



Progress and Mission Statement for the Walderslade Woodlands Group (WWG)

The Group is, and has been for a long time, a collection of like-minded individuals who have the common desire to try and make the woods a place where the local residents want to spend time. The Walderslade Woodlands include areas of ancient woodland, and form a valuable asset to the community, and the Group have been trying, albeit on a voluntary basis, to make them as safe as they can, and as desirable place to be, as possible. The Group aims to conserve the woodlands, encourage species diversity, and achieve legal protection through the achievement of Village Green status.

Over the past twenty years or so, Kent County Council, who are the land owners, have had a policy of non-interference in the woodlands which has meant that the work of the group has become even more crucial to their wellbeing. The woodlands have many areas which used to be coppiced, and other plateau areas which have been cleared. Without active management, the attractive character of the woodlands and plateaux will be lost as nature tries to revert to some less desirable state.

Going forward, the Group has to make a giant leap from a good-willed band of locals, to an organisation which works professionally, and optimises the potential and efficacy of the man-hours it has available to it. This is why we must make full use of the Group and its members, making sure we have the correct skills and knowledge to tackle any tasks which arise.

But it is not just about skills. It is also about having the right tools for the job, and this means machines which can maximise the Group's efforts and efficiency, whilst keeping the safety of volunteers and woodland users uppermost in our minds.

Like any volunteer group, resources are a scarce commodity, and this makes it essential that we have the right tools for the jobs which we encounter, and people with the right skills to use them.

We also need the knowledge to enable us not to waste any of the resources we have, but to make sure whatever the Group does is effective, worthwhile, and for the good of the woodlands.

Robert Burrows

Chairman WWG

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