

Friends of Oxleas Woodlands

DECEMBER 2020 UPDATE



Seasons Greetings
and happy 2021
from the
FOW Steering Group

Dear Friends,

What a year 2020 has been; an important time for the woodlands with the significant increase in the number and range of visitors especially over the first 'lockdown'. One positive has been a real awakening of people's interest and understanding of the benefits of spending time in nature. We look forward to continuing to welcome people to the woodlands and encouraging them to learn more about the ways that they can protect and support the wildlife, meadows and trees. Unfortunately, it seems unlikely that we will be able to resume our walks and other organised activities until the spring, but we are developing our 2021 Calendar of activities so that we are ready to go as soon as it is safe for us to do so.

Tom - FOW Chair

FOW Steering Group



Thank you to those who expressed their interest in becoming a member of the Steering Group and we are very pleased that Marketa Koskova has now joined us.

"As a local resident I feel a close affinity with the woodlands and the green spaces in the area. Their protection as well as any activities that promote and increase their appreciation by local residents and visitors to the area have always felt very important to me. I am strongly convinced that the initiatives carried out by the Friends, most of which I have actively contributed to in a volunteer capacity, are vital to the preservation of this community asset we are very fortunate to have on our doorstep."

Marketa (pictured here volunteering with her daughter)

Need to Know

For £5 a year you can be a Friend of Oxleas Woodlands, a volunteer-run community organisation. For more information see our website or email oxleas.friends@virginmedia.com

www.oxleaswoodlands.uk

For More Information

@OxleasFriends

Friends of Oxleas Woodlands

FOW Steering Group cont.

All the Steering Group posts will be vacated at the Annual General Meeting in March 2021 and Members have the opportunity to nominate and elect people to the Steering Group then. You will receive more information about this nearer the time. Meanwhile, the Steering Group will continue to work on issues such as FOW's 5-year plan; where we are exploring how we can undertake ecological surveys of the paths, water levels and biodiversity of the woodlands before developing a detailed plan. We are continuing to work closely with the Council's Park Service on issues such as the dumping of garden waste and other concerns raised by Members and the wider community.

FOW Membership

FOW's membership runs across the calendar year from January to the end of December; and the great news is that it is still only £5 for the year. The membership fee is very important to us as it allows us to fund projects and activities; and will become more crucial if we are to make progress on the ecological surveys and our other conservation plans for the future. You can pay by bank transfer, cheque or cash which ever is easiest and if you need any further information please contact the Membership secretary on suereeve@virginmedia.com



BBC Countryfile

We were surprised and somewhat flattered last month to be contacted by the producers of BBC Countryfile, who wanted to do a feature on volunteer conservation groups working during the pandemic. They had heard about the Friends of Oxleas Woodlands and were keen to visit the woodlands and to talk to us about the woods and our activities. Whilst our activities have been severely restricted over the past year we have managed to keep a 'skeleton' work party in operation, when Coronavirus protocols allowed.

On a rather wet and misty December morning we met the Countryfile film crew in the Oxleas car park and were introduced to the presenter Margherita Taylor, who although she lives in London, had never been to Oxleas. Margherita was keen to learn all about FOW and its various activities. She and the crew interviewed members of the work party and helped-out with the thinning of holly in Jack Wood. Although we had expected them to be with us for only a few hours, they spent the whole day filming, and finished by shooting a piece with a stunning sunset through the trees. The film – which will only be a few minutes long (despite hours of filming) – is scheduled to be broadcast on 10th January.

New Trees for Oxleas

Earlier this month Deansfield Primary School Year 6 pupils and Eltham Enviros have planted 22 oak saplings at the end of Oxleas Meadow as part of a tree planting initiative.

We will be adding new trees to this area over the winter with a further donation of over 200 trees from the Woodland Trust.

