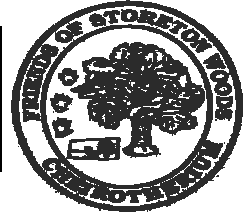


Issue  
No.81

Friends of Storeton Woods

June  
2011

# NEWSLEAF



Summer Issue

Registered Charity No.1001472

[www.friendsofstoretonwoods.org.uk](http://www.friendsofstoretonwoods.org.uk)

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT –

You may have noticed dead ivy on the perimeter trees. We have stopped this growing so that the Woodland Trust can carry out further tree safety surveys. Thank you to the United Reform Church for supplying some more tree saplings which we have planted with the help of some children from the same.

We have received a reply from Graham Tongue – the land agent for Leverhulme Estates. At present there is no further development in releasing Hancock's Woods to us; although the trustees are still aware of our interest.

The sandstone wall along the boundary of Mount Road looks like it wants a lot of attention at the base. The mortar joints have been washed out with the constant spray from the heavy traffic. This could take a few years to sort out and will be on going.

There was a Silver Birch tree leaning towards Mount Road a few weeks ago which finally fell on Easter Monday causing the traffic to stop. I quickly went along and helped the police to cut it up and throw it back over the wall.

We have had a few large fires over the Easter holidays and yes more overnight campers. I would like to thank the regular walkers who helped me to clear up the mess that they left and put out the hot embers.

Thanks you to all those who attended our 21<sup>st</sup> AGM at Victoria Hall on April 12<sup>th</sup>. It turned out to be a good evening and we hope to be at the same venue next year.

Thanking you for your support

Eric Forsyth (Chairman)

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From Tim Kirwin

Dear FOSW,

I am writing to inform you that I will be leaving the Trust as their Site Manager for Cheshire and Merseyside as of the end of May 2011. I have worked for the Trust for the last 8 years and completed some exciting and innovative projects during this time. I have immensely enjoyed working with the Friends and would like to thank all the committee for their dedication to the site and their support they have given me over the years. I have built some great relationships with individuals from the committee and respect them enormously. I wish the group continued success in to the future.

Continued overleaf

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The WOODLAND TRUST own and care for STORETON WOODS with the help and support of 'FRIENDS OF STORETON WOODS'.  
The Woodland Trust, Autumn Park, Dysart Road, Grantham,  
Lincolnshire, NG31 6LL Tel 01476 581111



I will be working part time for June and July for the Trust to support the new member of staff and download 8 years of knowledge to them about the 58 sites I currently manage. I will leave the job knowing that it is safe hands.

As for my future - I have set up an Environmental and Landscape consultancy business, "Wilder Things" and will be delivering a wide range of events. I have a number of strings to this business including Environmental school ground design, event delivery, bushcraft birthday parties for kids, team building events for businesses, woodland management advice as well as returning to my roots of design, renovation and maintenance of private gardens. In addition to all this I will be delivering work for the Woodland Trust as a consultant regularly over the next few years and completing ecological surveys for a number of different clients. If you wish to use any of my services please contact [tim@jo-kirwin.co.uk](mailto:tim@jo-kirwin.co.uk) or ring me on 07543406968 to discuss your ideas further or contact me via your chair, Eric Forsyth.

Many thanks

Tim Kirwin  
Site Manager for Cheshire and Merseyside  
The Woodland Trust

### **The Secretary's Jottings**

*Following my piece about the pen and ink prints in the last issue of Newsleaf, Paul and I had a telephone call and emails regarding them from Northumberland. They came from a member, Roger Jermy, who informed us that the prints mentioned were commissioned by him for his book "The Storeton Tramway" published in 1981. Peter Westley was a former teaching colleague who carried out the work for him. Peter is still alive and lives somewhere in Gloucestershire. At least that clears up the mystery and incidentally, we do not hold the originals, as Roger informed us that they are with him. Thank you Roger for the information you gave us.*

As I produce the minutes of the meetings, both committee and AGM, it is interesting to note that at the AGM's, those members attending, excluding committee and speakers, have been declining over recent years. Since 1996, when the attendances were recorded for the first time, to 2011 the average number attending is 28 although, in 2003, 47 members were present as our guest speaker was Prof. Steven Harding talking about the Viking connection but this year only 21 signed in.

In a way this leads onto a reminder that there is still a vacancy for someone to join the management committee during this year so that hopefully the team will maintain its strength. At present, your management committee have a few younger members within the structure but anything can happen to make us under-strength. It is a pleasure to say that Joanne has agreed to be deputy secretary.

However, the need for younger FOSW members to consider a role within the management committee over the next few years is critical and we can accept nominations anytime for consideration.

A.D.B.Old. (May'11)

## **2011 AGM Review**

The Chairman, 21 members, including guests and 11 members of the committee along with Tim Kirwin (WT) attended our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April. Our chairman, Eric Forsyth, welcomed everyone to the meeting followed by 5 apologies given for those who could not attend.

