showing. These bushes are in full bloom now and run along the edges of many of the fields.</p>