

To be read in conjunction with motion from Cllr. F. Bletsoe in relation to environmental matters within Bridgend Town & environs.

I base these environmental comments in relation to the power of trees and their paramount contribution to the promotion and stemming of climate change.

The accompanying three pages of informed reading are, in my view, without challenge and can only add and contribute to the way forward by Bridgend Town Council.

Members will doubtless recall that at the last meeting, a view was taken - seriously detrimental to our Town and environs - in that the future lease of Craig-y-Parcau Woods would not be taken up but left to Laleston Community Council to deal with as they may see fit.

It now transpires that LCC appears to currently have its own serious matters of governance to address and explain both financially and politically, so I do not hold my breath that they will fulfil the new role of leaseholder of Craig-y-Parcau Woods anytime soon - if at all!

That said, I recall a past discussion in Council that 'BTC had no tree planting policy'.

I would once again remind Council that BTC has an environmental policy and record second to none in respect of other lower tier councils.

I am yet to witness any of the other 19 lower tier councils achieve anything like the planting of 500 trees or 100,000 plus daffodil bulbs, together with other beneficial landscaping projects over the past decades; or the raising of over £60,000 towards environmental projects in outside grant aid.

We are told that we are spiraling towards environmental disaster on this planet in the highly respected words of Sir David Attenborough and we are grossly unwise not to heed those learned reflections as to our future.

With that in mind, we need to review our recent stance on the future Craig-y-Parcau lease at the earliest opportunity - BUT, meantime, there can be no delay with the environmental projects currently being undertaken by the Regeneration Committee and they must be given the fullest support to progress these at the earliest opportunity.

Councillors have been mandated by the public to attend to these matters and that mandate must be fulfilled without hindrance.

Cllr. David Unwin



TREE SUPERPOWERS

Without trees we're toast. These sap-tastic stats will make your jaw hit the floor



365 DAYS

Every year a large oak makes enough oxygen to sustain one human for a year!

Without trees, we couldn't breathe. As well as pumping out oxygen, trees clean our air by filtering pollutants that can lead to heart and lung disease.

900KG

A tree can absorb 900kg of CO₂ over its life – that's the weight of 200 cats!

Too much carbon dioxide (CO₂) is bad for our planet – but trees Hoover it right out of the air. That makes woods our best weapon in the fight against climate change. Kapow!

10°C COOLER

On a hot day, shady woods can be 10°C cooler than cities

Buildings and roads absorb the sun's heat, sending temperatures soaring in town. But shady trees cleverly deflect those rays to stay cool, man.



2,300 SPECIES

An oak tree can support up to 2,300 species of animals, plants and fungi.

Bugs creep in crevices, bats roost in nooks, birds nest in branches, mice feast on nuts. Trees mean life.



450 LITRES

One mature tree can glog 450l of water daily – six bathtubs full!

Their roots act like scores of tiny straws, sucking moisture from the soil. Formidable against flooding!

6,200 PITCHES

If every child in the UK planted a tree, we'd create a wood ten times the size of Sherwood Forest – that's 6,200 footie pitches!



Just shows what we can achieve if we all join together to protect our planet!

Planting for people

TREES IN TOWNS, trees by rivers, trees on farms. The Government has unveiled a £110 million planting package for England as part of UK efforts to create 30,000 hectares of new woods by 2025 – and it promises to reward landowners for putting trees where society needs them most.

The cash pot is a headline commitment in the new England Tree Action Plan, out last month. Details are coming soon, but it's understood that the new regime will increase grants from covering 80% of initial costs to 100%, and will also pay supplements if the trees boost wildlife, water quality and recreational access.

The Woodland Trust's John Tucker says: "These are the kind of incentives we've been demanding for years, and we hope they will ramp up the types of woodland

creation the Trust does already: on farms, with communities and on smaller plots. Woods of one hectare and up will be funded – previously the minimum was 3ha."

The shake-up reflects Westminster's new emphasis on awarding 'public money for public goods' such as biodiversity, health and wellbeing and flood mitigation, as it seeks to fulfil its pledge for the nation to be 'carbon neutral' by 2050.