Formal approval was sought and given for the minutes of the 2010 AGM that had been presented. Under matters arising from a query about FOSW calendars, the chairman stated that the committee had considered the suggestion but had come to the conclusion that for our group it was not financially sound. It was stated that another member had produced calendars of the woods for 2011 and had donated £2 for each one sold to the FOSW.

In the chairman's report, Eric briefly spoke about cutting back the ivy from around the base of the trees to aid inspection, planting 45 saplings within the woods that had been donated to us; and that storm damage during the past year had accounted for about 12 mature trees being lost.

Mention was made of our continuing communication with the Land agent for the Leverhulme Estates over Hancocks Wood, but as yet the Trustees had no further news on the subject.

A point was made over the waste bin collections at the entrances to the woods that were carried out by WBC. Due to a change in their route, this may not be on a regular pattern, so if members were to see that the bins were overflowing could they please report it to the WBC street scene department for their attention.

The treasurer, Peter Golby, presented his report on the finances of the FOSW with a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts being made available to the members. Our balance is very healthy at £72,576-51 with a steady income generated from subscriptions and donations although our membership as "dipped" below 700. The Gift Aid Scheme brought in £604-07, showing it was still a worthwhile exercise to claim for. Our main expenditure on the year was £955-83, being split between tree safety work and repairs to gates and signs due to "old age" plus materials used in the replacement benches. Peter also made commented that even though our membership has fallen slightly and bank interest was low, we still remain in a healthy financial position

As the retiring members of the committee were all seeking re-election, it was agreed en-bloc, for member's approval to be sought and this was given with no dissenters. There still remains a vacancy on the committee.

Tim gave a brief report on behalf of the Woodland Trust stating that the year had been relatively quiet for Storeton Woods with only tree safety work and inspections being carried out. He also mentioned that Mount Road boundary wall had suffered erosion on the road side due to constant vehicle splashing and this will have an inspection and repair procedure during this year organised by the WT.

The remainder of the agenda was addressed including the members agreement to join the Wirral Society as a Corporate Member in view of the demise of the Wirral Green Belt Council and by 20.13 hrs the meeting concluded with Eric requesting members to stay for refreshments and the guest speaker's presentation.

Following refreshments and a look at the photographic display, members were entertained by Tim Kirwin with his illustrated presentation on the way the Woodland Trust has developed since they became involved with FOSW 21 years ago. He mentioned that within the 70 woodlands in his area, 40 are termed urban woodland to which Storeton is one of them.

Showing various photographs of the different types of woodland under the Trusts' ownership, he mentioned that their aim is to double the woodland cover in the UK by the year 2050.

At the end of his presentation a Q&A was held.

Please note that a copy of the full AGM minutes will be posted on our website in due course for members to download and print off.

A.D.B.OLD.-(May 2011)

## Friends of Storeton Woods - Accounts for the Year to 31 December 2010

### 1. Receipts and Payments Account

<u>Receipts</u>	2010	2010	2009
Subscriptions	£1,905.00		£2,118.00
Donations	£1,834.41	<u>£3,739.41</u>	£2,652.20
Tax reclaimed	£604.07		£541.87
Tea towels & badges sold	£102.00		£183.00
Shopping bags sold	£207.00		£218.00
Calendar proceeds	£100.00		£0.00
Bank Interest (paid gross)	£96.97	<u>£1,110.04</u>	£453.29
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<u><b>£4,849.45</b></u>	<b>£6,166.36</b>
<u>Payments</u>			
Wood management	£955.83		£1,028.30
Caravan, Storage & Servicing	£52.00	<u>£1,007.83</u>	£104.00
Printing, photocopying	£239.46		£250.62
Stationery & postage	£309.35		£278.78
Wirral Green Belt Council subs.	£30.00		£15.00
Tea towels bought	£0.00		£185.00
Shopping bags bought	£0.00		£207.00
Office Equipment	£63.10		£177.75
Sundries	£196.09	<u>£838.00</u>	£186.55
<b>Total payments</b>		<u><b>£1,845.83</b></u>	<u><b>£2,433.00</b></u>
<b>Net receipts for the year</b>		<b>£3,003.62</b>	
Bank balances & cash at 31 December 2009		£69,572.89	
<b>Bank balances &amp; cash at 31 December 2010</b>		<u><b>£72,576.51</b></u>	

### 2. Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2010

<b>Monetary Assets:</b>	Nationwide B.S.	£24,884.42
	Caf Bank	£47,617.87
	Cash	<u>£74.22</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<u><b>£72,576.51</b></u>

#### Non-monetary Assets (estimated present value in brackets):

Caravan (£300), assorted tools (£130), slide projector, stand & screen (£50), paper guillotine (£10), First aid packs (£10) heavy duty stapler (£1) 85 tea towels (£255), 48 badges (£96).

