

Minutes of Friends of Haddon Wood
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held on Thursday, 20th April, 2017 upstairs at the Alhampton Inn

Present: FHWC, Margy Cockburn

MINUTES

ACTION

1 Chair's Report

HH welcomed all to the meeting and minutes of previous meeting were approved, before outlining events to date:

The trees are starting to look like trees, to the extent that some are so big they have had to have their guards removed, particularly alders and willows in the NW corner of F2. More will need to be removed in the coming months. In addition there was a day of clearing tubes in Fs 2&4 in October last year.

Fund raising was boosted by another record-breaking Open Gardens day in aid of the wood. Special thanks were given to those who opened gardens, sold refreshments and/or plants, helped with ticket sales and signage and baked for the teas. This year's event would be on 18 June, before taking a break in 2018. Perhaps there would be an event in Haddon Wood itself instead.

The pond has still never dried out. The bad news is that bulrushes are spreading, though the good that toads and frogs have been spawning. Specific signs warning people to keep dogs out of the water because of this seemed to have helped, which has in turn perhaps encouraged water birds (duck, heron, moorhen) to show an interest

The orchard is in the process of being re-staked with stouter versions, which has improved the guards enormously. The work will be ongoing during coming months. Five new plum trees have been donated in memory of Mary Schley and a mulberry in memory of Chrys Henning's mother. Pears and stone fruits have already flowered and apples are starting to.

Wildflower areas in Fs 2&3 are showing large crops of Yellow Rattle this year after sowing sessions by Gert, Jo and Mark. None has been seen round the pond to date and there are far fewer wildflowers in that area too.

Hedgerow maintenance has been carried out by Mark, Nick and Alf this year to good effect.

Training – a day on woodland management – was offered by the WT at Dolebury Warren. Two of our volunteers attended and Margy Cockburn would give an overview at the end of the meeting.

Award nomination. JoM nominated Haddon Wood for a WT Volunteer Award in December. Although not winners, we have a certificate confirming our nomination.

Leasing discussions are ongoing. Five of the committee met with JoM and Justin Millward (WT Land and Property Manager for the West – therefore a key person involved with setting up a lease). They were able to answer many of the queries raised which resulted in the committee's decision (assuming agreement on a contract) to lease Haddon from 2018.

Thanks as ever were due to the committee, who turn out whenever maintenance is needed and with some particular mentions:

- Jo, who maintains our risk assessments, looks after everything to do with money, found a way for us to insure people to brushcut, cuts grass and generally keeps us in order with paperwork
- Mark, for grass cutting, hedgerow maintenance and anything else requiring muscle/construction skills
- Rose, for her photography, producing promotional materials to sell, for designing posters and brochures and general publicity

- Nell, for taking minutes at some undisciplined meetings, the blog and horticultural knowledge
- Gert, for tool and plant sales at Open Gardens, horticultural knowledge, sowing YR and planting additional orchard trees
- Nick, for horticultural knowledge, research and help with planning leasing, keeping us on track with what's needed in the orchard, brushcutting and planting
- Alf Brummell for helping whenever he can and living with not being allowed to do all the things he'd like to
- And last, but by no means least, all those Friends who are real stalwarts and turn up regularly when help is needed.

2 Treasurer's Report

The account balance for April 2016 – March 2017 stands at £6075.72, comprising proceeds from fund raising and donations

3 Election of Officers

HH outlined the necessity and procedure for electing committee officers and therefore, following the FHW Constitution, all committee members resigned, but offered to stand again.

Secretary: Nell - Proposed by NT, seconded by RH: Unanimously approved

Treasurer: Jo – Proposed by HH, seconded by RH: Unanimously approved

Chair: Hil – Proposed by JC, seconded by NH: Unanimously approved

PR Officer (a new addition) Mark Curtis – Proposed by HH, seconded by GS: Unanimously approved

4 Report from Margy Cockburn re Woodland Management Training with the WT

Margy explained that woodland management is all about taking control of the amount of light let into the wood - keeping constant cover by retaining enough canopy to reduce the light allowed through to the floor. This was achieved by judicious halo thinning and coppicing:

- Halo thinning involves, firstly, deciding on which trees to keep and the individual canopy size wanted, then removing the trees around that canopy bed. This is best done in winter so as to minimise disturbance to wildlife.
- Coppicing can typically be carried out on hazel, for instance, to keep a certain amount of juvenile growth, which could be useful for future sales of, say, pea sticks and/or stakes. The remaining stools should be covered in blackthorn brash to discourage deer.
- Any unused offcuts (brash) can also be used for 'dead' hedges.

