



Friends of the Hurtwood

Administrators to the public rights of access to some 3000 acres of land in the parishes of Albury, Cranleigh, Ewhurst and Shere.

Registered Charity 200053

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Friends Newsletter



THE BIG QUESTIONS

Over the last few months the most frequently asked questions have been “who bought the Hurtwood” and “will public access to those areas that are sold remain the same as previously?”

WHO HAS BOUGHT THE HURTWOOD?

Of the 640 or so acres offered for sale, those areas of most significance to Friends of the Hurtwood are Pitch Hill, Bentley Copse, Windmill Wood and Jelleys Hollow, in total some 534 acres.

The southern part of Pitch Hill has been bought by the owner of Magalee, Andrius Jankunas, and Jim McAllister has bought the three lots comprising

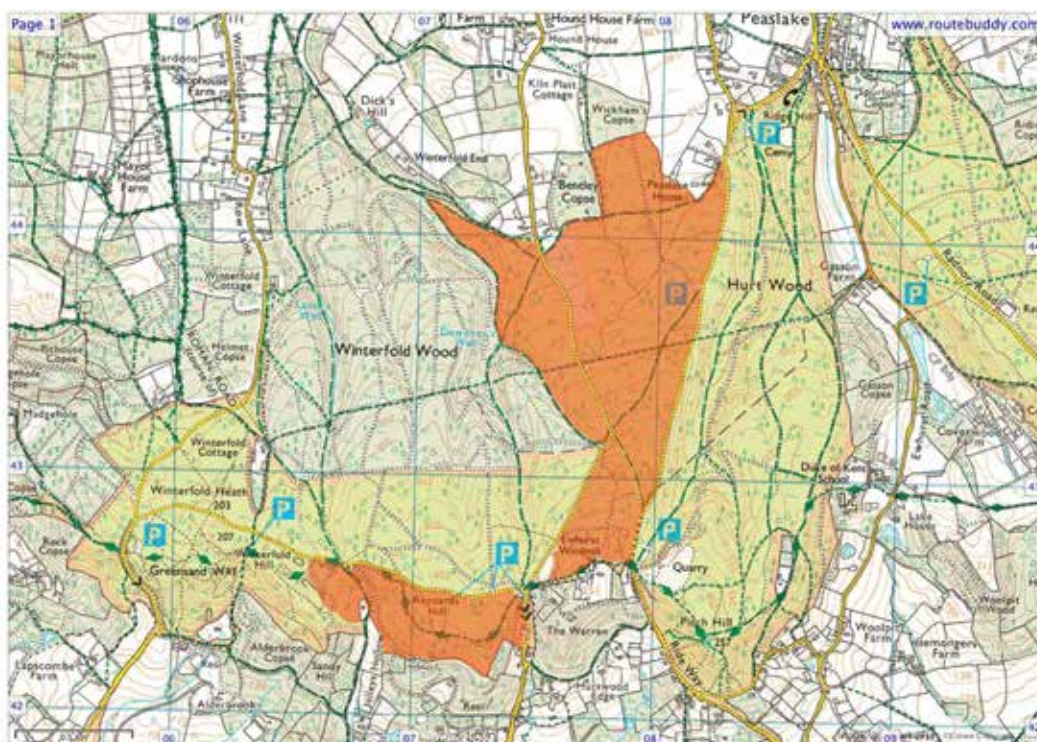
Bentley Copse, Windmill Wood and Jelleys Hollow. The sale of the northern part of Pitch Hill which includes Walking Bottom Car park, has yet to complete so is currently still under Hurtwood Friends management.

WILL PUBLIC ACCESS REMAIN THE SAME?

The new landowners have agreed not to revoke the 1926 Deed which gives the public the ‘right to roam’ on their land. This arrangement was ground-breaking at the time and not without its problems! A cutting from the Times of 1927 (courtesy of Michael Baxter of the Albury Estate) (See page 2) explains the origins and reasons behind the setting up of the original ‘Hurtwood Control’, now vested in our Charity the Friends of the Hurtwood.

The roles and responsibilities of the Friends of the Hurtwood are set out in formal Management Agreements between the Charity and each of the landowners concerned - historically Shere Manor Estate and Albury Estate. These Management Agreements reflect the Objects of the Charity which, simply put are to ‘preserve and protect public access to the Hurtwood’.