With backing from partners such as Sainsbury's and Lloyds Banking Group, the Trust has blazed a decade-long trail by mailing out millions of free trees to communities and subsidising agroforestry projects (right). Adds John: "We've shown the way, and the key test now will be delivery. We'll play our part to ensure all of society benefits from these new trees."

Sapling revelry

Sheila Harris is helping us forge our biggest ever new wood in Wales

Growing up in Neath, I would hide my horse in Dyffryn Wood when it was wall-to-wall conifers: what struck me was the silence. Years later, after the Trust restored it, I returned to find the air filled with birdsong. The difference was amazing, so when the charity bought Brynau Farm, just over the valley, I jumped at the chance to get involved.

"The Trust is planting 150,000 trees to extend the remnants of ancient woodland across the overgrazed hills. We volunteers have dug in hazel, hawthorn and clumps of heather and gorse to create corridors for butterflies and bees. I also help to herd our seven Welsh white cattle, which graze to stimulate the ground flora here.

"The potential is so exciting: my friend Maxine and I joke that we'll need to be pushed up the hill in our bathchairs in 20 years' time to marvel at the beautiful new wood we helped create."



» Brynau will open to the public next year. Get a sneak preview at our summer weekends, starting July 24: woodlandtrust.org.uk/brnau.

Urban JUNGLE

No trees work harder than the ones on your doorstep – and the Trust’s new £3m fund is planting many more, writes Vincent Crump

HEARD ABOUT the Woodland Trust’s latest transformative tree-planting drive? It promises 20,000 new saplings rooting in streets, parks and playgrounds, an arboretum, a community orchard and an ‘urban forest education space’. Four thousand volunteers will be enlisted to make it happen. So where is this bright green future unfurling? In Sheffield, scene of the UK’s most notorious tree massacre of recent times.

“If you’d told me five years ago that we’d be giving £180,000 to Sheffield Council, I’d have laughed,” says the Trust’s street tree chief Joe Coles. “Back then we were trying everything to halt their activities. But this new partnership brings home how the city is turning the corner.”

The saga of Sheffield is inked in the memory of all who cherish trees and their benefits. Back in 2016, as chainsaws revved to deliver the council’s ‘Streets Ahead’ maintenance programme, stories went global of suburban nature-lovers being carted off to police cells – and 5,500 of the city’s roadside giants being reduced to stumps. The carnage finally paused in 2018, after the Forestry Commission, urged on by the Woodland Trust, delivered a damning report suggesting it might be illegal.

Soon afterwards the council sat down with protestors to thrash out a way forward – and the upshot is Sheffield’s new-minted Street Tree Strategy, backed by those community campaigners and championed by the Trust as a blueprint for urban forestry UK-wide.

“It makes clear that healthy trees will no longer be felled as a cheap fix to avoid repairing pavements,” explains Joe. “Another 12,000 trees had been facing the axe – now it should be more like a few hundred, where there’s no alternative. There are also targets to boost the overall canopy, an emphasis on planting native species that support wildlife, and a city-wide network of volunteer wardens

who will act as guardians of Sheffield’s trees and suggest places to plant more.”

Sheffield’s story has proved a lightning rod for change nationally, as the climate crisis and perils like air pollution and flooding propelled the value of urban trees into the mainstream. In 2019 the Government launched a £10m Urban Challenge Fund, bankrolling 134,000 trees across 50 projects, and when its new Environment Bill hits the statute books this summer, it will mandate councils to consult local residents before felling can begin.

The Trust too has been busy, investing £750,000 in trees in towns since 2016. We’ve mailed 2,000 street-tree celebration packs to neighbourhood groups, encouraging them to salute and safeguard their roadside trees, and advised 1,000 more on how to defend specific specimens under threat. Saving the popular Lincoln plane (see page 17) was just one victory among many. And then there’s the 3.5 million free saplings we have trucked out to schools and community groups since 2017 – that’s a lot of leafiness added to the places people live.

Big strides – but 2021 brings a giant leap forward for our urban agenda with the roll-out of our Emergency Tree Fund. A first for the Trust, it has awarded £2.9 million to kickstart projects in town and country alike (see overleaf).