Safety, whilst carrying out the work, is essential ie always look up and be aware of where trees will fall and work from the outside.

Useful tools (second hand for better quality steel) would include bill hooks, pruning and bow saws.

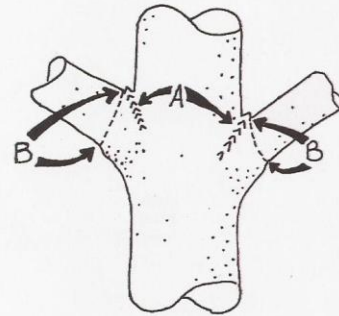
Margy provided an illustrated handout .. (*see below*)

Fig 1. Cutting branches

Parts of a branch

A – Branch bark ridge

Usually an area of disrupted bark that denotes a plane of separation between the tissues of two limbs/branches or stems at the point where they meet. This feature starts in the branch crotch and usually extends a distance down the stem/trunk to either side and exists throughout the plain of the tree representing a clear boundary between each organ.



B – Branch collar

An area where the tissues of the main stem/limb/branch overlap the tissues of the secondary limb/ branch. Often but not always seen as a distinctive swelling extending a short way up the secondary branch/limb.

Making the cut

1- Cut 1

Short cut upwards into the compression wood approximately 1/4 to 1/3 of the way through.

2 - Cut 2

Back cut either allowing the branch/limb to snap cleanly through to Cut 1 (or so that the sawyer can snap the wood section off by hand).

3 - Cut 3

Final cut using natural targets

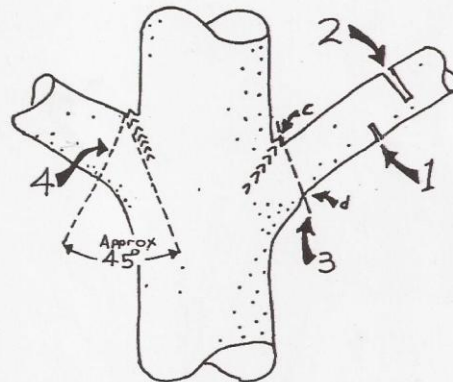


Fig 2. Tree felling

Safe tree felling

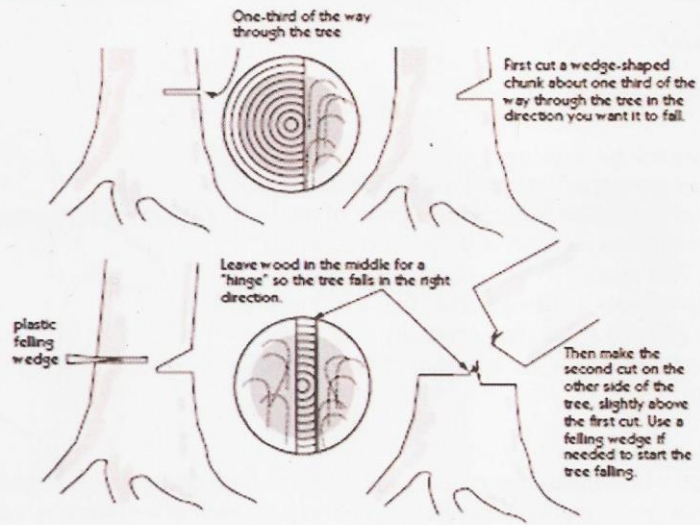
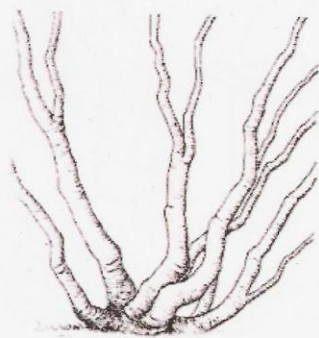


Fig 3. Coppicing

Stems should be cut near ground level

Cut angled outwards to shed water



Right



Wrong

Margy Cockburn April 2017