



FRIENDS OF ASHENGROUND AND BOLNORE WOODS

CONSERVATION : PROTECTION : ENHANCEMENT : ENJOYMENT

Newsletter – Winter 09/10



Late Autumn Leaves in Ashenground Wood

As nature passes through Autumn into Winter, wind, rain and a sharp drop in temperatures change the scenery in our woods, with a thick, damp covering of discarded leaves providing a wonderful carpet between the footpaths. The bare branches allow the light to filter right through, giving a whole different perspective to a walk. Fungi and berries replace the plants and flowers of many colours, while the trees enter a different stage of their life cycles with twigs and buds rather than leaves being the clues to identification. Nothing stands still in our woods.

Janice Tipping

AGM – 5th February 2010

I hope many members will be able to attend our AGM on the **5th February 2010** (7.30 p.m. in the Ashenground Community Centre, Southdown Close, off Vale Road). It is always an interesting evening and an opportunity to hear and see from our photo surveys of the woods what FoABW has achieved during the year. There will be news about our involvement with the ecological and environmental aspects of the new school in Bolnore and an update on Bolnore Village Phases 4 & 5. Our AGMs are renowned for their outside speakers and this year we are lucky to have Roger Cragg, who will present a slideshow entitled '**a Year in the Countryside**'.

FoABW is a vibrant, respected group in the community and I am grateful to all members for their support. However if we are to continue with the work we do to protect and conserve our woods, we do need more practical help. Please join us whenever you can on Conservation Days – they are fun and very social occasions. You don't have to have experience, just enthusiasm for our special Local Nature Reserve. We also need "new blood" on the committee and I urge you to consider putting your name forward. **We especially need someone to take on the role of secretary.** Gill Rogers has been an excellent secretary but she also has responsibility for conservation and her workload is far too big. If you would like to know more about the committee or becoming secretary, please give me a call on 454093.

Christine McLean, FoABW Chair

Events



Must you have pencil and paints to create art? Can you use natural materials such as crab apples, sticks, cob nuts, sweet chestnuts, conkers and bright orange nasturtium petals? Yes you can!



A total of over one hundred artists, both old and young, took part in the FoABW Natural Art events held at Town Day, Bolnore Village Arts Day and the Transition Day at Ashenground Community Centre. All events used natural materials but each did so in a different way. Town Day pictures were designed to be viewed from above.



See more pictures from Town Day on the FoABW website: www.foabw.com

Bolnore Arts Day centred on constructing animals from natural materials.



As Transition Day was held on October 31st, naturally the materials were used to make Halloween masks!



Emma Temple and Jane Good were invaluable helpers at Town Day and the Witch activity Jane ran at Transition Day was a hit with the very young.



A sincere thank you to you both.

If you would like to help with FoABW Art or have ideas for other activities please do get in touch.

Sarah Witts

Photographic Survey – 2 Full Years now completed

James and I have now completed a full two years of our photographic survey. We started in 2008 and carried out surveys in January, May, August and November in 2008 and 2009. Each survey involved taking 60 photographs from the same fixed points four times a year – making a total of 480 photographs over the two years. See them all on the FoABW website and note the changes over the seasons and years:



Above is Railway Path in January 2008 and in August 2009, both photographs taken from the same fixed point

Janice Tipping

'Secret Garden' for Bolnore School

FoABW has been working with Sharon Allen, the Headteacher of Bolnore School, to develop a 'secret garden' outside the reception classroom at St. Wildred's. This will allow the children to begin to understand the natural environment they will eventually be surrounded by and engender a 'green spirit' even before the move to the new site in September 2010.

Bolnore School Group

Progress on the School Site

FoABW is staying closely in touch with the school site development, and has attended numerous meetings with the contractor, ROK, to ensure the woods are protected. Our concerns led to a redesign of the surface water drainage to ensure that enough water reached the ephemeral ponds in Ashenground Wood, and conversely to avoid excess run off towards the bridleway to the north after extreme rainfall.

And speaking of rain, during the recent heavy weather, we objected strenuously to a stream of run-off water from the site which had eroded the 'new' path and was affecting the boundary path. ROK were quick to repair the path, and worked overtime to build interceptors to catch the water which will now be diverted into the village drainage system.

Looking forward to 2010 when the school fence abutting the woods will be erected, we triggered a lengthy site meeting which agreed the exact routing of the school fence. Much of the work will be 'handtools only' to protect the woods and the buffer, and the line of the fence will be altered slightly in places to avoid significant trees. We shall keep an eye on this and all other matters as work progresses on site.

Stuart Meier



One of many examples of fungi that can be found in our Woods during the Winter months



Our Woods after recent heavy rain

Conservation Work and Special Events

See our **Programmes** on the **notice boards** on the Bridge at the Ashenground Road entrance to the woods, and at the entrances to Pierce's, Catts and Bolnore Woods.

Don't forget to check out our **website** for our Newsletters and Programmes plus photographs and details of any special events.

www.foabw.com

There is also a link to an album of photographs taken in the woods over the years plus a link to the album of photographs taken as part of our ongoing photographic survey of the woods.

Join us to help with **Conservation Work.** We meet on the **1st Sunday** (meeting place Ashenground Bridge) and **3rd Saturday** each month (meeting place the Thatched Cottage in Bolnore Village) at 10.00 a.m. We arrange **Special Events** throughout the year. Look out for details on the notice boards and our website. Come along to our **New Year Walk on Saturday 2nd January.** Meet at the school site by the ROK notice board at **11.00 a.m.** and enjoy a stroll through the woods. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served at 12.00 noon!

Every other month we hold **Review Walks.** These help us look closely at the four Woods in our Nature Reserve (Bolnore, Catts, Pierce's and Ashenground) and decide priorities for conservation work. Do join us on one of these walks. The next two are: **Sunday 10th January at 10.00 a.m.** – meet on Ashenground Bridge; **Saturday 13th March at 10.00 a.m.** – meet at the Thatched Cottage in Bolnore Village.

As Christine McLean says, do come along to our **AGM on 5th February 2010**, 7.30 p.m., in the Ashenground Community Centre, Southdown Close, off Vale Road, Haywards Heath. It is an opportunity for members to meet each other to celebrate our woods, particularly those of you who are not able to get involved in our conservation work. As well as our special guest speaker, there will be albums of photographs taken in our woods plus albums of the photographic survey for you to view and enjoy.

General Information - Janice on 01444 414053 or 07752 003529
Information about membership - Fleur Carey on 01444 473179

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