“This fund will directly pay for half a million trees,” explains project boss John Tucker, “but what excites me is the ambition: it is designed to pump-prime councils who’ve got visionary programmes to green up their streetscapes.”

Sheffield’s ‘Treevitalise’ scheme is among our winners, but the list also includes three UK capital cities with new million-tree targets. Cardiff Council will be planting in five of its most socially disadvantaged districts, and creating leafy avenues between pockets of woodland to provide corridors for wildlife.

TREE-MERGENCY

Where our £2.9 million Emergency Tree Fund is going



QUEEN OF SPADES

Royal rallying cry goes up... Plant a tree for the Jubilee!

SHE IS SAID to be the only British monarch to succeed to the throne while up a tree – and she's planted a remarkable 1,500 saplings during her reign. Approaching a young hornbeam at an event in Cambridge in 2019 (below), the Queen declined an offer to delegate the digging: "No, no, I can still plant a tree," she retorted with a smile.

Now the entire nation is being exhorted to take up a spade and celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project. Backed by the royal family and with the Woodland Trust in the vanguard, the mammoth planting drive aims to create 70 young broadleaf woods of 70 acres each, in tribute to the monarch's seven decades of service. A 70-strong bevy of the UK's ancient woods will also be dedicated in the Queen's honour, along with 70 special old trees across the land.

The Trust is supporting the project alongside climate charity Cool Earth, and it will run throughout 2022, the Queen's platinum year. We're already lining up three million free saplings through our community tree packs scheme, so that neighbourhood groups and schools can join the jamboree by digging in their own copses and hedgerows. You can pitch for packs of assorted sizes – anything from 15 to

420 trees – and applications are open now for the autumn planting season.

Meanwhile a special interactive map is being created for the Queen's Green Canopy website, allowing everyone to plot their jubilee trees – the very first was planted in March at Windsor Castle by the 95-year-old monarch herself, with the Prince of Wales lending a hand.

"This project is a wonderful idea, and we're hoping everyone will get involved," says Woodland Trust chief executive Darren Moorcroft. "We'll be working with the Queen's network of Lord Lieutenants in each county to find sites for 70 vigorous new woods, as well as lending our advice on how to plant sustainably, with the right tree in the right place.

"In 2012 the Trust's Diamond Jubilee Woods scheme planted nine million trees, and this will create another superb legacy, honouring Her Majesty while helping to tackle the climate crisis and succour our native wildlife for decades to come."

» For all the ways to take part, visit queensgreencanopy.org. Or apply now for your free Woodland Trust tree pack: woodlandtrust.org.uk/QGC.



SHUTTERSTOCK EDITORIAL

SUMMER 2021 • BROADLEAF 9

SALUTING SIR TOM

LONG BEFORE HE set off to walk around his garden, Tom Moore roamed the moors and dales of his beloved Yorkshire, blackberry-picking in the woods and collecting "things that wriggled" in a jamjar.

Now Captain Sir Tom, as he's become known to the nation, will be remembered forever at a new memorial wood on the edge of his boyhood home town. The heroic centenarian raised a remarkable £38 million for the NHS after setting out to walk 100 lengths of his Bedfordshire back garden. Following his death in February, Sir Tom's daughter Lucy and her family have joined forces with the Woodland Trust and international tree-planting charity TreeSisters on a campaign to remember not just the man himself, but all those lost to Covid-19.

Trees For Tom has so far raised over £100,000 from well-wishers, and the location for the memorial will be bucolic Holme House Woods (pictured), which froth along a valley just a mile west of Keighley, where Captain Sir Tom grew up. It's already flitting with kingfishers and bright with bluebells – and happily, the man who did so much to unite the nation will now help link together two remnants of precious ancient woodland, as the Trust adds more than 3,000 saplings to the streamside fields.

"I was very emotional when I heard about the choice of site," smiles Lucy. "There's every chance my father would have known this exact spot from childhood.

"Creating something enduring that will combat climate change and offer solace and serenity for people affected by the pandemic is a perfect legacy. My father would be very proud, and I hope lots of local people can be invited along to help make this happen."

» woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-for-tom