As each sale has completed, the Management Contract with Shere Manor Estate for the area concerned has been formally terminated and each new landowner has been offered a Management Agreement by our Charity. At the time of writing, agreement has now been reached regarding the southern part of Pitch Hill. But it is necessary to point out that, until such time as Agreements are signed by each new landowner, the Friends of the Hurtwood cannot accept any responsibility or liability or provide any assistance to members of the public visiting the areas concerned. For clarity the areas concerned are shaded red. We will provide updates on the website as and when this situation changes.



Map roughly indicating areas affected, for illustrative purposes only

*Extract from "Times" dated
22nd March 1927*

MOTORISTS WHO SPOIL THE COUNTRY.

NEW RULES FOR SURREY COMMONS.

Owing to the bad manners of certain motorists, the Duke of Northumberland, Mr. R. A. Bray, of Shere, and other big landowners in Surrey, have combined to form the Hurtwood Central Committee, which controls about 2,000 acres of country, stretching almost from Holmbury to Cranleigh, and taking in Pitch Hill and the Hurtwood and Peasiake Commons.

Mr. R. A. Bray, who is lord of the manor of the larger part of Hurtwood Common, said the Committee were anxious that the public should enjoy the privilege of visiting that beautiful part of Surrey, but they had been compelled to take action against gipsies and a certain class of motorist. They allowed some of the older gipsies to camp on the commons in places set apart for them, and issued permits for a month. The gipsies behaved very well, and they had had to refuse to renew only one permit.

Most of the motorists also behaved, but some of them ran wild when they went into the country and did not care what damage they did. They left paper, bottles, tins, and other litter about, and dogs and horses had had their feet cut by broken glass. Some of them even went into people's gardens and cut flowers, and into parks and took rhododendrons. Great damage was also caused by the careless manner in which they had made fires. The behaviour of this class of motorist was getting rather worse every year.

The Committee had put the commons under the Law of Property Act. This gave the public the right to walk freely on the commons, but made it an offence to take motors on to them without leave, and to do damage by lighting fires and in other ways. They had set apart certain open spaces near the roads where motors could park, and had appointed a common ranger. There would be no unsightly fences, but just a simple board to indicate the parks.

TRUSTEES NEEDED!

Rob Fairbanks will not be standing for re-election at the Annual Meeting and Sheri Johnson announced her decision to retire at the end of last year. They will be hard to replace. Rob has brought the AONB perspective to our discussions, especially on mountain biking issues.

Without the financial help Rob was able to organise, our early initiatives to manage mountain biking would never have got off the ground.

Refusing to give up, Sheri was singularly responsible for making the Hurtleberry Duathlon a success. Sheri has also been the custodian of all our communications and has successfully managed a series of complicated enhancements to our website in addition to being editor of our newsletter for many years. I would like to thank them both for their contribution.

Alison Fortescue is also retiring at the Annual Meeting and will be replaced by David Clifford, whom many of you will know from his recent involvement in the Peaslake Community Pub initiative.

If any readers of this newsletter would be prepared to contribute to the running of our charity please do make contact when more details can be provided about the specific roles available. As always there will be an opportunity for members to propose new trustees at the Annual Meeting.

On a more personal note, I have informed the trustees that following the Annual Meeting I shall be standing down as Chairman. The new chairman will be appointed by the trustees as is usual from amongst their number at their next meeting after the Annual Meeting.

As I hope you will see from the Annual Report, your charity is in good shape and is ready for the new challenges ahead. Visitor numbers continue to increase because the Hurtwood is an attractive destination for walkers, horse riders and bikers alike.

Friends of the Hurtwood will continue to be a stabilising influence between the conflicting demands of these very different users but also in the protection of the potentially fragile environment of the Hurtwood.

Peter Copping

FRIENDS OF THE HURTWOOD ANNUAL MEETING

THURSDAY 7TH APRIL, 7:00 for 7:30pm
Duke of Kent School, Peaslake Road, Ewhurst

7.30pm FORMAL MEETING
REVIEW OF PAST YEAR ACTIVITY
APPROVAL OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS
ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Pre meeting drinks will be kindly provided by Handa Bray

NEW ARTWORK TO ENHANCE THE HURTWOOD

So you think you know all the best views on the Hurtwood? A project launched by Surrey Hills Arts with funding from the Mittal Foundation last October is challenging that assumption. It has commissioned five artists from the region to create artworks inspired by the panoramic views from the tops of the Greensand Hills in the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These views will not necessarily be the familiar visitor hotspots!

