
Welcome

Autumn and Winter Edition

Welcome to our latest newsletter and hope you enjoy the articles following

During the time since the last one in Spring, we have been very busy with the volunteering on all fronts, and having a stand of our own at the celebration of 100 years of Thetford Forest at High lodge at the end of July.

It was very gratifying to meet in person many of our members, and to talk to those that showed an interest in joining Friends, as we could not achieve what we do without our members on board.

We were finally able to hold a 'real' AGM for the first time since 2019 at Oak Lodge where the existing committee was confirmed , and an offer for someone to join the committee going forward from November. The AGM was followed by a very informative and entertaining talk given by Dudley Gunn, Wildlife ranger at Thetford. Also present at the meeting were senior members of FE who confirmed their commitment to working with us to continue our stated aims and projects within the forest.

Covid brought many challenges for everyone, but we are confident that we held our own and the ability to move forward.

Your Current Committee

Anne Mason

Chair/Archaeology

Alan Spidy

Treasurer/Membership Secretary

Dave Goodrum

Secretary/Conservation

Katherine Jones

Volunteering Co-ordinator

Clare Tough

Lynford Arboretum

Photo credits in this issue:

Cover - D Goodrum

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New Forest Management Director Appointed

FoTF received the following information from Forestry England recently:

We're pleased to announce that Dan Whyment joined as the new district Forest Management Director (FMD) on 3rd October.

Dan is from the Canals and River Trust (CRT) where he held a senior position overseeing operational delivery for the East Midlands region.



Dan brings with him significant leadership experience across the public, charity and volunteer sectors. Completing postgraduate studies in Criminology he spent the first part of his career in policing with specific experience in senior community and safeguarding roles.

Dan achieved chartered management status with CMI in 2014 and holds qualifications in programme management from the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health as well as relating to Construction Design Management.

After attending our AGM within days of starting his new post, Dan wrote to us to say:

"Thank you for the warm welcome from Friends of Thetford Forest, I was very pleased to meet many of you within my first week and even benefit from the discussion about wildlife management from one of our own Rangers.

I have heard so many positive things about FOTF and look forward to working with you all in the near future."

What's in a Name ?

If you look at an Ordnance Survey map of Thetford Forest, it includes some intriguing names, secret clues to the history of the landscape.

Here is a selection. The map opposite, by FOTF member Andy Carter, has the same numbering so you can see where the names can be found.

1 Warren Wood / Warren Plantation

/Warren Belt: a warren was where rabbits were farmed for their meat and their fur, from the 1280s to the 1920s. A 'Belt' is a shelter belt, usually of Scots Pine, planted to prevent soil erosion.

2 High Lodge: denotes the site of a warren lodge, where the warrener lived and worked, was always on the highest point of a warren.

3 Wellington Wood; Waterloo Belt; Dreadnought Plantation: these names reflect national figures or events at the time of the original planting.

4 Mount Ephraim Plantation: named by the Angersteins who purchased the Weeting Estate in 1805. They were Russian émigré Jews and Mount Ephraim in Israel is an important religious site.

5 Emily's Wood: when John Julius Angerstein bought the Weeting Estate in 1805, he gave the name of a family member, Emilia Boucherette, to this wooded area.

6 St Helen's Picnic Site / St Helen's Well:

Helena was the mother of the Emperor Constantine and after her death, she was made a saint with guardianship of holy wells.

7 High Wrong Corner: 'Wong' or 'Wang' is Anglo- Saxon for an area of grassland on a corner plot so could easily change to 'Wrong' as spoken aloud.

