

Friends of Judy Woods

Newsletter Spring 2020



Water, water everywhere! Well that's not true about Judy Woods currently because where there isn't water there is mud. Thick, gooey, mud! On various occasions over the years I have commented "I have never seen the woods as muddy as this" but I think the current situation wins hands down. Of course, everyone is experiencing the same thing, and many communities are suffering from the high winds and rain which are still forecast to continue for the near future. Our Wednesday morning PTG work has been continuing, but we have been restricted in some of our plans. In particular the rubble-filled stepping stones in Royds Hall Great Wood, which the team reinstated only a few weeks ago have gone "swim-about" again, owing to the high flow of water.

And speaking of water flow, some of you will have noticed the rogue torrent which for some time has been discharging from the field near the top of the 99 steps in Low Wood, and is taking the surface off the path before discharging in to the side stream. The cause seems to be a blocked sub-surface culvert in the field, which hopefully will be attended to soon by Bradford Council and the landowner.

Soon the buds will be opening up to reveal their new leaves. Although many of the trees in Judy Woods are beech, oak and birch we have identified over thirty different species growing in them. So, with this in mind we will shortly be fixing plaques to certain trees, to let you know just what species they are. We are grateful for a donation which will cover the costs of this "educational" exercise.

Some of you were disappointed that our annual Seasons Greetings walk did not take place as usual in December. As previously explained the mummers and dance team could not commit themselves to the event this time, so we decided to take a complete break. We have almost completed our programme of events for 2020, which you can see in this newsletter or in the accompanying sheet, and whilst we are not intending to resume our post-Christmas entertainment in the same way, we are definitely planning a walk - and possibly some entertainment - on 28th December. We will let you know full details later in the year.

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PTG Planning

The practical tasks group had a meeting on Wed. 29th Jan. at Wyke Bowling Club Pavilion to establish what members wanted to accomplish during the year and what materials we require from the council. The heavier jobs will require a commitment from those in the group who are willing and able to dedicate the time and effort required to complete the agreed tasks. Fortunately there was enthusiasm from sufficient group members to say we will be able to take on some of the proposed larger and more arduous tasks.

Bird Of the Season

The Great Spotted Woodpecker

It's always special to hear the sound of our bird of this season - the Great Spotted Woodpecker. This woodpecker is resident in Judy Woods and its unmistakable drumming can be heard at anytime of the year when it's searching for food but especially in Spring when it's mating time. It nests in decaying and dead standing wood and a couple of years ago one nested right beside the path leading from Station Road to the bridge and its chicks could be seen peeping out from the nest. So keep your ears tuned and your eyes peeled this Spring for the Judy Woody Woodpecker!

AGM 2020

The AGM will be on Thursday 16th April at 7:00 pm. The guest speaker will again be Seonaidh Jamieson, now with the RSPB. She has kept in touch, since her departure from the immediate area, where she ran the Clifton Beck Project in Wellholme Park and did some tree planting in our woods. We are pleased to have her as guest speaker. Don't forget all members are welcome, it is useful for the committee and active members of the PTG to have the views of the general members. Come along and join in, tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided to attendees as an inducement.

Clearing drains on Station Road. Geoff's comment after taking the photo was "How many PTG members does it take to clear one drain?" I remind Geoff that although PTG actually stands for Practical Tasks Group just before him taking the photo we were engaging in another PTG activity Predominantly Talking Gossip.

Stepping Stones - We lose them again

The 2 winter storms Ciara & Dennis have washed away the stepping stones we had located at the entrance to Jagger Park Wood. Of the six tyres used only one remains so maybe we need to think up another solution. This job will have to wait till the weather improves in Spring. The building of the steps at the far side of the beck, described in a previous newsletter, is to a degree a waste of time if we cannot replace the stepping stones.



Drain Clearing



As a result of the first of the winter storms, Ciara, a tree on the Perimeter Path in Low Wood has fallen straddling the fence and wall. Most of it is now in the adjacent farmers field. The resulting damage and clear up is beyond our capabilities. The council has been informed by us and probably by the farmer.

