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## Friends of Park Wood Newsletter January 2021

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Park Wood is a green oasis of calm and peace during these troubling times. It is generally agreed that time spent in woodland or other natural surroundings is good for our mental wellbeing and general health. Having Park Wood on our doorstep is of real benefit to our community. It has been very noticeable just how many people have been using Park Wood for their outdoor exercise during lockdown.

At the end of October, we resumed our workdays only to halt them when the second national lockdown was initiated at Christmas. Hopefully, we will be able to resume the workdays once the current restrictions are lifted. In the meantime, please continue to visit the wood and enjoy it.

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### Benches

The two benches that were in the meadow by London Road are now in need of replacement and one has had to be removed entirely. Fortunately, we have recently received an offer of a donation from the Waterloooville Allotment Association to provide some new seating in the wood. We are currently talking to the Woodland Trust about a design for the seats and we hope to commission a chainsaw artist to make some unique benches for our wood later this year.

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### Volunteer Work Parties

Just before the present lockdown we had resumed our Sunday volunteer work parties and were able to do some coppicing as part of our new management plan.

However, with the new lockdown we have had to stop holding workdays until current restrictions are lifted or eased. As the Trust consider our group to have all the necessary precautions in place to keep our workdays COVID-19 secure we will resume workdays as soon as we can do so.



In the meantime, some individual wardens will continue to litter pick the wood while on their daily exercise. Hopefully, we can get back to doing our practical conservation work soon.

*If you would like to become one of our volunteers, please contact Pete Hodges on 07565 058965*

## Ivy and Trees

Ivy in our woods is a much-misunderstood plant. A lot of people think mistakenly that because they have seen ivy growing up dead trees or into trees with dead branches that the ivy is killing the tree. Ivy would be cleared from plantations where the trees are being grown for timber to encourage straight trunks and make thinning and felling easier. Whereas in our native broadleaf woods Ivy is beneficial for nature conservation.



Ivy uses the tree as scaffolding, it is not a parasite on trees as its roots are in the ground. Trees that go over in high winds, regardless of having Ivy cover, do so because they have poor root structure. Decay may be due to infestation of detritivores such as insects or fungi like honey fungus which have rotted the tree.

Trees can succumb to climate events like prolonged periods of dry weather or storms especially after prolonged rainfall. The ground remaining waterlogged after the wet summer was a contributing factor for the 15 million trees lost in the hurricane which struck Southern England on the night of 16/17 October 1987. True the Ivy leaves can act as a sail in high winds, but it is made much worse if the Ivy has been cut removing the root structure that would otherwise help to anchor the tree.

Ivy is an important food source for birds in late autumn and winter as it is one of the last fruiting plants of the year and its flowers are important nectar sources for bees, butterflies, and other insects. It also provides additional cover for our smaller woodland birds.

Ivy is not so bad as some people believe. It does have benefits particularly in our native ancient woodlands where trees are prized for their nature conservation value and are not being grown for timber production. This is certainly the case in Park Wood. So please spread the word that we are okay with Ivy on our trees in Park Wood.

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## Membership Renewal 2021-2022

We will be asking for membership renewals from April 2021. More information in our next newsletter.

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## Friends of Park Wood Committee and AGM

Having had to cancel last years AGM we hope to have news in the Spring newsletter as to when we shall hold the next AGM when we will elect our new committee. If you would like to join the committee, please contact our current chair Pete Hodges or Committee Secretary Maureen Nye.

Pete Hodges  
Chair of the Friends of Park Wood