



## FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD August Newsletter 2020

[www.fqw.org.uk](http://www.fqw.org.uk)



### OUR FIRST LIVE EVENT SINCE LOCKDOWN

On Friday 21st August Cindy Blaney will be leading a **bat walk**. As only 6 people can meet together at the moment, the first 5 people to email [membership@fqw.org.uk](mailto:membership@fqw.org.uk) saying they want to come will get a place but we will keep a waiting list in case the Government rules change, Meet 8.00pm at the Lodge.

### THREATENED OAK TREES IN THE WOOD

The threat to the four oak trees adjacent to 105 Wood Vale, which Haringey Council is proposing to fell, remains very real. The house is severely affected by subsidence, allegedly because of damage caused by the roots of the trees, and the insurers of the property, AXA, have told the Council that either it fells the trees or they will have to charge it with the costs of underpinning, which are quoted at £270,000 . The Council does not wish to fell the trees but feels that it has no option but to do so since it simply does not have the money to meet the demands of the insurers.

When the news first broke a petition was mounted calling on the Council to call off the felling. A camp was also set up inside the Wood, occupied 24 hours a day, to stop it going ahead. In the face of



Camp near Wood Vale



Poster near Wood Vale

FQW sympathises very much with the Council in the difficult position it finds itself in. But we remain totally opposed to the felling of these beautiful and ancient trees, which provide a habitat for a wide range of wildlife, and we support the aims of the protesters. We have agreed to donate £500 towards the costs of the legal advice sought and such other legal costs as may be incurred in pursuing this case. To date the

Council has taken no action to try to enforce its decision. We will keep you informed.

## **LITTER IN THE WOOD**



Rubbish in Wood



Garden waste Queen's Wood Rd - photo Sam Samuelson

One of our members, Ruth Edwards, has been collecting litter since the beginning of lockdown and reached her 100<sup>th</sup> bag including about 19 from Queen's Wood.

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On 20 July she found the remains of a barbecue in the Witches' Coven. The police had had to be called in the previous night to put the fire out and there were several sacks worth of waste to be cleared.

Another problem during lockdown has been a huge increase in dumping of garden rubbish by Queen's Wood Road. Most of it is dead ivy. Dead hedges with this as the base will be created by volunteers but it is an eyesore. Tips were closed for a number of weeks and householders often employed people to clear gardens, unaware that the cuttings would be dumped. Invasive species can be spread into the wood this way and affect the special ecology of ancient woodland.

Haringey Council spend over half a million pounds each year dealing with the accumulation of rubbish left in parks alone. The Parks Service employs 15 staff dedicated to emptying bins and litter picking the parks. Much of what the council does is supported by local groups such as ourselves, carrying out practical litter picking sessions.

The Council is currently experiencing a significant increase both in terms of the volume of litter left in parks in and around existing and temporary bins, and on the ground where people have dropped or have left their litter where they were sitting.

They have therefore launched a campaign to convince people to clear

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up after themselves and take their litter home.



## **TREE OF THE MONTH - WILD SERVICE TREE (*Sorbus torminalis*)**

We are fortunate to have several Wild Service Trees in the wood, some of which have grown from runners and others from seed. They are an indicator Ancient Woodland, a native here since the last ice age. A true springtime stunner, it's not so long ago that you could find wild-service fruit at a market. These days it's rare and hard to find but it's still a favourite with wildlife like the wood pigeon, whose gut softens its seeds for propagation.

This deciduous broadleaf tree can reach 25m when mature. The bark is brown and patterned with cracked, square plates, and the twigs are slender, shiny, grey-brown and straight. The square pattern on the

bark gave rise to the name Chequers and many pubs are named after it.

**Look out for:** the leaves which have 3-4 unequal lobes.



Bark of Wild Service Tree



Leaves of Wild Service Tree

**Identified in winter by:** the green buds, which are not hairy

## **NEWS FROM THE WOOD**

Another two rough sleeper sites have been cleared and the occupants helped through the ThamesReach organisation. (Meeting the

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representative at 7 am in the woods is not always convenient but nothing compared to the tireless efforts of the outreach workers.) It is sad to see these, often young, men living like this. Sometimes they set fire to the tree roots to keep warm.

The camp for the tree felling protestors is unfortunately near the site where many beautiful wood anemones grow in the spring. We do hope that these will not be damaged as, while dormant, their root systems are fragile and they do not regenerate by seed.

Relevant to the protest our ornithologist, David Darrell-Lambert, points out that rare birds, such as hobbies, do nest in oak trees and we have had them in Queen's Wood. The fine for disturbing this bird, which is on the Schedule 1 Protected Species list, is £5,000.

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Photos by Michael Johns except where stated

## **WORKING PARTY DATES**

There will not be any Working Parties during August. The next one will be on 26 September. Further details will be circulated.

## **YOUR COMMITTEE:**

**Chairperson** John Dorken

**Treasurer** Michael Johns

**Membership and Newsletter** Alison Watson

**Ecology** Lucy Roots

**Infrastructure** David Warren

**Arts events** Jane Warren

**Conservation and Management Plan**

Sarah Graham-Brown

**Publicity** Janet Shapiro





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Friends of Queen's Wood  
30 Connaught Gardens  
London, N10 3LB  
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