<b>Liabilities</b>	Subs paid in advance	£246.00
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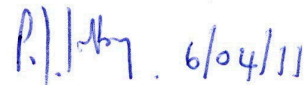


**Mr A. White**

**Independent Examiner**

### 3. Notes and Commentary

- a) Our 2010 membership of 672 was 45 less than that of 2009, possibly a result of the present general economic situation. Our income from subscriptions was reduced by over £200, while donations were reduced by over £800, though this is partly explained by the fact that, in 2009, donations were boosted by a one-off legacy of £500.
- b) In 2010 we received over £600 in tax reclaimed under the Gift Aid scheme. We would urge any tax paying member who has not already done so to contact the Treasurer so that we can increase this figure in future years.
- c) We began selling shopping bags in late 2007. We bought a total of 500 bags for £906 and have sold them for £1,528. It is not proposed to continue selling such bags as they are now widely available from many outlets.
- d) During the year, one of our members produced a quality calendar composed of photographs taken of the Woods. His kind donation of £2 for each calendar sold amounted to the £100 itemised in the accounts under "Calendar proceeds".
- e) Interest of £96.97 was credited to our accounts in 2010. The comparable figure in 2008, on a smaller balance, was £2,781.97.
- f) Expenses incurred in maintaining the woods include £600 for tree safety work and £250 for gate repairs and sign fixing. The balance of the £955.83 itemised under "Wood management" was spent on the materials used to construct and install benches.
- g) An amount of £246 is shown as a liability in the accounts. In the highly unlikely event that FOSW should cease to exist by the end of 2011, we would be obliged to reimburse this sum to those members who had paid their subscriptions for 2012 and beyond.
- h) It has sometimes been argued that a financial aim of a charity should be to accumulate sufficient funds such that the interest received will fund the ongoing activities of the charity. It is clear that, with interest received of about £100 and wood management costs of around £950, we are far from reaching that target and continue to rely of the generosity of our members.



**Mr P. S. Golby**

**Treasurer**

## IN PRAISE OF BLUE FLOWERS

Yes, I am well aware that blue is considered by some people as a colour associated with depression. They speak of 'singing the blues,' if they are unhappy, but while blue can be a somewhat cold colour - especially if it used to paint a room that doesn't get much sunshine, to my mind blue is calming, perhaps nature's way of relaxing us.

I cannot imagine anybody not loving the woodlands when they are carpeted with the dainty bluebells, their shining, narrow leaves and beautifully held heads - a lovely sight and one to gladden the heart of any walker. They are about 30cm and bloom from March until May, and I love seeing them in Storeton Woods.

Another blue flower is one that grows on dry grasslands and in the hedgerows, is the field scabious, with its striking head and leaves called lobed. It grows up to 75cm blooming from June until October - quite a long time for this pretty blue plant to flourish.

A plant that has more purple flowers than blue and yet is also attractive is the woody nightshade. It thrives in hedges, woods and in damp places as well as waste areas. Its poisonous berries go from green to red - so avoid this plant. It grows from May until September - so it stays long enough for us to recognize it. It grows up to 2m, and is striking enough with its richly tinted flowers.

A plant that has gentler looking blue flowers is the heath speedwell. It grows in the grassy places, on heaths as we realize from its name, as well as woods. It is a creeping kind of plant, its leaves forming dainty mats. It grows up to 30cm, from May until August. I've seen close ups of this flower, and it is a pretty one - and not one for making me sing the blues. Look for it when you visit its natural habitat.

Linda Tilston

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Mr. Shaun Daly from Rock Ferry has written to F.O.S.W. via the website:-

I am currently working on a film script and one of the main locations I want to use is Storeton Woods, because of its grand history and some of the mysteries. I want to use that mystery to create supernatural elements that are significant to the story. I wonder if it is possible to learn more about the woods through someone who knows the woods well. I think the film I'm working on would give great credit to the wood's prestigious heritage.

If you can help Mr Daly with your knowledge or stories of the history and mystery of the woods then please contact Barrie Old (Sec) or Paul Wallington (Editor) and we will pass you his details but permission of the Woodland Trust and Committee of FOSW will be required before using the woods for filming.

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### **Public Consultation on Forestry Commission Woodland**

The last issue of Newsleaf carried an item on the government proposal to sell off of the National Forest and a statement from the Woodland Trust with their views on the proposals. As luck would have it on the very day that Newsleaf was collected from the printers the government announced that the consultation process had been stopped and the plans shelved. Unfortunately therefore the article was well out of date by the time you read it. However, it is pleasing that the government listened to the groundswell of opinion that was rising against the proposals and did its "U turn" before the situation became really difficult. No doubt these plans will be back at some stage – perhaps later in the life of this government when there is less going on in the political arena.

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