



Broadland Tree Warden Network

Low Farm Wood, Postwick Lane, Brundall, Management Report

By

Richard Farley, Broadland Tree Warden

May 2022

This report is supplemental to my previous reports to Brundall Parish Council on the progress of the management by the Broadland Tree Warden Network of Low Farm Wood, located to the north of Postwick Lane in Brundall, almost opposite the Brundall Country Park. This report should be read in conjunction with the aims and objectives set out and agreed in the “Low Farm Wood Management Plan” dated 2 May 2020.

I apologise for the absence of my report for April 2022 but, regrettably, one of our team contracted COVID-19 meaning that we were unable to complete the work planned. However, that team member has now basically recovered although, as we have all learned, it takes some time to fully regain strength and fitness resulting in the fact that one of our two qualified and certificated chainsaw and chipper users was unavailable for several weeks and, as you are aware, such users cannot work alone.

Having said that, we were able to resume in mid-April using hand tools only (ie bowsaws and billhooks) and then, at the end of April, with chainsaws. We are pleased with the progress we have made. Indeed, by the end of April we had almost completed the thinning of phase 3 of the project. However, we have yet to process the arisings through the chipper which we estimate will take 8 days (ie 96 man-hours) and the completion of phase 3 is only just over half of the total project. Nevertheless, as we commenced the project on 1 June 2021, we are slightly ahead of our original anticipated project duration.



We now face a major difficulty hauling a chipper to the northern section of the wood. Last time we hired it, even with four men, it presented an almost monumental task because it is very heavy, has a small wheelbase and has to be dragged uphill by hand. Added to that we must reluctantly admit that we are no longer as young, fit and strong as we once were!

Therefore we have asked the Clerk to the Council to contact the neighbouring farmer to seek permission to have the chipper delivered to the north of the unofficial footpath created by local residents, indicated on the aerial picture opposite, accessing via the bridleway from Cucumber Lane. The hire company delivery vehicle can then drive along the bridleway to leave the chipper at the end of the unofficial footpath. We can then haul it up to the north-western corner of the wood.

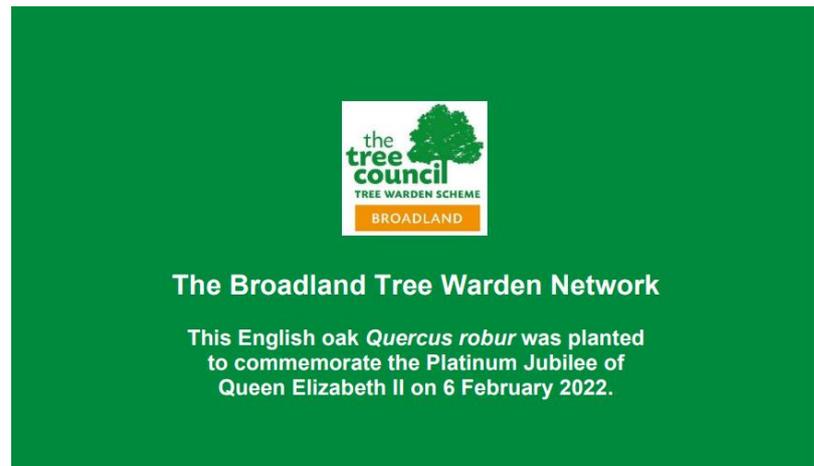
At 30 April 2022, as we approached the completion of the thinning of phase 3, the labour donated to the project totalled 908 man-hours of which 885 was Broadland Tree Wardens and 23 a local volunteer. That would equate to a value of £13,620.00

It may be of interest to note that, of the Broadland Tree Warden labour, 148 hours was spent using chainsaws and 308 hours using a chipper. Both are very strenuous activities and must be carried out with the utmost care if serious accidents are to be avoided.

Our Tree Wardens use their own chainsaws and carry out their own maintenance and sharpening of chains. However, from time to time new chains are required and spares for the chainsaws have to be purchased. We are most grateful to the Parish Council for funding our fuel and oil.

During March the Network planted some additional *Acer* species standard trees that had been ordered but then cancelled by another parish. They will add outstanding shades of red to the woodland's foliage.

In addition we planted a standard English Oak *Quercus robur* adjacent to the entrance to the wood to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II. That commemorative oak has been marked by the plaque shown opposite.



At the end of April we were pleased to receive a visit from Jan Davis, one of our elected Members for Broadland District Council, who has always been a keen supporter of our work. We were able to show him our progress to date and explain our plans for the future. Jan even gave us a hand piling arisings from our thinning work ready for chipping. His support and encouragement is very much appreciated.

We continue to receive very favourable comments from members of the public and there has been a marked increase in the number of people visiting the wood.

So, the Network continues to be very pleased with progress to date, although much work has yet to be completed. I shall continue to give the Parish Council regular progress reports and we would welcome visits from Members who wish to view the progress for themselves. We are normally on site between 08:00 and 14:30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays and will be pleased to explain what we have done and why we have done it. Why not come and see us (check that we will be on site first of course) to see what we have achieved so far and enjoy what is rapidly becoming a major asset for Brundall.

Richard Farley
Broadland Tree Warden for Brundall