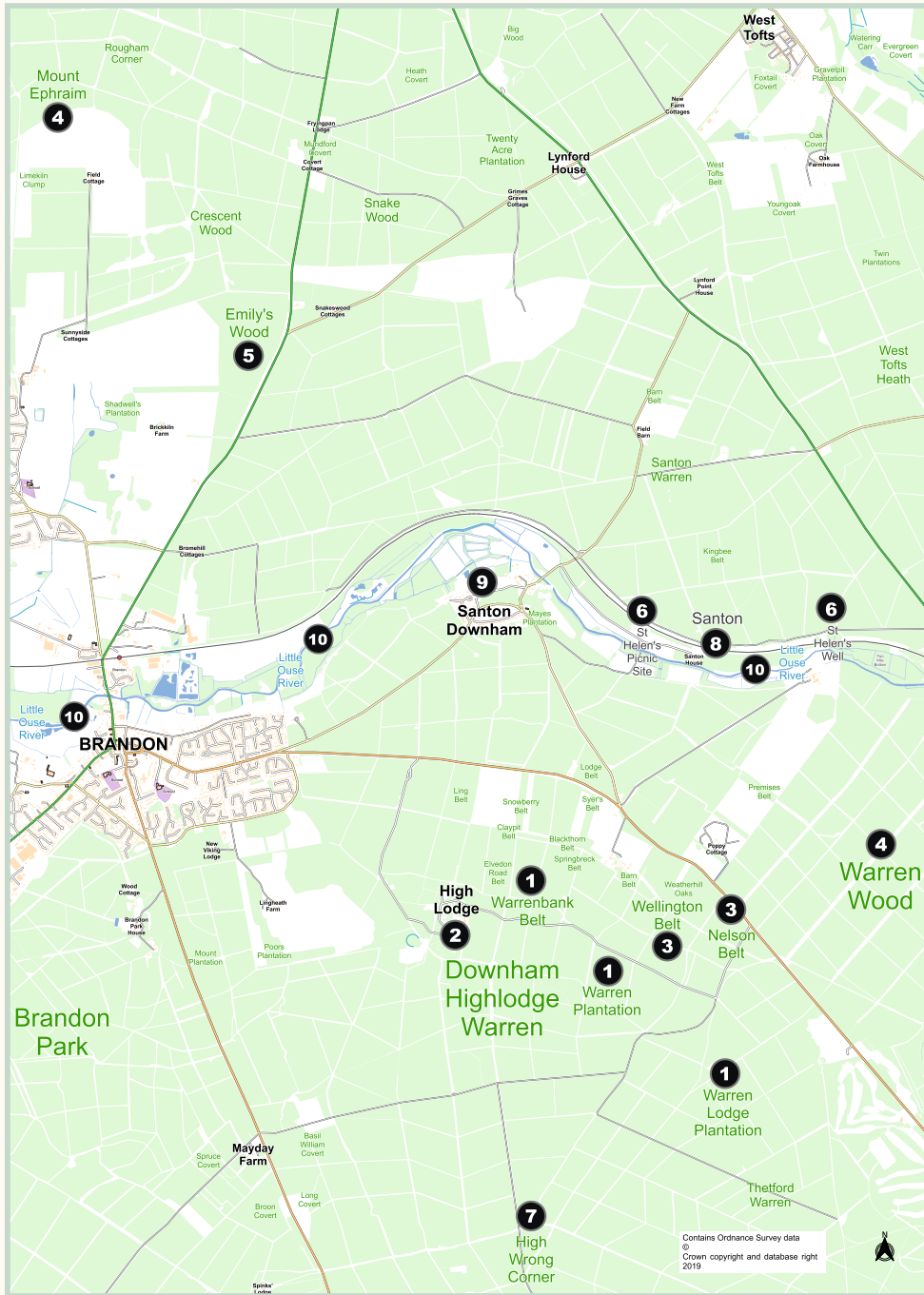
8 Santon: the sandy place.

9 Santon Downham: the sandy place on the higher land. 'Down' is an old word for 'hill' and 'ham' is a Saxon word for 'settlement'.

10 Little Ouse: 'Ouse' is a Celtic word for 'water' so is one of the few words still in use from at least two thousand years ago.

If you would like to know more about a place-name, please email it to info@fotf.org.uk and we'll publish a reply in the next newsletter.

Anne Mason



Map - Andy Carter

More Volunteers Needed

and you can benefit too

Many Friends' members are already volunteering and helping to care for Thetford Forest but new volunteers are always needed, as existing ones 'retire' or move away.

Here are the current volunteering opportunities:

Checking the way marked walking trails at West Stow, King's Forest and the Fir Trail at High Lodge.

These checks are carried out monthly, using a standard recording form and there is a training session beforehand.

Checking some of the other trails could be shared so if you regularly walk in the forest and are interested, please email volunteering@fotf.org.uk

Monitoring the condition of archaeological sites in the Forest, using a standard recording form. The training session includes a visit to the site/s..

Sites in need of monitors are:
The Foss Ditch, Cranwich
The Burial Mounds and Wayside Cross, Mount Ephraim, Weeting
Lynford Arboretum banks
Burial Mounds, King's Forest

A site needs only to be visited once a

year and its condition recorded – such as damage by animals, vehicles or people and the amount of vegetation and tree cover.

In addition, you can volunteer for: The conservation task on the third Sunday each month, to improve a habitat for wildlife.

Caring for Lynford Arboretum, Mundford, on two Wednesday mornings a month.

