



Where our Nation remembers



## January 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Working Weekend Report

The country had been ravaged by storm force winds and rain during the previous week, but yet again this weekend was blessed with sunny spring like weather on both days. 10 volunteers assembled on the Saturday to be guided by James Shallcross the Assistant Curator as Sue Elliott was still recovering from a Christmas bug. A warm welcome was given to new volunteer Tony, who had previously discovered the joys of the arboretum whilst out on a country walk and had been inspired to come and help.

Work continued in area 63, part of the Millennium Wood. Richard Knock had carried on with the side pruning over the holidays and the team completed the main area by lunch time, dragging the brush out onto the rides for the Grounds team to collect the following week.

After a good lunch with discussions ranging widely from Christmas activities to world travel everyone moved down into a small wood in area 64. The optimistic thought had been that this would be completed before the end of the day. However many of the small oaks have bushed out early and so there were plenty of side branches to prune out to lift their crowns. James tried to raise the arboricultural bar by talking about co-dominant leaders when choosing what branches to take out, but this was sensibly pigeon holed by everyone else. However time ran out and a small section was left for Sunday.

Sunday had a select group of 8 go back down and into the main part of area 64, new volunteer Tony and James Mills were left to complete the previous area. The rows were very long so it was decided that every one would work in pairs and come in from each end of the row. The warm weather encouraged everyone to crack on and by lunch time five long rows had been successfully pruned.

This ended a successful weekend with a large amount of work being achieved and two quiet woods successfully tidied up. The trees in these areas are starting to take off and there will be some magnificent specimens in years to come. Their good clean stems will be left as evidence of this working weekend. Lets hope the weather on the next weekend on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of February will be as good.

Thank you James for this comprehensive report. Pleased to say I am almost fully over my virus which has hung around for weeks. I have not been on my own, seemingly large numbers of people have been hit by the very same bug.

**STOP PRESS PLEASE TAKE NOTE IMPORTANT DATE CHANGES**

It has been decided that as the Working Weekend in April falls on the same weekend as Easter we have moved WWE to April 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>.

Similarly the June WWE falls on the same w/e designated for the nationwide celebrations of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee again the decision has been made to bring forward the WWE to 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> May.

Obviously this will not suit everybody but at least with two such important dates people will be able to be with their families and friends.

Sue Elliott Working Weekend Team Leader