

# Warwick District GREEN SPACES

NOVEMBER 2020



## In this edition

**It's National Tree Week  
28 November - 6 December,  
so join us in a celebration  
of our tall, green friends.**

- Pump Room Gardens Programme Update
- Tree planting
- What to look out for in November
- The trees we love
- A year in the life of an Oak Tree

## Green Space of the Month Wych Elm Drive Park

**Located off of St Helen's Road, Wych Elm Drive is a treasure trove of trees, with a small play area and wildlife pond containing great crested newts.**

Trees from all over the world were planted here in the 1800s, particularly from North America and China, as it became the height of fashion at the time to plant large conifers. You'll find two types of Californian Redwoods: Coastal Redwoods and the impressively large Wellingtonia.

Some other trees to look out for are the Deodar Cedar, native to Western Himalayas, Cedar of Lebanon, Lawson Cypress and Western Red Cedar. Located appropriately on Gingko Walk, you'll find a Maidenhair Tree (also known as Gingko), native to China. Some trees on this site could live to be 1000 years old!

There are also plenty of trees that you'll recognise and find in other green spaces in Leamington, including Maple, Sycamore, Horse Chestnut and varieties of Holly: this park really does have a pic n mix of trees!

There's an interpretation panel, located on the corner of Wych Elm Drive and St Helen's Road, with a handy map identifying each tree's location.



# Pump Room Gardens Programme Update

It's been a quiet summer with most public facing events being cancelled due to Covid-19. Although we have missed you, rest assured there has been plenty of work going on behind the scenes.

The 'Postcards from Home' competition has now closed and our judges are busy looking through entries. Good luck to all who took part: we can't wait to announce the winners!

Two new leaflets will soon be available from the Pump Rooms or to download; the first is an updated history of the Pump Room Gardens and the second 'Spa Gardens' leaflet has two fascinating walking routes following the River Leam.

FREE digital, interactive presentations are now available for community groups of all ages and primary schools to book over the winter period. Both hour long workshops will enable you to teach your groups about the history of the Pump Room Gardens or give you the inspiration to create your own piece of abstract artwork inspired by the Leamington born abstract artist Terry Frost. Both sessions can be delivered via a video call.



Previous participants have said:

"The presentation was well-paced and engaged the children right through the session... without this session they wouldn't have an opportunity to identify their own artistic drawing skills."

"I had no idea the gardens had such a rich history! Really informative and enjoyable presentation."

Contact Nicky Bellenger, Community Engagement Officer, for more information and to book:  
[nicky.bellenger@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:nicky.bellenger@warwickdc.gov.uk)

## Tree planting

**"The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is now"- Chinese Proverb**

The Council is moving forward with its exciting tree project to enable 160,000 trees to be planted in our District between now and 2030.

Working in partnership with the Woodland Trust, the Forestry Commission, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, and the Tree Council, our aim is to bring together local communities, Town and Parish Councils, schools, businesses and landowners together in a project which will not only make our post COVID-19 district a healthier and more beautiful place to live, work and visit, but will also enhance wildlife and help to combat climate change.

To help achieve our ambitious target as well as planting on our own land, the Council will be working with businesses and community groups to help bring about tree planting on third party land.

In addition to planting on larger sites such as Newbold Comyn and the new Tach Brook Country Park, we hope

to encourage a range of tree planting initiatives from street trees, to community orchards and new hedgerows. To aid this work we will be carrying a mapping exercise to identify land which is suitable and available for tree planting.

We are also encouraging schools to get involved by taking advantage of the Woodland Trust's free tree packs for schools and community groups.

For more information  
[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

We're hoping there will be lots of opportunities everyone to take part as we progress our plans, we will be updating our website with our latest news  
[https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20830/tree\\_planting](https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20830/tree_planting)

Contact us at  
[treesforourfuture@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:treesforourfuture@warwickdc.gov.uk)



# What to look out for in November

Watch out for the seasonal changes; the leaves turning golden brown and orange tinged, and eventually falling. All types of moss can be found amongst hedgerows or in the woods as it's velvet green tufts stand out against wood that is bare.

Birds favour food such as seed heads from hogweed and teasel, these are produced from a number of plants. The seed heads can also provide stems, which insects can survive on through the winter. Walnuts, horse chestnuts and acorns are plentiful for squirrels, birds and mice who stock up on their food supplies during autumn. You may even catch sight of rabbits with longer, thicker coats in rural areas.

Many types of birds flock together, such as finches and tits, and it's important to note that us humans can also be affected by seasonal changes too, such as sleep patterns and changes in hormonal balance, so it's an important time of year to look after ourselves and each other.



