

Tackling the Muddy Puddles – You may have noticed piles of bags of gravel in a number of sites around the wood. They are part of this winter's project - to improve walking conditions by filling the worst muddy puddles. Although the plan was first formulated over a year ago, the timing was crucial. The gravel had to be distributed around the wood before the mud got bad so that the vehicles involved could get traction and would not further damage the paths. However, it could not be laid until the puddles appeared as we wanted it to bind with the mud rather than just laying loose on the surface.

The first batch of gravel (150 bags) was purchased in September using a grant from our local Councillor's Budget. Many thanks to Sara Bashford and the Council for that. For the distribution we recruited the help of a local resident, Paul Winter, who has a 4x4 vehicle and on the September workday the bags were distributed to the sites of the worst puddles and in one or two places bags were opened and gravel laid where it was already muddy enough. It turned out that Paul is in the trade and he supplied, free of charge, a couple of bags of wood chippings which were also used. Moreover, we are delighted to say that Paul offered a donation of a further 100 bags of gravel and more wood chippings from his company. Many thanks to Paul for this. The materials were delivered in mid-October and distributed in the same way as before. The photo shows Paul and the team laying the woodchip direct from his trailer.

Mud had already started to develop in two of the worst sites – the southern end of Middle Gorse and the spot beside the huge Beech trunk in the Wend – so gravel and wood chippings were spread in these locations and both paths are currently dry and comfortable to walk across. It remains to be seen how well the repairs will hold up when the main winter rains come. The work is somewhat experimental but we are very hopeful. A full report with more photographs can be found on the Projects page of the website.



Sarah Purvis Seat - In July the seat dedicated to Sarah Purvis in the Great Field was moved by vandals and broken in the process. FSW looked at it and decided that it was beyond our capabilities to repair as much of the wood seemed rotten. We asked Croydon Council to take a look at it and they removed it from the site for inspection. They too decided that it was beyond repair and offered to replace it with a different refurbished seat and to reset the old plaque in the new seat. The replacement seat was set in place on 24th October 2016 when this photo was taken.

















Our Own Detectorists – A few weeks ago we were contacted by a young man asking if it would be OK to do some metal detecting in the woods. We said yes so long as he refilled any holes he made. During half term week I met him with his father exploring with the metal detector. They had not yet found anything much of interest (just a horseshoe and a few modern coins) but have promised to let us know when they discover great treasure!

The FSW Calendar 2017 is now available for a donation of £5 - Phone 020-8657 0423 or e-mail selsdonwood@gmail.com

FSW Walk – Discover Autumn Leaves on Saturday November 12th @ 1pm – Join us at the car park for a 2 hour walk to enjoy the autumn colours. Alternatively, if you can't join us on the day you might like to take your own walk with guidance from the QR codes. Just follow the green or red walk markers from the car park and hold your smart phone up to the codes on each post for information about that location.

Our spotters' guide this month shows some of the most distinctive leaves we hope to see on the walk.

<p>Autumn Leaves to find in Selsdon Wood in November</p> <p>50p coin shows scale and notes give a clue as to location. See the FSW website for further information about our trees.</p> <p>All photographs taken in Selsdon Wood.</p>	<p>Ash</p>  <p>Compound leaf made of 3-5 pairs plus one at the end. Common throughout the wood.</p>	<p>Hazel</p>  <p>Widespread throughout the wood. Small nuts (cobnuts) or their shells on the ground give a further clue.</p>	<p>Oak</p>  <p>Widespread throughout the wood - Oak is Selsdon Wood's most common tree.</p>	<p>Turkey Oak</p>  <p>One in Vale Border hedge in F1. Several others around Steven's Larch in F3 and Great Field..</p>
<p>Sweet Chestnut</p>  <p>Most in northern wood - Broad Walk and Avis Grove. Spiky nut shells on the ground are a further clue.</p>	<p>White Poplar</p>  <p>Distinctive white underside. Just one tree on the south side of David's Crook near Pool Grove.</p>	<p>Hawthorn</p>  <p>Widespread. Especially common in the northern woods - along Courtwood Grove.</p>	<p>Sycamore</p>  <p>Widespread. Many in the southern woods either side of Greenhill Way. Red stem is distinctive.</p>	<p>Field Maple</p>  <p>Shape similar to Sycamore but very much smaller. Dispersed in woodland also in field hedgerows</p>
<p>Silver Birch</p>  <p>Most in southern part of the wood. The distinctive silver bark of the tree is another clue..</p>	<p>Whitebeam</p>  <p>Distinctive white underside. Found both sides of the woodland strip between F2 and F3.</p>	<p>Horse Chestnut</p>  <p>Large and distinctive, palmate leaf with 5 leaflets. By Vale Border in wood between F2 and F3.</p>	<p>Horse Chestnut Leaflet</p>  <p>Often on leaf-fall the leaflets separate and so will most commonly be found like this</p>	<p>Red Osier Dogwood</p>  <p>Striking red leaves many remain on the bush well into winter. Found only on the western hedge of F3.</p>