At the suggestion of Andrew Cutts (Assistant Trees and Woodlands Manager at the time) we have planted some Rowan trees in Judy's Field and four old Yorkshire varieties of apple tree, it is an open area and catches the sun as it has a south west facing aspect. These trees once established will provide shade, berries, food and a varying habitat for wildlife. The photograph shows Alan in the process of planting one of the apples.



Stone Marker Path

New wooden posts are being made by Stuart to replace the broken stone ones. We are hoping that 6 inch square wooden posts will be more resilient than the original stone ones. The design will be similar to match the existing posts.

Network Rail Activities

Our container site on Station Road is getting busier with the Network Rail contractors bringing on more plant, cabins, and materials for railway purposes. At least the site is safer with us being inside the security fence. Official contractors are coming and going at all hours so we feel that our container is more secure than before.

Triad of Raptors

Spotted by Stuart, our Ornithologist, one Wednesday in mid February south of Station Road 2 Buzzards & a Sparrowhawk. We have spotted a Buzzards before but no one has mentioned Sparrowhawks, so in your quieter moments keep your eyes peeled.

Damaged Walls

Much of the dry stone walling needs some repair. We have an introduction to some experienced wallers who plan to join the group in April to do some repairs and hopefully instruct us in some walling skills.

Demise of a leaky dam

The stone revetment built in 2019 and described in the Spring 2019 newsletter was partnered with a leaky dam built just a few metres upstream from it. This leaky dam has been completely washed away by the winter floods, so comprehensive was the destruction that the post driven into the bed of the beck as part of the construction was found quarter of a mile away downstream. The irony is that for most of the summer this beck is completely dry.

Unsolicited Praise

Sometimes the regular attendees to the PTG on Wednesday mornings start to think that their efforts go unrecognised. Recently we have had a fair number of woodland walkers make an effort to thank us for the work we do. Being acknowledged is a pleasant positive experience, and at least someone notices the difference.

Resurface of Main Path

During the tenure of Andrew Cutts there were discussions with contractors to resurface the main path and install new path edging. The PTG have suspended work on this area as it seems pointless to do localised remedial work if the whole lot is to be replaced. To date we have not yet heard anything from the council but we keep our fingers crossed for a positive outcome.

Temporary Lake

High Fernley Beck had been redirected, no doubt by kids (it was half term time) to form a small lake in the low ground to the left of the Main Path. Four PTG members repositioned the dam so the beck resumed its correct course - we just wonder how long it will take for the lake to soak away.

Land Slip. There was a land slip due to the rain just before the culvert where the main beck runs under Station Road, a consequent build up of branches, twigs, leaves, mud and clay possibly threatened the structure of the culvert. Contractors from Network Rail came and cleared the blockage and built an impressive fence to ensure path walkers were unlikely to fall into the culvert. Practically no one uses this path so that element was possibly a wasted effort.

Events Programme 2020

Saturday 4 April 1:30 pm

Springtime in Judy Woods - meet Stuart Tordoff and Sally Tetlow at the Station Road entrance, off Huddersfield Road, Wyke BD12 8LA

Thursday 16th April 7:00 pm

Annual General Meeting - speaker Seonaidh Jamieson from the RSPB -Wyke Methodist Church, Laverack Field, (off Towngate) Wyke, Bradford BD12 8JB.

Sunday 3rd May 2:15 pm

A stroll to Judy's Garden - (a Calderdale Heritage walk - a charge of £3) Meet Mary Twentyman at the War Memorial on Village Street, Norwood Green HX3 8PZ.

Thursday 21st May 1:30 pm

Ramble to the Lightcliffe Tea Rooms - meet Sally Tetlow at the Station Road entrance, off Huddersfield Road, Wyke, BD12 8LA (Approx 5 miles) Please remember to bring some money for your delicious refreshments.

Saturday 4th July 10:00 am

Balsam Bashing - meet at the Station Road entrance, off Huddersfield Road, Wyke BD12 8LA for a morning of balsam bashing followed by lunch (See website for more details.)

Since there is another newsletter scheduled for July 2020 the events programme for later in the year will be detailed then - or visit our website for up to date information.