



SURREY TREE WARDENS NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2021

Street Trees and Surrey Highways

We are being urged to plant more trees, but many Surrey Tree Wardens are having problems getting permission for street tree planting from Surrey County Council. A meeting was arranged last month to discuss the problem between Surrey Councillor Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, and Surrey Tree Warden Chairman and Councillor, Trefor Hogg, and Councillor Rebecca Paul.

Several Tree Wardens were able to provide specific examples of applications that had been rejected, and a detailed report was collated for the meeting. It also included concerns about Surrey's New Tree Strategy. In particular

- There was inadequate time for consultation because much of the data available in appendices, including for street trees, was not made available until near the end of the consultation period.
- Information about maintenance and replacement of felled street trees was missing.
- The new fee of £25 for each tree planting application was 'mean spirited' when in most cases, Tree Wardens are funding, planting and maintaining the new trees.

The meeting was helpful, though there was not time to discuss all the issues raised. Matt Furniss said that the rules on acceptable risk to underground services had been changed nationally and Surrey Highways absolutely had to comply with that. He added that Surrey Highways are planning to bring in more environmentally trained staff, and he pointed out that Tree Wardens may be able to frame requests differently to allow flexibility and avoid wasted survey charges. He also said that a review of the Tree Strategy was underway.

Matt Furniss agreed to a follow-up meeting with Tree Wardens later this year, maybe as early as next month to discuss the issues in greater detail. Please tell us if you too have experienced problems.

Freebilee Treebilee

The **Bookham** Tree Wardens are giving away free trees as part of the Queen's Treebilee. The Treebilee, a nationwide tree planting project, was announced by Prince Charles a month ago to celebrate the Queen's 70 years on the throne in 2022. The Bookham Group won a Lottery bid two years ago to plant street trees. But permission from Surrey County Council was not forthcoming. The money has to be spent, so the Group are offering free trees to residents to plant in their front gardens. The trees will be given out at Bookham Village Day on 30th August, for delivery and planting in November. There are 19 trees altogether including several different varieties of flowering Cherry, also Walnut, Norway Maple, Crab Apple, Silver Birch and Bay Laurel.

It is a different story for Warwick Hutchinson, TW for **Oxshott and Stoke d'Abernon**. He has run out of places to plant street trees. Along with the local Residents Association, he has been planting trees for the past ten years at least. Now the grass verges left are too narrow.

Save the Date: 16 October The AGM for the Surrey Tree Warden Network will be held on Saturday 16th October 2021, 9.30am - 4.30pm, in Tadworth. The keynote speaker is Paul Wood, who has written many books on trees including 'London is a Forest' and 'London's Street Trees' - books about the extraordinary variety of trees, exotic and native, to be found in the capital. More details to come.

Calling Tree Wardens in Elmbridge

A call has gone out to form a local tree warden group in **Elmbridge**. Rod Thorn, who is launching the project, says there are two good reasons for this. Elmbridge Council are planning to plant 1000 trees in four open spaces around the borough this year, and along with community groups, expect to plant another 2000 in other locations. Secondly, Walton Charity are hoping to establish a base for Elmbridge Tree Wardens as part of their Tree Canopy project <https://www.waltoncharity.org.uk/news/vote-for-our-tree-canopy-project> If you are interested, please get in touch with Rod: info@surreytreewardens.org.uk

Hands On Training on Offer

The **Spelthorne** Tree Wardens are offering ‘on the job’ tree training to anyone who wants to come. The group meets every Thursday morning at 9.00 at their Tree Nursery on the Towpath at the end of Docket Eddy Lane, Shepperton, TW17 9NT. Anybody wanting to attend should arrive before 10 am because the group often leave the site to work on planting or caring for the many trees they have planted in the borough in the past few years. This will be thoroughly practical training from a group which has years of experience. Please call first to say you are coming: Dave Woods on 01932 786806 or 07717 473124

There has been a delay in the rollout of the new Tree Council online training materials for Tree Wardens. Watch this space.

Hedging the Future

The **Tadworth & Walton** Tree Wardens, in conjunction with other local residents’ groups and wildlife organisations, are looking to use the northern part of the borough of **Reigate & Banstead** as a pilot for looking at improving green corridors to assist biodiversity.

The aim is to identify and strengthen green corridors, encouraging new tree and hedgerows where desirable, and identifying pinch points between settlements where it is important to maintain green corridors and prevent development.

At the same time, The Tree Council has opened a new **Community Hedge Fund** which can provide up to 100% grants for volunteer Tree Wardens and community groups in England to plant new hedgerows, hedgerow trees and gap up existing hedgerows in winter 2021/22. Planting can be in rural or urban areas on private or public land where the community will benefit. Applications must be in by 8 August. For more details see the website: treecouncil.org.uk



Down My Way in Bushy Park

Surrey Tree Wardens celebrated the relaxation of lockdown with a spring walk in Bushy Park organised by Rod Thorn. They walked along The Lime Tree Avenue, all clones of one tree it’s said, and came across mighty oaks and ancient hawthorns festooned with mistletoe. In the woodland gardens they found a Champion tree, a crab-apple *Malus hupehensis*, which is celebrated as a “Height County Champion of Greater London” at treeregister.org.

CONTACT US

<https://www.surreytreewardens.org.uk>

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