Tree Labelling at Lynford Arboretum, attaching new scientific labels to the 900+ trees in the Collection and learning identification skills at the same time.

Friends' also undertakes archaeological research projects and investigations and if you register your interest at volunteering@fotf.org.uk you'll be sent details of when and where these take place.

How you benefit:

After 35 recorded hours of volunteering, you receive free site entry to High Lodge Centre for a year.

You have priority booking for FOTF events

You discover more about the Forest's wildlife and history.

You make new friends and share interests and enthusiasms.

You help care for Thetford Forest – as one of the nation's forests, it belongs to us all.

Below are 7 images to give some idea of things that may come up while taking part in the archaeological activities, or working in the arboretum, and small but important things on a trail check for everyone's safety.



Sorting and labelling archaeology finds



Learning how to identify and label trees in the arboretum



Fallen tree over footpath, need reporting as too large to move to one side



Rotten wood on bench seat, needs reporting as unsafe



Broken marker post to report



Finding an old boundary post



Having cleared brash from a bank at St. Helens Well, a moment's rest

FoTF AGM October 16th 2022

After missing two years due to Covid, Friends of Thetford Forest was at last able to meet in person for the AGM instead of circulating reports online. The formal business was soon dealt with which left plenty of time to enjoy the refreshments, chat to people and listen to the speaker.

Though Wildlife Manager James Upson was unwell and so unable to give his talk comparing deer in Kielder Forest with Thetford, with very short notice Dudley Gunn, Wildlife Ranger, stood in as his replacement and gave a very informative, entertaining and enthralling presentation about the deer species in the forest and why deer management is such an essential part of timber production.

A selection of antlers highlighted the differences between the species and it was fascinating to learn about the terminology used through the centuries.

The relaxed atmosphere of the meeting allowed not only for questions to be asked but also for discussions with members and other FE staff, especially about possible markets for venison, a truly free range product.

Thank you to our members who attended and also to Neil Kellett and Joshua Heffer from Forestry England. A special 'thank you' to the new East District Forest Management Director, Dan Whyment who made time in his first two weeks to be with us.

AGMs can have the reputation of being overly formal so we're grateful once again to Dudley Gunn and all those who attended; everyone helped make another FoTF AGM a lighthearted and enjoyable experience.

In accordance with our Constitution the committee was elected covering the period Oct 2022 to Oct 2023.

All existing members of the committee agreed to continue in post, and their election was supported by members Colin Lang and Tony Grover.

Although not able to be at the meeting, an expression of interest in joining the committee was received by the committee from another member, and the floor agreed to a suggestion that he attend our normal November meeting as a precursor to joining the committee full time after that.



Conservation 2022 in Pictures



January Cranwich



February Lynford water



March Mildenhall Woods



April Mildenhall Warren pits



May Kings Forest



June Rex Graham Reserve



July Lynford Arboretum



August Santon Street

FOTF supports Apprentices

For several years now, FOTF has given the Thetford Forest apprentices a donation of £100 towards books and equipment. After a pause during the pandemic, FOTF has again been able to offer this support in 2022.

Ben Chittock wrote to the committee: I applied for the Forestry England apprenticeship because I like working outdoors and have always enjoyed working with trees. I have recently been felling trees with Cliff from harvesting, In the future I would like to work on the harvesting team felling trees and using the machinery. I used the donation from the Friends of Thetford Forest on some tree species books to further my knowledge.

Fraser Eyres is the forester responsible for the apprentices and explained that: Cameron and Ben Joined Forestry England as apprentices in November 2020 after a very competitive process involving over a hundred candidates. They were immediately thrown in at the deep end and spent the next 6 months

helping to plant in excess of one million trees across Thetford Forest. They have since been trained on chainsaws, clearing saws, knapsack sprayers and much more.

They have both become invaluable, experienced members of our beat teams and it has been a privilege to see them progress from having no forestry knowledge or experience, to be where they are today.

As they approach their end of season exams and assessments, we have been looking onwards to our next intake of apprentices and have recently been undertaking further recruitment for the next two years. Training new, enthusiastic people will always be vital in the hidden industry of forestry.

By a happy coincidence, Fraser himself began his Forestry England career through the apprenticeship scheme and remembers receiving a £100 cheque from Friends !



High Lodge Sporting Events

CaniCross returns to High Lodge

Following much demand from the CaniCross community we are pleased to announce Raw Trails will be delivering this new and exciting 5km winter race series.

The 3 race series will take place in November, December and January and includes a discounted option to help keep the event affordable.

