

Friends of Duncliffe Wood, Fifehead
Wood and Kingsettle Wood .

**Community Woodland Network,
Grant Report, 2003.**

COMMUNITY WOODLAND NETWORK, GRANT REPORT.

Thank you for the grant.

We applied for the grant, to enable us to replace worn out tools and equipment, to pay for refresher courses, and to ensure that the leaflets, used in two of the three woods in which we carry out conservation works are more user friendly and of a better quality than previously.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT.

The tools and equipment, bow saw blades, chain saw blades, and brush cutter blade, are self-explanatory, they are in use on and off throughout the conservation year, and most of these items require replacing every other year.

Many of our workforce group, supply their own gloves, and hard hats, but as we never know until we reach the work site, how many persons will be working, and whether there will be any new volunteers, we always need to carry spares to comply with Health and Safety, and Risk Assessment criteria.

The majority of our conservation work relates to the widening of rides, public and permissive footpaths, and bridleways. They are widened out to between twenty and forty meters, with scalloped edges. Smaller growing trees such as hawthorn, field maple and holly are left, and also leaving suitable oak and ash as open standards. This improves the habitat immensely especially for the ground flora and butterflies, for flight paths and egg laying and larval food plants, also the flowers for butterflies to nectar upon.

This is a rotational operation running over a five-year program, a little like the Fourth Road Bridge, you get back to year one, and start all over again.

Of course we also carry out, where ever we are able, dealing with trees down across paths and bridleways, where they are within our capabilities.

We have enclosed some prints, showing the work we have done since September 2003, in Kingsettle Wood and Duncliffe Wood. In the first instant clearing a viewpoint, and in the second opening up along one of the longer paths, this work will not be completed until December 2004, following which we revert to year one of our ongoing programme. There are also three prints showing how we deal with logging bays, they all present ideal butterfly habitat, and 25% of each bay is cleared down to ground level every four years, giving a good cycle of plants and brambles, etc. for nectaring butterflies.

REFRESHER COURSE.

We have one Trained First Aid person in the group, who needs a three yearly Refresher Course, as many of the items in the course change year by year; the course was attended in December 2003.

The Chain Saw users refresher course and assessment was attended in November 2003, the refresher part of the course was felt to be very useful, updating the operator on different methods, and new equipment.

LEAFLETS.

Two of the woods have had black and white leaflets, for a number of years, each with a map, and in one case with two way- marked walks, shown on the leaflet and described in some detail. We have taken the liberty of using part of the leaflet grant to print 8,000 copies of the Duncliffe Wood coloured leaflet, and the Woodland Trust have offered to print off, copies of the coloured Kingsettle Wood leaflet as required.

DUNCLIFFE WOOD.

As a result of the grant we shall have a stock of these leaflets, sufficient to last us about four or five years. This will release a lot of funds over those years, as the cost of paper and print cartridges, and printing is not inconsiderable. We have been printing in excess of 1,500 copies each year. They are placed in leaflet distribution boxes at the entrance to the wood.

A copy is enclosed with the rest of the documentation.

KINGSETTLE WOOD.

The Kingsettle Wood leaflet is enclosed, we use about one hundred of these each year.

SELF-FUNDING.

We are to a certain extent self funding, and as a result of this grant, enabling us to provide a better quality of information and publicity material for at least the next four to five years, we shall be able to provide all our normal tool replacements and other necessary expendables.

We supply bean and pea sticks to a local garden centre, with labels explaining that the materials are from a natural renewable source, and naming the wood they originate from.

We also cut and stack suitable log material in cords, and sell this by the cord to local residents, who load, and take the material away themselves.

ACCOUNTS.

A copy of the Grant Account, supporting Invoices, and Bank Statements are attached.

MONITORING, RECORDING AND LED WALKS.

We also have 24 Tawny Owl boxes in Duncliffe Wood, and 8 in Kingsettle Wood, these were from the Hawk and Owl Trust, the annual records are sent to the Wildlife Conservation Partnership. These are surveyed immediately before the anticipated fledging date, and at the end of the year, any uninvited guests are removed and the boxes cleaned. Numbers are increasing steadily.

We also have ninety Bat boxes supplied by the Vincent Wildlife Trust; a Vincent Wildlife Trust employee, together with volunteers assisting, monitor these. The numbers and range of species are steadily increasing, and are recorded once a month for six months.

We have a butterfly transect walk with eight sectors, which are walked for twenty- six weeks of the year, and the results transferred to British Butterfly Conservation Transect Walker computer programme, they are also interpolated into Dorset Branch of Butterfly Conservation records.

We have some quite large populations of orchids, which are counted and recorded each year, and taken in to the Hardy Orchid Societies records. These areas are managed (gardened) to the benefit of the orchid populations, in some cases with spectacular results.

Members of the volunteer group lead walks. The woods have many habitats and items of interest, acres of blue bells, with early purple orchids and wood anemones, etc.