The Inspiring Views project includes work to open out the views and make them more accessible and also an educational programme to engage new audiences through talks, creative writing, poetry, sound and photography.



Three of the sites chosen are on the Hurtwood, at the Judge's Seat on Reynards Hill, Winterfold and Holmbury Hill, involving three separate landowners: Jim McAllister, Mark Foster and the Shere Manor Estate.

At Reynards Hill, Surrey artist Russell Jakubowski was inspired by the formation of the Greensand Way, the layers of sedimentation, and the contours of the hillside to design a dynamic form within the bench. See illustration left.

At Holmbury Hill, away from the main viewpoint, experienced furniture designer Matthew Burt will create a circular piece with four benches similar to the photo

below, creating a conversational arena whilst allowing people to gaze out at the beautiful view. This design is also suitable for wheel chair users. The old wheelchair path has deteriorated and a new path will be created for easy access from the car park. The proposals were not only for benches.

Architect Giles Miller proposes to create a wooden shelter to be sited at Winterfold. This innovative form resembles a giant seed pod covered in wooden shingles inscribed with words gathered from visitors to the site. See illustration right.

Visitors will discover these viewpoints, share the artists' interpretation and have the opportunity to learn about the history and unique features of their local landscape.

For further information on the Inspiring Views Project and Surrey Hills Arts visit:

www.surreyhills.org or
contact Programme Manager,
Ali Clarke:
sa.visual@surreycc.gov.uk.



Since our last newsletter, we've had the wettest winter on record I believe, and it certainly felt like it even if it wasn't! I've seen water lying in places for weeks, that normally only hangs around for a few days, though overall the Hurtwood is remarkably resilient and has weathered the rain very well. The odd gully forms here and there but it's not long before sand fills them in again. However, if you are aware of a path that's suffered, please do let me know, and I'll see if it's something we can sort out.



You may have seen that we have cleared part of the southern section of bridleway 192 on the western side of Holmbury Hill, as it had become very overgrown with gorse folding in on the path making it difficult to use. We spent a couple of days giving it a fairly major 'hair cut'. It's only a short section but an invaluable path to horse riders as it cuts off some unpleasant slippery road work with blind corners.

As part of our management of the various user groups, checking conflict points is a major priority. A 'conflict point' is where one, two or in

this case five paths meet. The appropriately named 'Fiveways' on Holmbury Hill is a fairly major junction, used by everyone as it's near foot paths, bridleways and mountain bike trails. Our aim here was to cut back vegetation to enable all users to clearly see each other as the five paths converge, and thus reduce the risk of conflict. This is something we do all over the Hurtwood and it is continually under review. On Farley Heath, since the winter we've been out cutting back the trees on the main paths. Though nothing was impassable, I did have a few issues getting the tractor through to all areas last summer to do the ride cutting. It's amazing how a wet summer can bring on so much growth and it's not long before heavily laden branches make it hard for the tractor to get through.



FLY TIPPING

Fly tip is getting worse, and takes up a considerable amount of time, even with the tractor. It's got to the stage where our trailer is not big enough to cope, necessitating more than one trip!

Members may not be aware of this, but it is actually an offence for a householder not to ensure that rubbish removed from their property, is carried out by an approved, licensed, waste contractor. The Environment Agency, Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991 (as amended), require all householders to make sure their waste is only removed from their premises by registered waste carriers. Householders who cannot prove they have taken reasonable measures to do so can face fines of up to £5000. Mole Valley recently prosecuted a householder for this offence when some of their waste material was dumped in the middle of a country lane. Unfortunately we don't have the same power as the local councils to force a private prosecution, but this is possibly something worth thinking about.



On a practical level, I'm not sure how we can solve the problem. Height barriers are an option, but even just putting them in the worst offending car parks would cost £15-£20,000, and they would cause problems for horse boxes as well as all the totally legitimate other users who may happen to have large vehicles. Cameras look to be the best option and currently, they are what I'm looking into.



We also recently had a burnt out car, (first one for some years) which I had great trouble getting anyone legally, to remove. Historically borough councils have removed these vehicles for us and Guildford still does, but unfortunately this one was in Waverley, which adamantly refused to help. It's such a shame when we provide car parks that are heavily used by Waverley residents. A slightly battered car dumped on Winterfold near Car Park 6, was considerably easier to get taken away for scrap.

