

Minutes of the meeting of the Dulwich Society Tree Committee held on Thursday 20 October 2022.

Present: David Beamish (Chair), Mary Poole-Wilson, Glynis Williams.

Apologies were received from Patricia Hole and Sam Taylor.

The Committee noted the **retirement** from the Committee of Judy Marshall and John Hughes. Warm tribute was paid to their service to the Dulwich Society and the Committee, in particular Judy's service as Secretary of the Tree Committee and John's authorship of tree articles for the Society's Journal.

Declaration of interests: Members' declared interests are recorded in an appendix.

The **minutes** of the meeting on held on 14 January 2020 were approved. It was noted that COVID-19 restrictions had led to the Committee keeping in touch via email since then.

The Chair had circulated an update note covering the rest of the agenda.

Tree walks: It was noted that Daniel Greenwood had agreed to lead another tree walk in Dulwich Park, this time on the theme of fungi, starting at the Park café at 11am on Sunday 23 October.

Tree articles for the Dulwich Society Journal: Tree articles had appeared in each recent issue of the Dulwich Society Journal, and also a Platinum Jubilee insert of a version of the 1977 Silver Jubilee Tree Walk, updated by the Chair in Journal 205 (Summer 2020). Now that John Hughes has stepped down it was agreed that the Chair would write a piece on deciduous conifers (*Taxodium distichum* and *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) for the Winter 2022 Journal.

Planting a tree to commemorate HM Queen Elizabeth II: The Society's trustees had agreed to mark Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee by planting a tree. The Dulwich Picture Gallery had agreed in principle to permit it to be planted in their garden. Following Her Majesty's death it was no expected that the tree would commemorate her reign as a whole. The Committee considered what might be a suitable species, noting that availability of stock might limit what was possible and that it was preferable to choose a species not already represented in the Dulwich Picture Gallery garden.

After discussion it was agreed that a Golden Rain Tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*) would be best, failing which a cypress oak (*Quercus robur* Fastigiata) or disease-resistant variety of elm would also be suitable. [Update: subsequently Mark Lane had commented to Mary Poole-Wilson "I do love *Koelreuteria paniculata* as it performs so well throughout the season, but they are relatively short lived. You may be lucky to get 50 years out of it before it will be in terminal decline. If space is available, and considering the issues with global warming, I wonder whether you might consider one of the new disease-resistant elms or possibly a lime tree. Both have fared well during the 2022 droughts, remaining green throughout. Agreed neither are as spectacular in flower but they may be there longer."]

It was noted that arrangements would need be made for the tree to be planted at a suitable event.

Sydenham Hill Wood: Sam Taylor had provided a written report as follows:

- Drought and extreme heat this summer saw many trees stressed – particularly saplings. Will see next spring whether there have been many casualties if some trees fail to come into leaf.
- Works on Cox's Walk bridge expected to start this winter. After a successful campaign the two mature oaks on the western side of the bridge are to be retained (well done Southwark Council for getting there in the end!)

- Path works are currently under way. These were funded by a successful fundraising campaign in April that raised close to £30k including £10k of match funding from the Dulwich Society. Jeremy Prescott instrumental in publicising and organising this with LWT. This will help focus footfall and prevent compaction and erosion, which has in many places exposed tree roots, so in the long run improve the health of trees in the wood and aid natural tree regeneration in areas that have previously been trampled to bare ground.

Oaks near the Cox's Walk footbridge: The Chairman's note had recorded that the threatened oaks had been saved thanks to a revised plan produced by Southwark Council for making safe the footbridge.

Dulwich Society website: Glynis Williams noted that the list on the website *Trees* page of tree-related articles in the Dulwich Society Journal needed updating.

Tree maps: Glynis Williams proposed that maps of the Old Burial Ground and Long Meadow should be updated. David Beamish said that he was not familiar with these maps but would be happy to take this forward if provided with the originals. It was also suggested that the Society website's *Trees* page might include links to other local tree maps, e.g. Ruskin Park and Peckham Rye Park.

Next meeting: Thursday 5 January 2023 at 5pm.

Declarations of interest

David Beamish: Chair, Dulwich & District u3a. Volunteer, Dulwich Picture Gallery. Member, Dulwich Park Friends. Member, Woodland Trust.

Patricia Hole: No relevant interests.

Mary Poole-Wilson: No relevant interests.

Sam Taylor: Employed by London Wildlife Trust as manager, Sydenham Hill Wood.

Glynis Williams: No relevant interests.