The event will be chip timed and professionally photographed

Sunday 6th November - 9:30am

Sunday 11th December - 9:30am
(Festive theme)

Sunday 22nd January - 9:30am



Elf Trail at High Lodge

This Christmas, High Lodge will have some Free, Festive Fun in the form of an Elf trail. Can you find all 8 elves hiding in the forest and discover their story?

The Christmas themed trail will be open from Saturday November 26th to the 4th January Sunday (7 days a week) with tick sheets available from the information point.

The trail will follow the Nature Trail (brown waymarkers)



Can But Tri Duathlons

Can But Tri's fun and friendly duathlons are perfect for those new to multi-sport events, but also great for the more experienced competitor wanting to test their fitness!

Currently happening at High Lodge is the winter series which has events in December, January, February and March

A Long Term Project at Lynford Arboretum

About ten years ago Friends volunteers at Lynford Arboretum planted some oak trees. The idea was that in around two hundred years or so they might be ready for use for repairs to some of our local ecclesiastical buildings – the so-called "Cathedral Oaks".



Happily, the oaks have survived their first ten years but time took its toll on the cages protecting them. On one very hot day last summer, some of our current band of volunteers carried out repair work to the old cages setting them up nicely for the next ten years.

Bin Free Thetford Forest

Forestry England have been managing 9 bins (1500 litres) at 4 of our sites across Thetford Forest (excluding High Lodge). There is considerable cost associated with managing these bins and misuse of the bins is now becoming a problem.

A long-term solution is now needed and so from October 2022 we will no longer provide bins within Thetford Forest, the overarching message will be to 'take your waste home'.

Many of the bins within the car parks are not being used effectively and are encouraging fly tipping and overuse. Forestry England will provide better information on their websites and Facebook pages so that Visitors can plan their visit and so manage their own waste.

This new statement is also in line with Forestry England environmental policy of creating less waste, reducing reliance on energy and fossil fuels, and taking a 'whole life cycle' approach to developing new opportunities.



These new opportunities will see Thetford Forest redeploying resources from managing other people's litter to investing in expanding people's experiences of accessing green space.

What should visitors now do with their waste?

Visitors will be expected to manage their own litter and take it back home with them.

What will the money saved be used for?

We will be redeploying the financial savings from bin collections into managing and expanding our offer within the Nation's Forests.

How can you support Forestry England in being bin free?

Help keep the Nation's Forest looking beautiful and protect wildlife by taking your litter home with you. You can also volunteer through the "Friends" and support their work in protecting the forest.

Forestry England





Delicious food at
**High Lodge
 Cafe**

High Lodge Cafe and Pantry and Food to go is situated in the High Lodge tourist attraction located on the Norfolk-Suffolk border. There are many activities surrounding the cafe such as Go-Ape, archery and many beautiful walking trails and children's play areas.



High Lodge Cafe, Thetford Road, Brandon, IP27 0AF
 Winter Opening Times
 Monday - Sunday 10am - 4pm



Pop in and check out our seasonal specials tempting treats such as fresh crepes and Belgian waffles throughout November. Get warm and cosy by the fire in the cafe and maybe even treat yourself to a mulled wine or Baileys's coffee throughout December. We wish you very Merry Christmas from Hazel and the High Lodge cafe team.

Volunteering

We offer lots of opportunities – and they all come with the appropriate training:

Checking the Walking Trails.

Monitoring the condition of the various walking trails at High Lodge and in Thetford Forest generally so that they are safe from hazards and litter-free, on a monthly basis.

Looking after Lynford Arboretum.

Carrying out day-to-day maintenance of the Arboretum at Mundford, including tree-planting and looking after the shrub layer, up to four mornings a month.

Conservation.

Enhancing habitats for rare plants and animals “somewhere” in Thetford Forest, under the guidance of the Forestry Commission’s East of England Ecologist, on the third Sunday of every month.

Archaeology.

Monitoring the condition of archaeological sites annually and investigating and caring for archaeological sites within the Forest, as and when required.

High Lodge

Having seasonal work parties to support maintenance of the Heritage Trail and High Lodge in general; helping at the concerts and at special events.

Please email volunteering@fotf.org.uk for further information.

Please note that all volunteers will be required to complete a welfare form and comply with the risk assessments and safety guidance and the current Covid19 regulations.



E-mail: info@fotf.org.uk

www.fotf.org.uk

  follow us @fotf_uk

With thanks to all of our corporate members for helping us increase understanding and enjoyment of Thetford Forest, and helping us to fund various projects.



Corporate members receive many benefits from the Friends of Thetford Forest. If you are interested in becoming a corporate member, please see full details at www.fotf.org.uk

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