As usual, please keep your eyes and ears peeled for anything you see that looks untoward, I can't be everywhere, so I do rely on The Friends for little extra help. Look forward to seeing you over the coming year.

Mark Beaumont



DON'T MISS THE HURTLEBERRY DUATHLON AND TRAIL RUN!

SUNDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2016

The Hurtleberry Off-Road Trail Run and Duathlon is back again this year, for the third time. So put the date in your diary: Sunday 4 September.

This is a great fun day out for all the family. On offer, we have a 10k Trail Run (with dogs allowed), and two distances

of Duathlon (run/mountain bike/run): The Sprint (5k,10k,1.5k) and the Full (10k,20k,5k) . The event is set within the beautiful Hurtwood, in the heart of the Surrey Hills. The undulating terrain of the Greensand Hills in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty attracts adventurers from a wide area.



Each course will be fully signed with marshal support on route, and the Trail and Sprint events are suitable for all ages and abilities. If you feel up for a bigger challenge, take on the Full Duathlon.

Tri-Adventure are organising the event again this year on behalf of The Friends of the Hurtwood and full details, including how to enter, can be found at www.thehurtleberry.co.uk.

A great turnout will help raise significant funds which will go towards maintaining the Hurtwood.



Check out our new web site!!

Visit www.friendsofthehurtwood.co.uk

Find out what's happening in and around the Hurtwood...



Friends of the Hurtwood

Contact details:

Friends of the Hurtwood
St Mark's Church Yard
Peaslake GU5 9RR

Office: 01306 730100 (Answer phone)

Ranger Mobile: 07920 705070

www.friendsofthehurtwood.co.uk

SURREY HILLS EQUESTRIAN WORKING GROUP

A new working group has been set up by the Surrey Hills AONB to promote and enhance horse riding and carriage driving. It will complement work already being done to manage mountain biking.

The equestrian group is initially looking at the area that includes Pitch, Holmbury and Leith Hills. Its vision and aims are still being finalised but in essence they include creating a network of trails, identifying long distance routes, clearing blocked trails and improving surfaces, looking at opportunities to link paths, raising awareness of horse safety, marking routes clearly, providing parking for horse transporters and also protecting and enhancing access for carriages.

The three hills have been selected as the pilot project for the group, partly because Leith Hill has got recognised problems including track surfaces and parking. If the group is successful in fulfilling its aims it will then be extended to cover the rest of the AONB west to Farnham and Haslemere and east to the Kent border.

Local members of the group include Hurtwood Ranger Mark Beaumont and Hurtwood Friend Jane Kumar and



Brenda Carlisle from

Holmbury, who are both horse riders. So far the group has met twice, and has already achieved rough identification of a series of circular rides and suitable parking places and also areas where access needs to be improved.

For the last 90 years, riders have enjoyed unparalleled access across the Hurtwood, but if riders or carriage drivers have come across problem areas, maybe linking parts of the Hurtwood, or any other access issues that the group might be able to help with, contact Mark at the Hurtwood Office or Jane on jane@kumar2087.freeserve.co.uk.

FUNDRAISING - IT'S AS EASY AS SHOPPING

Who doesn't enjoy shopping, especially browsing through catalogues online?

You get an even bigger buzz though, when you know that every time you make a purchase, your chosen charity gets a donation. Friends of the Hurtwood is registered with **easyfunding.org.uk** in order to make fundraising easy for our supporters. Here's how:

Easyfunding.org.uk helps raise money for charities, schools, sports clubs, community groups and other good causes just by shopping online. You don't pay anything extra. Donations come from the shops and organisations you buy from and so far it's raised £8.8 million for causes throughout the UK.

Members of the Friends of the Hurtwood just need to register with the website and name FoH as their good cause. Then when you want to buy something, instead of going to the shop website, you go to **easyfunding.org.uk** and then go to the shop you want and make your purchase as normal.

Easyfunding.org.uk retains a small percentage of your payment which it gives to your good cause. You can make it even easier by getting the easyfundraising Donation Reminder. Just click the reminder when you shop to receive any eligible donations.

You can also register your business for easyfundraising. If your company regularly makes purchases online, from booking travel to stationery, it would be an easy way to raise cash for a cause you care about - and it's completely free! Donations come from the retailer, not from your pocket! And it's 100% free for businesses and individuals to use.

Please support the Friends of the Hurtwood - sign up to www.easyfundraising.org.uk NOW