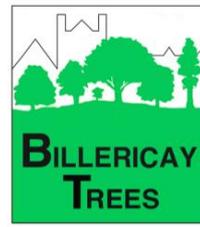


Billericay Tree Warden News-sheet for March 2021

We hope that everyone is safe and well in these continuing dangerous times. **Our next Committee Meeting, via Zoom, will be on Wednesday 17th March at 6pm.** When we are able to meet again in person for Committee Meetings, it will be at the BTC's new Council offices venue at the Chantry Day Centre, Chantry Way.



Conserving Our Tree Heritage
In association with Billericay Town Council

Stop Press!

We have just been informed that we are about to acquire another 400 (four hundred) one metre high refugee oaks from the controversial HS2 project –“Refutrees”! We have locations to plant them as an oak hedge and as standalone oaks. We will have to strategize planting operations so as to conform to the current lockdown rules. This is in addition to the Barleylands item described below. More on this in the next BTW News-sheet.

Planting at South Green

The Great Burstead & South Green VC requested that the BTW organize tree a planting project on their Green. A BTW project funded by the Village Council. This involved two Maples - An Acer October Glory Maple tree– (*Acer rubrum*) with stunning autumn red foliage & Acer Princeton Gold (*Acer platanoides*) a golden-leaved Norway Maple – Both were planted as “standards” on the weekend 20th February. Nathan did the honours.



Planting Project - Barleylands

As previously reported we have taken possession of 100 “Refutrees” from the HS2 project, now looking for a new home. They are about a metre tall, vigorous and in good condition. They are destined for the windswept Barleylands area; some will form part of a hedge line whilst others will be spaced well apart to become standalone oaks.

South Green - Maple

Outwood Common Road Adjacent to Norsey Wood

A Joint EWT Living Landscapes 34 & BTW Planting Project

We have just been informed by the Woodland Trust that they are to supply 420 native tree “whips” during April. This is after the recommended planting time of March but we are siezing the opportunity and will make sure that they are watered by bowser until they establish themselves. This will supplement the native “whips” supplied by the Norsey Wood Society that the BTW planted earlier. The final run of hedging will probably be in excess of 500 metres. Nathan and Neil to run the project with voluteer help as per the lockdown rules dictate at the time.

Requests to Join Planting Work Parties

We have had requests to join in the voluntary workforce for planting projects but our hands are still tied by the lockdown restrictions. Hopefully there will come a time when we can all revert back to the many hands make light work formula!

Hillway – Henham Close

A mature oak tree has been felled on a portion of land still owned by Taylor Wimpey. Technically, permission would be required of Taylor Wimpey. The BBC confirmed that the tree was not the subject of a TPO. As yet we have no information as to why it was felled. Researching such slivers of leftover land by building companies always presents difficulties. Both the ECC and our Borough Council do not pursue issues where trees are not on their land. If anyone is aware of the circumstances leading to this tree loss please get in contact with the Tree Wardens – Any information received will be held in confidence. The email address is at the end of this News-sheet. Thank you

BTW Posters

Our original A4 BTW poster has been updated. The BTC is to display one on their notice board at their new offices at the Chantry Day Centre. The Fold is to display one at the Fold itself and then another after Easter in the Waitrose car park. Both the Resident and the Cater Museum are other outlets to pursue. Two of our lady members are helping with this project. Thanks to the Norsey Wood Society for highlighting the various poster locations within the town.

The BTW News-sheet – Distribution

Our Town Clerk Deborah is to continue including the BTW's News-sheet on their Council website thus achieving a wider distribution to the residents. Forming part of our "raising awareness" initiative for trees in our town.

The Police Station – Adjacent Sun Corner

Although the front desk of the Police Station has been withdrawn for quite some while, the building still serves as a facility for the Police speed camera enforcement team. But it is quite likely that the building will eventually be sold off as an asset for police funding. A very controversial issue in its own right. In view of that, the Town Council has had the building registered as an "Asset of Community Value" that gives a six month period of grace for the building to be acquired for community service. A system devised to prevent buildings of note from immediately being sold off to Developers and thus denying a potential community use. The relevance to the BTW is that there are existing mature trees on the corner that provide a valuable Street Scene amenity and a vehicle air pollution absorption "natural service". So should a future Planning Application be lodged with the Basildon Borough Council, then the BTW would request that the trees are retained. There is also an opportunity for some colourful horticultural planting between the trees and the car park. **Wildlife aspect:-**

The tall berry producing Holly tree on the corner plays host to the visiting Fieldfare and Redwing winter thrushes!



Mountnessing Pond Reclamation Project – A non-BTW Project

Following on from a successful large wildlife pond reclamation project carried out a few years ago adjacent to the Mountnessing St Giles' Church, now the large water body on the south side of the tree-bordered Old Church Lane is next to be reclaimed. It is very much silted up, overgrown with reeds and vegetation plus criss-crossed with several fallen decaying willow trees. It requires a major effort to fully restore. A project to be led by Nathan that is to be funded by Natural England with digger machinery usage supplied by the proactive and environmentally friendly Mountnessing Hall Farm. Covid-19 has delayed the start of the project but it is hoped that reclamation work will commence towards the end of this year.

The Basildon Borough Council – A Post Covid-19 Greening Approach? – The New Normal?

The Council's recent approval of their 2021 Budget includes a raft of nature / community orientated items. £50,000 pounds set aside for tree planting across the Borough and the creation five new community woodlands. And within their online and distributed booklet "Believe in Basildon" the following are featured:- Norsey Wood / Lake Meadows / Wat Tyler Park Pitsea / The 26 acre extension to the Wickford Memorial Park with its wildlife, woodland and recreational emphasis / And advice on home composting.

**Thank you to the Billericay Town Council for providing the BTW
with advice and moral support.**

Prepared by the Billericay Tree Wardens [Editor JHS - 02/03/2021]

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