## The trees we love

We know you shouldn't pick a favourite, but when it comes to trees there's always one that has that special place in your heart! What's yours?

Here are the Green Spaces team's favourites:

### Simon Richardson, Green Space Development Officer

My favourite trees are Copper Beeches as they are something a bit different, and in the right location they look fantastic, adding a splash of colour. There's a great copper beech at Victoria Park.

### Nicky Bellenger, Community Engagement Officer

Tough choice, but I'll go for the Horse Chestnut. Such a beautiful display of tall, white/pink flowers in the spring, and then the treat of shiny conkers in their brilliantly spiky cases in autumn. There's a lovely one near where I live, and I've loved watching it transform through the seasons this year. I've also just planted a conker from it in a pot – I really hope it grows!

### David Anderson, Green Space Manager

For me it's the oak tree since the Scottish Clan Anderson Crest is an oak tree with a motto saying 'Stand Sure'. My dad is Scottish, hence the connection.

I was also born and brought up in the Forest of Dean, famous for its Nelson Oaks. Timber from the trees was used to build many of the ships used at the Battle of Trafalgar. I also lived close to a registered special

'seed-stand' for the Sessile Oak where acorns are collected by the Forestry Commission as a national seed source for the rest of the Country.

### Jon Holmes, Green Space Development Officer

My favourite tree is the Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). It's a small tree, very versatile, lovely white blossom in May, really good for insects, good autumn colour, good for birds i.e for nesting and they can eat the berries, mammals enjoy the fruit too, grows almost anywhere, and you can eat the young leaves in a salad.

I spent 10 years producing trees for Warwick district in the tree nursery in Warwick. I used to grow 10,000 trees and 10,000 shrubs from seeds collected round the district and planted in our open spaces.

### Helen Hancox, Green Space Development Officer

My favourite tree is the Japanese Cherry. The cherry blossoms are a symbolic flower of the spring, a time of renewal and a reminder of the fleeting nature of life. The blossoms only last around two weeks, and there is a long tradition of hanami, which involves admiring the cherry blossom. Admiring this short lived blossom, encourages introspection and contemplation about our time on earth and that we must make the most of our time on earth in a positive manner. The blossom coincides with springtime, and as such, is also a symbol of renewal and optimism, which allows us to think about our aspirations for the future, whilst reflecting on the preciousness of life.



# A year **in the life** of an Oak Tree

In celebration of National Tree Week, we've replaced our usual 'Day in the Life of' article with a celebratory 'Year in the Life of' the beautiful, ancient Oak tree.

Oaks can live for more than 1000 years and aren't considered to be old until they reach around 700 years. An English Oak supports an impressive number of species in just one year, playing host to hundreds of insects, providing food for birds and mammals and providing a place for bats to roost and feed under loose bark. They are therefore essential for supporting biodiversity.

Here's how an English Oak transforms throughout the year:

## Spring:

Like most trees, lots of activity happens in spring, with the first leaves and flowers appearing and buds beginning to burst.

The leaves grow in bunches, and make an appearance mid-May. They grow to around 10cm long with almost no stem and have the iconic deep lobes around the edges.

Both male and female flowers grow on the same tree. The long, hanging catkins are the male flowers, and the tiny, red female flowers are barely noticeable on the tips of the shoots. The catkins release their pollen in April and May, allowing the females to start developing into acorns.

## Summer:

The first ripe fruits (acorns) appear in August, growing on long stalks. The base of the acorn is known as a cupule, and as the fruit ripens the green acorn turns brown and comes loose from the cupule, falling to the ground below to begin sprouting next spring (if it's not snapped up by a hungry creature nearby!).

## Joke of the Month

What's a tree's favourite radio station?

One that plays poplar songs!



A time for leaves to tint and fall, creating picture perfect scenes in autumnal sunshine. Autumn is also crucial for supporting biodiversity: as the oak's leaves break down on the canopy below, they create a rich leaf mould which supports fungi growth, in turn helping plants to take up water and nutrients. Autumn is also a crucial time for a range of wildlife to shelter and find food.

## Winter:

In winter months, the bare tree can be identified by its rounded buds that appear in clusters, with each bud having multiple scales. In order to stay alive in colder months, most necessary nutrients are stored in the oak's roots. However, in addition to these vital minerals, the oak also relies on mycorrhizal fungi to extract phosphate from the surrounding soil, to ensure it is healthy enough to begin the process all over again in spring.

To sign up to this e-newsletter, please visit:  
[www.warwickdc.gov.uk/gsnews](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/gsnews)

For more information about green spaces in Warwick District please visit:

 [greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk)

 [www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parks](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parks)

 WarwickDCNews

 @Warwick\_DC



[www.warwickdc.gov.uk](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk)