

£5.00 | Free to members

MAGAZINE OF The Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum



Westonbirt

AUTUMN/WINTER 2023/24

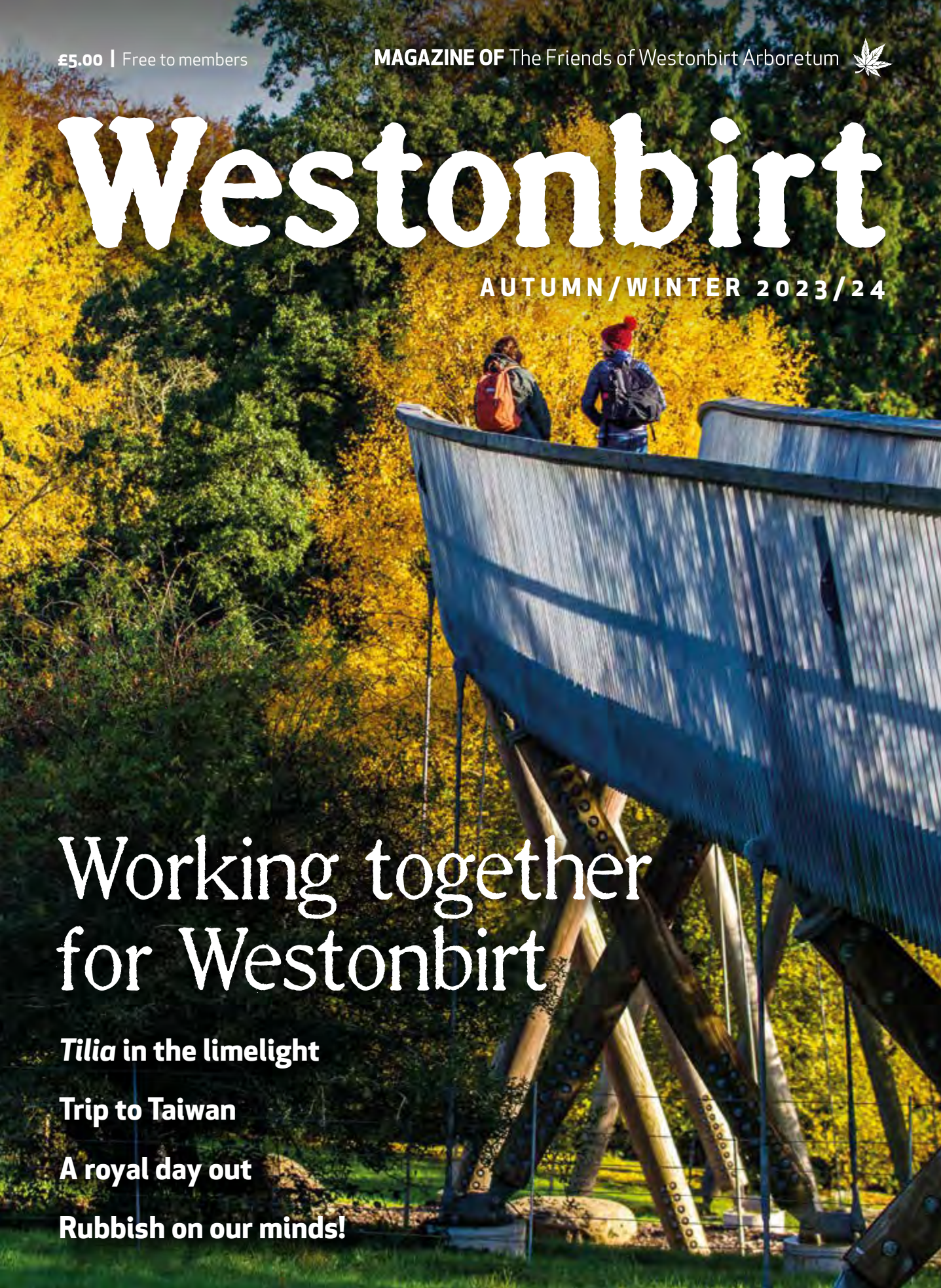
Working together for Westonbirt

***Tilia* in the limelight**

Trip to Taiwan

A royal day out

Rubbish on our minds!



Conservation:
Protecting our trees for the future



Education:
Sharing knowledge to create change



Participation:
Connecting people with nature



You are part of Westonbirt's story!

Welcome to our autumn and winter edition of the Westonbirt Magazine.

You are a central part of the Westonbirt story, exploring this incredible landscape, making new memories, and contributing towards Westonbirt's conservation work.

In this edition you'll discover more about Westonbirt's fascinating guided walks led by a team of volunteers, learn about The Friends' new exhibition in the Great Oak Hall, find out what's happening at the Westonbirt Woodworks and much more. You'll spot the conservation, education and participation icons highlighting the progress being made towards Westonbirt's 10-Year Vision.

We say farewell and a big thank you to our Chair of Trustees, Mike Mintram and fellow Trustee Gavin Grant who have both contributed a very significant amount of their time voluntarily, each having served an incredible nine years on the Board of Trustees.

Finally, after six incredible years with The Friends, I will be moving to another local charitable cause. I will however be sure to continue my personal supporter journey with Westonbirt through membership and regular giving (see page 41); and, down the track, volunteering. I sincerely thank you for your unwavering support and continued loyalty, and I leave you in the hands of the incredibly talented Friends' Team.

Jane Shute, Head of Supporter Journey

Protecting trees and enriching lives at Westonbirt Arboretum

If you're able to support the arboretum's vision over and above membership, please donate at fowa.org.uk/donate



In this issue

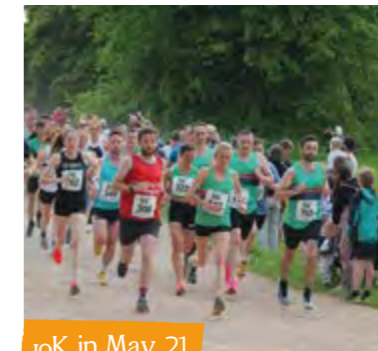
Thanks and farewells	6
A belated celebration: The Great Oak Hall Exhibition	8
A trip to Taiwan	10
Events	12
Tilia in the limelight	16
Membership benefits	18
10K in May	21
The Westonbirt Calendar	22
Autumn & winter seasonal highlights	24
Your rubbish has bin on our minds	30
The hibernators	31
Family fun!	32
News and The Friends' quiz	34
A legacy for the future of Westonbirt	40
Westonbirt Guided Walks	42
Enjoy learning new skills: The Westonbirt Woodworks	44
Supporter Stories	46
The Friend's Financial Overview	48
Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum Team	51

Contents

Features



The Great Oak Hall Exhibition 8



10K in May 21



Your rubbish has bin on our minds 30



The Westonbirt Woodworks 44

the friends
of Westonbirt
Arboretum



Westonbirt

Issue 123, autumn and winter 2023–2024:
September – February
© Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum.
Reg. Company 4965522
Reg. Charity No. 293190

Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum,
Tetbury, Glos. GL8 8QS.

Cover image:
Johnny Hathaway

Design:
Oyster Marketing and Design
www.oysterdesign.co.uk

Print:

Stephens & George
stephensandgeorge.co.uk
Printed on Woodforce, sourced
from responsibly managed
forests. Mailed in recyclable
FSC material.

Editorial team:

Jane Shute
Ally Whaley
Helen Chick
Jo Murray
Ellie Davis

Views expressed in the Westonbirt magazine are not necessarily those of the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum or Forestry England. Every effort is made to check factual accuracy, but no guarantees are expressed or implied. In particular, readers should satisfy themselves about the authenticity of products advertised.



Leaves of Life

Commemorate
Celebrate

A beautiful and meaningful way to
remember someone special.
Fill the Leaves of Life tree sculptures at
Westonbirt Arboretum with your memories.

£280 per leaf



One year on

Autumn 2023



It's hard to believe that a year has passed since I took up the post of CEO for the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum!

It has certainly been a busy 12 months, as you will see from the articles in this edition of the magazine.

We have recently appointed a new Chair of Trustees, Neil Sachdev MBE, who is joining us at a key stage of our journey. We have revisited our charity purpose and worked with staff and trustees to develop a three year strategy which focuses on our fundraising goals, growing our membership and ensuring all our members have a great experience.

It is exciting to be working with our partners at Forestry England (Westonbirt) as we shape and support our future together.

Thank you for your support of The Friends.

Emma Griffiths
CEO, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum



One of the inspirational quotes about trees is 'The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit'.

This quote highlights the timescales over which we must consider the management of an

arboretum. For every tree we plant today, we must envisage how they will fare over the next hundred years. Although shorter in timescale, many things, such as Christmas, also need to be planned well in advance at Westonbirt.

Since last writing, I'm grateful that The Friends have committed three years of funding to support our tree conservation work, which will have a global and local focus on *Sorbus*. Appropriately, The Friends have also committed to supporting our Silk Wood Community Planting Project, which will enable many people to plant trees, the shade of which they may or may not one day sit under.

Andrew Smith
Arboretum Director, Forestry England

Thanks and farewells

The Board of Trustees ensures that our charitable activities are carried out in a way that benefits the public. This year we say thank you to our Chair of Trustees, Mike Mintram, and fellow Trustee, Gavin Grant, for their wonderful contributions to our charity over the last nine years.

Our calm and consistent Chair of Trustees

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Mike Mintram, our Chair of Trustees, for his unwavering dedication and contribution to the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum over the last nine years. Mike has calmly guided the charity through leadership changes, navigated us through the pandemic, helped us to attract more supporters, worked collaboratively with Forestry England and been a rock of support for many different projects. These projects have helped ensure Westonbirt Arboretum continues to be both a visitor attraction and a conservation centre of excellence.

Mike has been visiting the arboretum since he was a small child and we look forward to seeing him enjoy this magical environment in the future. Thank you Mike!

A pivotal member of our Board



We would also like to say a huge thank you and farewell to Gavin Grant, who has been a pivotal member of our Board of Trustees for years. Gavin has made a wonderful contribution to our partnership work with Forestry

England, advocating for significant project funding including Silk Wood House, the Quarantine House and the Community Shelter.

We wish Gavin all the best in his role as Mayor of Malmesbury and with his continued charitable support of local community outreach programmes.



A big thank you and farewell to our President and Patrons

We wanted to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to our patrons who are stepping down Giles Coode-Adams OBE, Sir Henry Elwes KCVO, President Christopher Brickell CBE and Vice-President Roger Busby for their support and dedication to our charity.

Over the years, we have accomplished so much together, from fundraising for essential conservation and education projects to organising events and engaging with our community in new and innovative ways. We are deeply proud of what we have achieved together. It has been an honour to work alongside such a talented, committed, and passionate group of individuals.

Looking forward – we are delighted that Neil Sachdev MBE has accepted the role as our incoming Chair of Trustees, with Christian Walker (National Trust) and Nigel Frost (Highgrove Enterprises) taking Trustee roles on The Friends' Board.

Trustees, patrons and presidents are all volunteers. These volunteer roles for The Friends do become available from time to time. For more information visit fowa.org.uk

Moving on



After many happy years as a Trustee, Mike takes a look back at some of the highlights, the progress made in partnership with Forestry England and challenges that have been overcome.

Mike Mintram, Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

The project I am most proud we funded

I have been a Trustee for nine years. I started as we were completing the Treetop Walkway. Since then, The Friends have funded a great many projects. Personally, I think the purchase of Silk Wood House and the surrounding land stands out as one of the best. This was a once in a generation opportunity to expand the arboretum, and one I doubt could have happened without the financial support of The Friends.

We have grown into an organisation with an income of more than £1.7 million per annum, employing 23 members of staff and serving more than 38,000 members. I am immensely proud of our work, impact, partners, and the generous support from our Royal Patron.

Our strength and your support

The Friends' staff and volunteers are a dedicated, passionate, and a high-performance team, who are incredibly proud of being part of Westonbirt Arboretum. Working together, the charity has been able to develop the arboretum in so many ways and a huge part of this is thanks to you, our wonderful supporters!

The challenges we have overcome

The Friends and Forestry England have faced many challenges over the years. Together we have had to adapt to a changing world. The impact of the pandemic was perhaps the hardest to face, when the arboretum was either closed or had visitor restrictions in place. We adapted to working in a different way, whilst coping with whatever faced us in our personal lives. It was inspiring to see how staff and volunteers adapted as they continued to welcome members and visitors.

We are now delivering the aspirational 10-Year Vision, developed in partnership with Forestry England to transform Westonbirt Arboretum and secure its place as 'a world leader in trees'. The next challenge is how we support Forestry England to turn the vision into reality through the conservation, education and participation themes, being more inclusive and inspiring people from all backgrounds.

My next journey

2023 is my final year as the Chair of Trustees for The Friends. Looking ahead, I have some voluntary interests that I will continue to support. I'm Chair of Governors at a local school, and I sit on the Board of Trustees for Citizens Advice North & West Gloucestershire. I also plan to increase my business coaching support for businesses in Gloucestershire. I'm interested in the re-wilding movement so will look at how I can help their work too.



A belated celebration

The Great Oak Hall Exhibition

Three years ago, we celebrated 35 years of our charity supporting Westonbirt Arboretum and the 20th anniversary since the completion of the Great Oak Hall, our practical and spiritual home! Naturally, we had grand plans to celebrate these milestones but, as you may well have guessed, everything was put on hold due to the pandemic.

Jane Shute, Head of Supporter Journey, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

Last year we got our plans back on track with an initiative affectionately known as 'Project Red Robin'. With the help of supporters and volunteers, we merrily rummaged through our charity archives, historical magazines and image library to design an exhibition highlighting the key milestones along The Friends' journey.

The result is a fascinating and inspiring new exhibition that is now open most days in the Great Oak Hall. On your next visit why not drop-in to discover the history of the charity and some of our landmark achievements? The exhibition also explains the many ways in which our members, supporters and volunteers have made the wonderful achievements of the charity possible throughout our history.

A peek inside

As you enter the hall, two central panels explain how your donations are currently supporting our conservation, education and participation themed projects and programmes, and how this will enable Westonbirt Arboretum to achieve its 10-Year Vision.

To the left of the hall, you will find one of two displays. One highlights the history of the Great Oak Hall construction with a focus on its key structural features. You can discover the fascinating story behind the hall's design, find out about the hidden time capsule and follow the official opening of The Great Oak Hall.

The second display explains how and why the charity was originally established. A visual timeline guides you through the charity's history, celebrating significant achievements over the last three and a half decades, all thanks to your ongoing support. We swap the displays from time to time so make sure to make multiple visits and discover all this celebratory exhibition has to offer.

Supporting Westonbirt's future

As you leave the hall, you can spend a few moments reading the endearing messages inscribed on our Leaves of Life tree sculptures in the foyer. You can also find out how to further support the arboretum's work through our Gift a Membership and Support a Square initiatives, make a donation or pledge a gift in your Will as a wonderful legacy for the enjoyment of future generations.

We hope this exhibition will deepen your understanding of how your support protects trees and enriches lives here at Westonbirt Arboretum. Find out more at fowa.org.uk/support



How your support is enabling Westonbirt's 10-Year Vision



The Great Oak Hall build



The Friend's journey through time

How you can support the arboretum





▲ Credit: Dan Crowley

A trip to Taiwan



In March of this year, I was privileged to have the opportunity to travel to Taiwan to explore some of the hyper-diverse, Fagaceae-dominated forests that occur in the southeast of this fascinating island. While the UK is home to less than a handful of oaks and their relatives in the beech family, in eastern and south eastern Asia it is another story, with Fagaceae being one of the most important tree families in the region.

Dan Crowley, Westonbirt's Tree Conservation Manager, Forestry England

I was travelling with colleagues from the International Oak Society, and our purpose was to learn more about the conservation needs of these keystone species, having been invited by representatives of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau and the Taiwan Academy of Ecology.

There are a great many species native to Taiwan that grow here at Westonbirt, but the forests in much of the southeast comprise somewhat less familiar

plant assemblages, though we did encounter several familiar species including maples *Acer kawakamii* and *A. serrulatum*, growing in the company of our fagaceous foci. A particular highlight was spending time among giant *Keteleeria davidiana* var. *formosana* in relict, though unprotected forest. Here, we saw examples of trees more than 800 years old, that face an uncertain future owing to ever-increasing pressures on its sensitive and highly restricted habitat.

Exploring the central mountain range

In addition to our time in the southeast, we had a brief opportunity to explore some of the temperate forests at higher elevations on the island's central mountain range, which have attracted western explorers for well over a century. Gloucestershire-born Ernest Wilson made several collections from the region, which is home to numerous conifers that are, like many of the oaks and their relatives, under serious threat of extinction. These include *Taiwania cryptomerioides*, which while growing well along Specimen Avenue in the Old Arboretum, has been replaced in parts of its range by planted *Cryptomeria japonica*. The most we saw of *Taiwania* was a few planted trees and a slice of trunk from a 700-year-old tree felled in the 1970s on display at the local visitor centre. Thankfully though, natural *Taiwania* stands remain elsewhere.



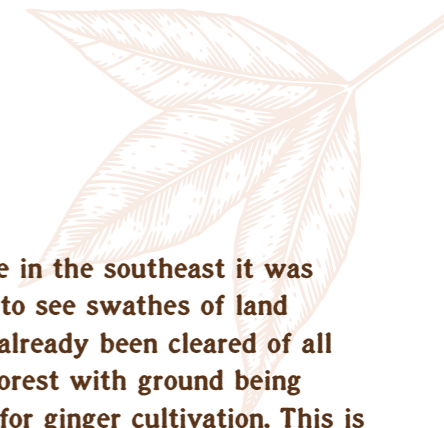
▼ Credit: Ai-kuang Tung
Stachyurus chinensis

Collaborative conservation

Following our forest visits, our trip culminated in a symposium focused on the conservation of the forests of the southeast, at which we all presented on the various conservation programmes we are involved in, and how compatible mechanisms might be applied in Taiwan to support tree conservation on the island. It was a first for some of us to present with simultaneous translation, which also added an extra element to the question-and-answer section which followed! Suffice to say that the mutual desire to collaborate for conservation was not misinterpreted.



The trip provided an incredible insight into the forests of Taiwan, and with it a wonderful opportunity to build relationships – with exciting potential for further collaboration in the future. I am grateful to the Taiwan Forestry Bureau and the Taiwan Academy of Ecology for sponsoring the trip, and to the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum for their continued support of Westonbirt's conservation objectives.



Elsewhere in the southeast it was shocking to see swathes of land that had already been cleared of all trace of forest with ground being prepared for ginger cultivation. This is evidently a significant cause of forest loss in the region, with the habitat of some of the most threatened species lost to agriculture. We also saw cut logs that were being used for growing shitake mushrooms – another threat in this incredible region.



▲ Credit: Dan Crowley

International participants:

Roderick Cameron – International Oak Society Chair

Amy Byrne – The Morton Arboretum / Global Conservation Consortium for Oak

Phil Douglas – Denver Botanic Garden

Joeri Strijk – Alliance for Conservation Tree Genomics

Coming up



Wild Wonder at Westonbirt

Do your children love books? Would they love to meet their favourite authors and ask them questions? Then Wild Wonder at Westonbirt is the place to be!

Fri 15 – Sun 17 Sep
Price: From £10



Enchanted Christmas

Westonbirt's captivating landscape and stunningly lit trees creates an enchanting world full of wonder and imagination – the perfect place to create cherished memories that will last a lifetime.

Fri 24 Nov – Sat 23 Dec
(open on selected evenings)

Price: From £19



Guided walks and tours

Westonbirt Guided Walk

Explore the seasonal highlights of Westonbirt's Old Arboretum.

Check website for days & times during autumn & winter

Price: Free after entry

Discovery Walks

Take the path less travelled and delve a little deeper into our captivating trees.

Every Sat in Sep, 10.30am

Price: Free after entry

Wild Flower Guided Walk

Discover the fascinating world of wild flowers and other flora at Westonbirt Arboretum.

Tue 05 Sep, 10.30am

Price: Free after entry

Sensing Nature Guided Walk

Let our visually impaired guides lead you through an immersive and interactive sensory experience.

Fri 08 Sep, Fri 22 Sep

Price: Free after entry

Active Forest Events

Forest Runner

Choose between a 5K or 10K run and enjoy some beautiful autumnal surroundings.

Sun 10 Sep, 4pm

Price: From £22.50

Workshops and courses

Creating Garden Plans Workshop

Find out how professional garden designers create a well thought out garden.

Wed 02 Sep, 10am–4pm

Price: £135

Windsor Chair Making Course

Create your very own Windsor chair using traditional skills.

**04–09 Sep, 11–15 Sep, 02–07 Oct,
09–14 Oct, 9am–5pm**

Price: £535

Failsafe Garden Plants

Gain a good understanding of how to select the right plants for your garden plus top tips to help them flourish.

Wed 13 Sep, 10am–1pm

Price: £85

Woodland Sculpture Wednesdays

A day fully immersed in the woods to create a willow sculpture of your choice.

Wed 20 Sep, Wed 11 Oct, 10am–3.30pm

Price: £95

Spoon Carving

Learn to make a spoon out of a branch from a tree at the lovely Silk Wood Barn.

Sat 23 Sep, 10am–4.30pm

Price: £75



Find out more

Visit forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/events or call Westonbirt Arboretum on 0300 067 4890 to find out more about any of our events.

Hand-tied Bouquet Workshop

Relax as you learn a simple florist technique to make a hand-tied bouquet.

Sun 24 Sep, 10.30am–1pm

Price: £85



Beginners Digital Landscape Course

Spend a day at this fabulous location developing your skills in camera technique and digital technology.

Mon 02 Oct, 10.30am–3.30pm

Price: £65

Sketchbooking your environment

Basics of botanical illustration, watercolours and observational drawing.

Sat 07 Oct, 10am–4.30pm

Price: £90

Public Fungi Foray

Learn all about the fascinating world of fungus in the magical setting of Westonbirt Arboretum.

Sat 07 Oct, Morning and afternoon walks

Price: Free after entry, booking essential

Autumn Scrapcrafting with Peace & Craft

Enjoy a peaceful morning with a small group of fellow stitcher crafters and learn to look at your textile scraps differently.

Fri 13 Oct, 10am–1pm

Price: £40

Intermediate Digital Photography Course

Enhance your confidence and understanding to capture great landscape photos.

Mon 16 Oct, 10.30am–3.30pm

Price: £120

Planning Garden Borders

A workshop to provide you with everything you need, including your own drawing kit, to make your own borders bright and beautiful.

Sat 21 Oct, 10am–4pm

Price: £135

Willow Sculpture Workshop

Spend a relaxing day crafting and weaving your own willow design.

**Fri 17 Nov, Sat 16 Dec, Sat 20 Jan,
Sat 10 Feb, 10am–4pm**

Price: £95

Winter Scrapcrafting with Peace & Craft

Enjoy a peaceful morning with a small group of fellow stitcher crafters and learn to look at your textile scraps differently.

Fri 01 Dec, 10am–1pm

Price: £45



Christmas Wreaths Workshop

Take some time out and enjoy a mince pie while you create your own Christmas wreath.

Sun 03 Dec, Wed 06 Dec, Sun 10 Dec, 10am–12.30pm

Price: £75



For children and families

Discovery Days

Learn more about our trees and wildlife and feel more connected to nature.

Sat 16 Sep, Sat 21 Oct, 10.30am–3.30pm

Price: Free after entry

Home Educated Learning Events

Join us to explore Woodland Food Webs.

Thurs 28 Sep

Use your creativity as a Natural Sculpture artist.

Thu 09 Nov

Become a Woodland Manager for Wildlife.

Thu 29 Feb

Price: £6 per child age 7–11, £4 for siblings, 10am–12pm

Tots & Twigs Forest School

Forest School for Preschool aged children (2–4 year olds).

Term time, Mon & Thu 10.15–11.45am,

Fri 10.15–11.45am & 12.30–2pm

Price: Check forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/events

Storytelling trail

An autumn family trail in the Old Arboretum

(Sorry, no dogs allowed)

Join a mythical goddess of nature and forests, and help her reunite with her tree sprite friends to gain her full autumn glory. Created by author and illustrator Duncan Beedie, this trail will take you on a story telling adventure with exciting tasks and challenges along the way.

Autumn

Price: Free after entry

Create your own characters!

Continue the theme of the autumn family trail and try your hand at creating nature characters and stories!

Mon 23– Fri 27 Oct, 10.30am–3.30pm

Price: Free after entry

Westonbirt 10K



Lace up your running shoes and get ready to be captivated by a scenic course that winds its way through the National Arboretum.

Whether you're a seasoned athlete seeking a new challenge or a casual runner looking for a memorable experience, our well-marked course offers a perfect blend of natural wonders and beautiful views!

The Westonbirt 10K will go on sale in the New Year so make sure you're subscribed to The Friends' eNews by contacting membership@fowa.org.uk



Tilia in the limelight:

Sampling diseased lime trees for new discoveries



My name is Helene Kile, and I am currently undertaking a three-year PhD project (initiated in 2023) supervised by Dr Carrie Brady and jointly funded by the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum and the University of the West of England (UWE).

I am investigating *Tilia* trees (commonly known as lime or linden) suffering from bleeding cankers. *Tilia* species are popular choices for planted avenues in parks and arboreta throughout the UK and are also prolific in ancient woodlands.

The cankers observed on these trees have a black to mid-brown colour and are present on the trunk and often on branches leading to the canopy. During spring and autumn, the cankers tend to appear wet with dark exudate weeping out, hence the term bleeding cankers. Over recent years, reports of such cankers in lime trees across the UK have been increasing. The fungal-like organism *Phytophthora plurivora* is suspected to be involved in these cases.

My lime tree journey began in 2020 when I embarked on a master's project (offered by Carrie at UWE) to compare the bacterial microbiome of limes suffering from bleeding cankers with healthy limes, to pinpoint potential pathogens present. Early on, a novel bacterial species, *Brenneria tiliae*, was isolated from a diseased lime tree at Westonbirt Arboretum. Interestingly, this species belongs to a group of tree pathogens known to cause bleeding cankers in multiple tree species. This led to the hypothesis that *B. tiliae* could also be involved in the bleeding symptoms.

Since the initial sampling at Westonbirt both *Phytophthora* and *B. tiliae* have been isolated from several symptomatic limes across the UK. My PhD project builds upon these previous discoveries and aims to determine the microbial agent(s) responsible for the symptoms, whether these agents can be linked to specific symptoms and the potential threat posed to lime trees in the UK.

The plan going forward is to continue sampling and collecting data from symptomatic limes across the UK. Healthy trees will also be included to compare differences within the microbiome composition. Based on the sampling results, potential pathogens that might be involved in the disease will be included in pathogenicity tests to determine whether they can produce disease symptoms in healthy saplings. These results combined with genomic analysis of the microorganisms may give us new insight into the cause.

“Another important secondary aim of the pathogenicity test is to determine if climate change makes the causative agent(s) more aggressive and whether some lime tree species are more resilient.”

To determine this, I will inoculate the microorganisms onto different species of lime saplings exposed to stress conditions (i.e. high temperature, drought). We hope that these results could be used to inform foresters, landowners, and stakeholders about the choice of resilient lime planting stocks.

The research is still in its infancy with many unresolved questions and the road ahead may take unexpected turns. I am grateful for the opportunity to pursue this important research, hoping to learn more about the disease affecting these beautiful trees.



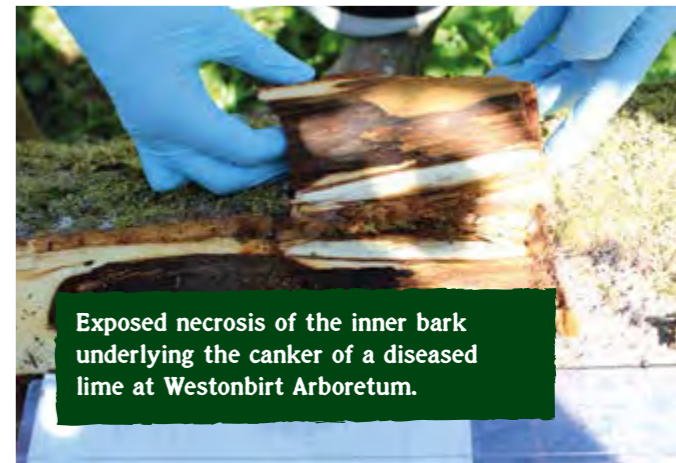
Symptomatic lime tree with bleeding canker present on the trunk. The almost-scorched appearance and weeping exudate are key symptoms of disease.



Helene and Carrie sampling for the *Tilia* Threat Project.



Sampling in action, Helene swabbing a bleeding canker of a lime using a sterile cotton swab.



Exposed necrosis of the inner bark underlying the canker of a diseased lime at Westonbirt Arboretum.

Membership benefits

As you continue your Westonbirt story through membership, your support will help enable the arboretum to thrive. In return for your loyalty, we are delighted to offer you these fantastic benefits:



Visit Westonbirt Arboretum all year round!



Kids go free! Bring up to 4 of your own children or grandchildren free of charge (age 18 and under)



Family activities in school holidays



10% off at the Westonbirt Arboretum Shop
Simply show your valid membership card when making your purchase



Behind the scenes Westonbirt Magazine and regular Friends' eNews



Earlybird pre-sale for Enchanted Christmas and Forest Live concerts



Member Tuesdays this wintertime
Bring a family member to Westonbirt for FREE on Tuesdays between 21 November 2023 – 28 March 2024 inclusive (excluding Boxing Day)

Please pre-book your free time slot to guarantee your entry on these key dates:

Autumn – Saturday 30 September – Sunday 12 November

Christmas – Sunday 24 December – Monday 01 January

Time slots are released 7 days in advance and can be booked online at fowa.org.uk/prebook or by phone on **0300 068 0400** between Monday–Friday, 09.00–17.00. Pre-booking is also available year-round.



Partner gardens

As a member, you can also benefit from discounted entry into these selected partner gardens.

Visit for free:

Batsford Arboretum
Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos batsarb.co.uk

Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Glasshouse, Edgbaston, Birmingham
birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

The Yorkshire Arboretum, Castle Howard, York yorkshirearboretum.org

National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire
botanicgarden.wales

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (including Dawyck, Benmore and Logan), Edinburgh rbge.org.uk

Receive 2 for 1 entry into:

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Richmond, Surrey kew.org

Royal Botanic Gardens Wakehurst Place Ardingly, Nr Haywards Heath, West Sussex kew.org/wakehurst

Please check the partner garden's website ahead of visiting, as you might be required to pre-book to visit.

15% off Runners Need



Visit the running specialists and present your membership card in-store, or shop online at runnersneed.com with discount code **AF-FOWA-M1**. Valid until 31 March 2024 (T&Cs Apply).

15% off Snow + Rock



Huge range of ski, snow and climbing clothing and equipment from the world's best brands. Shop in-store with your membership card, or online at snowandrock.com with discount code **AF-FOWA-M1**. Valid until 31 March 2024 (T&Cs Apply).

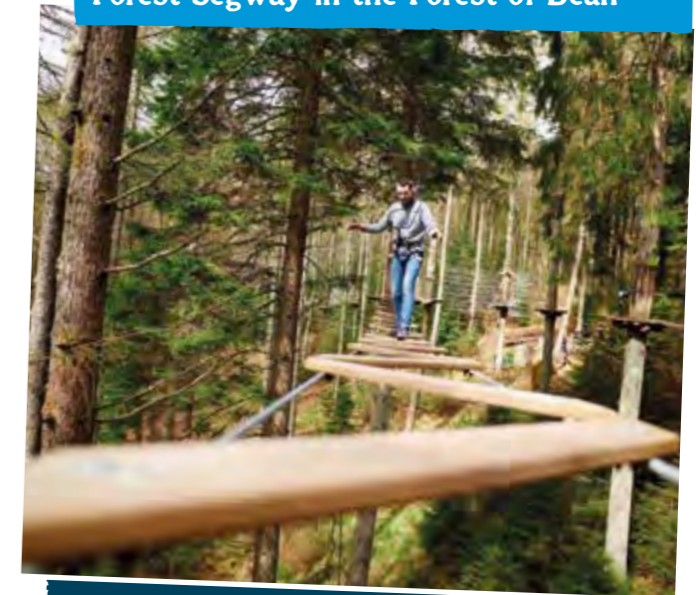
Local partner discounts

15% off at Cotswold Outdoor

Get expert advice and the best brands in-store with your membership card, or shop online at cotswoldoutdoor.com with discount code **AF-FOWA-M1**. Valid until 31 March 2024 (T&Cs Apply).



10% off Go Ape Tree Tops Challenge and Forest Segway in the Forest of Dean



Book online at goape.co.uk using the discount code **GAARB23** until 31 December 2023. Excludes Saturdays.

Visit our website for full details at fowa.org.uk/membership-benefits

ENCHANTED CHRISTMAS

at Westonbirt Arboretum

24 Nov ~ 23 Dec

Open on selected evenings



 10K in May

They smashed it!

Our Run for the Trees team of eight runners achieved an incredible result at Westonbirt's May 10K, smashing the £2,500 target and raising a whopping £3,950 (including Gift Aid)!



Credit: Jane Shute

Well done to you all, we are incredibly proud and grateful for your training and wonderful fundraising that will make a huge contribution to our work at Westonbirt Arboretum.

We particularly want to thank everyone who sponsored the runners and our partner, Runners Need. Our friends at Runners Need very kindly provided our team with gift vouchers worth £50 each, to spend at any Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock or Runners Need store or online. We are looking forward to continuing our partnership in 2024.

Remember, if you're a member you can access 15% off with your discount code at Runners Need! (see pages 18-19 for all membership benefits).

Why not join our Run for the Trees team for 2024?

If you're looking for a New Year challenge, or are an old hand at the Westonbirt 10K, why not join the team for 2024? Applications open soon. You can add your name to our early access mailing list and be notified when applications open. If selected, participants will receive free entry into the race (no need to queue when tickets are released), a 2024 Westonbirt running vest, Westonbirt water bottle and other goodies. Plus we'll support you every step of the way with handy fundraising and training guides!



To find out more visit fowa.org.uk/10K

Follow us on social media:

 @FriendsofWestonbirt

 @FriendsofWestonbirt

 @WestonbirtFOWA

 friendsofwestonbirtarboretum

Every pound helps to protect trees and enrich lives. Together we can save trees from the brink of extinction, inspire a young person to a career in nature, and help families access safe, green spaces.



The Westonbirt Calendar

Your eco-friendly Christmas gift

Few gifts bring pleasure every day of the year but the Westonbirt calendar is one that can. This perennial favourite has been created by the Eco-Friendly Card Co (originally Glebe Cottage) since 2007. The wonderful photography of Scott Morrish captures the changing seasons and beauty of this unique landscape and its eco-friendly production credentials are second to none.

Scott founded Glebe Cottage in 1993 with support from The Prince's Trust. He was joined in 1996 by Sue and between them they pursued their shared passion to create an environmentally friendly business.

"We wanted to understand the environmental impact that publishing our products was having. We spent a long time researching everything from the types of inks we used to the bags we packed the card in. By understanding the issues we have been able to create our own eco-commitments, that determine how we create our products today."

Switching to the exclusive use of 100% recycled envelopes in the 90s, they went on to become the first card publisher to use compostable bags and the first direct-to-retail publisher to obtain FSC® certification. Their achievements won them Gold for environmental best practice in printing and publishing at the Green Apple Awards.

As well as using FSC® certified materials, every product has recycled content, many of the card ranges use 100% recycled board and envelopes and are printed with vegetable-based inks using alcohol-free printing techniques.



Sue says



We are very positive about the future. We believe consumer choices can change the way businesses think about the environment. In essence, everyone can help to make the world a little bit greener, just one card, calendar or notecard at a time!



Sue and Scott are passionate about their business choices. They print and manufacture everything in the UK. Sue explained:

"Our offices and printing presses are powered by Green Energy. We offset our office's carbon emissions via CO2 Balance and their African Stove Project, which is great for the local communities. We also work with the World Land Trust to carbon-balance all the paper we use as a business."



Scott has been taking photos at Westonbirt for over 16 years. He visits eight or nine times a year! He varies his content, sometimes capturing the same scene at different times of day in varying light, or different times of the year. Depending on the camera, he takes between 50 and several hundred photos a day – all this to produce 13 carefully curated images for the calendar as well as other favourites for Christmas cards and notecards.

Sue contacts the Westonbirt Shop Team in early spring to discuss the following year's calendar. By April the images have been chosen and the captions checked by Penny and Mark, Westonbirt's experts. It's then designed for publishing, with the new calendar arriving on the shelves towards the end of the summer.

Buy your calendar when you next visit at the **Westonbirt Shop**



£12.95
Plus members receive **10% off!***



*simply show your valid membership to the friendly Shop Team



Autumn & winter seasonal highlights

As the arboretum enters the autumn and winter months, the landscape is a constantly changing canvas. The wonderful colours of autumn eventually give way to the beauty of a winter woodland. There is always something special to see at Westonbirt as you enjoy a stroll in the historic tree collection. Our seasonal guide will help you to locate some of the best sights.

Seasonal map

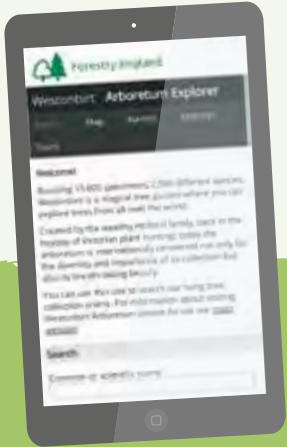
You can use this pull-out map to identify and locate where each of the trees in the highlights article can be found in the arboretum.

Each tree has a coloured dot next to it. You will find the same coloured dot placed on the map to show its location. You may wish to take the full article on your next visit.

The map is a simplified version of our main map. We've done this to make finding the tree easier. If you would like a copy of the full map, pick one up on your next visit from the Welcome Building.

Pull out map

● The coloured dots mark some of the spectacular trees worth seeking on your next visit...



Use our Arboretum Explorer

Arboretum Explorer is a web based search tool that enables you to locate specific trees at Westonbirt. You can use as much or as little information as you choose and the website will show you a map with the location of the tree.

To use the Arboretum Explorer facility visit westonbirt.arboretumexplorer.org

Tree guide

Autumn

- Sargent's rowan: *Sorbus sargentiana*
- Sorrel tree: *Oxydendrum arboreum*
- ★ Indian quassia: *Picrasma quassioides*
- ★ Maidenhair tree: *Ginkgo biloba*
- Wax tree: *Toxicodendron succedaneum*

Winter

- Willow podocarp: *Podocarpus salignus*
- Early stachyurus: *Stachyurus praecox*
- Moosewood: *Acer pensylvanicum*
- ★ Tall stewartia: *Stewartia monadelpha*
- ★ Monkey puzzle: *Araucaria araucana*



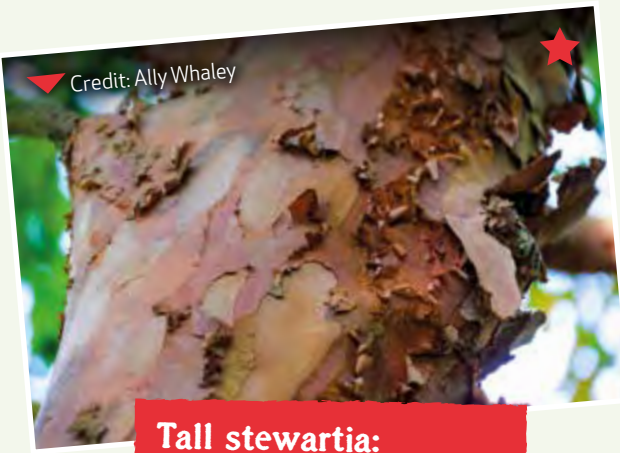
Willow podocarp: *Podocarpus salignus*



Sargent's rowan: *Sorbus sargentiana*



Early stachyurus: *Stachyurus praecox*



Tall stewartia: *Stewartia monadelpha*



Wax tree: *Toxicodendron succedaneum*



Credit: Ally Whaley



Moosewood:
Acer pensylvanicum



Credit: Ally Whaley



Credit: Doug Lodge

Monkey puzzle:
Araucaria araucana



Indian quassia:
Picrasma quassioides

Credit: Ally Whaley



Credit: Ally Whaley

Sorrel tree:
Oxydendrum arboreum



Credit: Ally Whaley

Maidenhair tree:
Ginkgo biloba

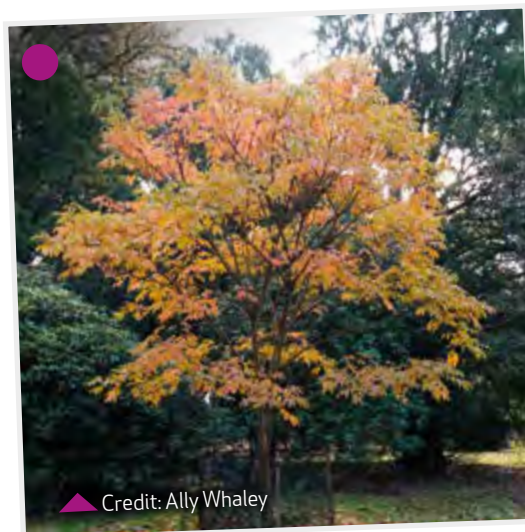
Autumn highlights

● Sargent's rowan:
Sorbus sargentiana

Described by some as the finest of all the rowans, this native of western Sichuan, China is an autumn show-stopper. In mid-November, stand under the tree close to the junction of Green Lane and Willesley Drive in Silk Wood, and marvel at the spectacular amber-scarlet canopy as it blazes away. The appeal of Sargent's rowan is not limited to this autumn sight. In late May, large mahogany-coloured leaves unfold, followed by swathes of white flowers in June which produce an abundance of orange-red fruits.

● Sorrel tree:
Oxydendrum arboreum

You should probably avoid tasting the leaves of this tree, and the scientific name of this eastern USA native provides a helpful clue as to why. The genus name *Oxydendrum* is made up of the Greek words 'oxys', which means sour, which references their bitter taste and 'dendron' - meaning tree. Despite this the bitter foliage was once used in medicinal teas and honey that is produced from bees that feed from its flowers and highly sought after.



Credit: Ally Whaley

★ Indian quassia:
Picrasma quassioides

Despite having a widespread distribution, ranging from the Himalayas to Temperate East Asia, this slender tree is rare in cultivation. It is a beloved tree here at Westonbirt, where the leaves' remarkable transition between yellows, oranges and reds makes a valuable contribution to our spectacular autumn display. Indian quassia is widely used as a medicinal plant and it contains compounds called 'quassinoids', which have been shown to treat a broad range of illnesses.

★ Maidenhair tree: *Ginkgo biloba*

Not only is this beautiful tree a key part of the Westonbirt landscape, but it is also important in our understanding of tree evolution. Maidenhair trees were growing on earth, before dinosaurs came into existence and are the only surviving link between conifers and ferns. Due to its considerably ancient origin, this tree is known as a 'living fossil' and is the only remaining species within the ancient family Ginkgoaceae. In autumn, the leaves of this unique tree turn a delightful, buttery shade of yellow.

● Wax tree:
Toxicodendron succedaneum

There are no prizes for guessing what used to be made from the wax tree! Before petrol was widely utilised in Japan, one of the countries' primary sources of artificial lighting was candles made from wax tree fruits. Nowadays, this tree is primarily grown for its large, tropical-looking leaves which turn a rich shade of scarlet in the autumn. Admire it from a distance because, as the scientific name suggests, *Toxicodendron succedaneum* is toxic and can cause severe skin irritation and allergic reactions to humans.

Winter highlights

● Willow podocarp:
Podocarpus salignus

This species so closely resembles a willow, that it was named the 'willow podocarp', however it is actually an unlikely looking conifer! Look out for its elegant, glossy leaves which are an illuminating sight in the winter sunshine. This unusual tree is endemic to the Chilean Andes and Coastal Cordillera mountain range, where it is sadly under threat from commercial forestry and habitat degradation. Our oldest specimen, a female, was planted near the junction of Loop Walk and Morley Ride in 1979. It bears bright red fruits, which are only found when male willow podocarps are found nearby.

● Early stachyurus:
Stachyurus praecox

In late winter, while many of us are dreaming of spring, this Japanese native is already springing into life! Flowers are sometimes seen as early as mid-February, but can appear later depending on weather conditions. This is reflected in the species name *praecox*, the Latin term for 'very early'. Enjoy the charming pale-yellow pendulous flowers (called racemes) which drip from its dark, bare branches. In the wild this beautiful arching shrub can be found along forest edges in temperate areas of Japan, where the fruits have been used as a black dye.

● Moosewood: *Acer pensylvanicum*

Winter is a great time to admire the unusual bark of this deciduous North American native. The green bark of young trees is marbled with white vertical streaks, which inspired one of its many common names 'the striped maple'. Another common name is 'moosewood', which is named for the moose which love to nibble its young branches and leaves. Come back to experience the tree in autumn when its large leaves turn a dramatic shade of yellow.

★ Tall stewartia: *Stewartia monadelph*

This fantastic Japanese native offers exceptional year-round interest. Throughout the winter, look for the sculptural form of the trunk, and the glow of the scaly, amber bark in the sunshine. In summer, beautiful white flowers emerge, which bear a striking resemblance to those of its close relative *Camellia*. In autumn, its green, serrated leaves transform into vivid shades of red and orange. The genus *Stewartia* honours John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713-1792), but an early spelling mistake means he is now forever immortalised incorrectly!

★ Monkey puzzle: *Araucaria araucana*

Chile's national tree, the charismatic monkey puzzle, is a favourite here at Westonbirt. Popular with gardeners across the country for its curious prehistoric-looking leaves, the monkey puzzle is also an important food source to the indigenous people of the Andes mountains in southern Chile and western Argentina. The seeds, called 'piñones', can be eaten raw or roasted, and can even be fermented to make a drink called 'chavid'. Keep an eye out for the grove of young trees between Morley and Holford Rides, which wouldn't look out of place on the set of Jurassic Park!



Credit: Doug Lodge

Don't forget to pull out the map and bring it with you to discover our seasonal picks on your next visit!

Your rubbish has bin on our minds



We're always looking at how we can reduce our carbon footprint at Westonbirt, and we've been investigating visitor attitudes to recycling so we can make this easier.

Libby Morris, Events Supervisor, Forestry England and member of Westonbirt's Green Team

In 2019-20, dry mixed recycling and glass constituted a quarter of all waste generated on-site, and general waste made up 43 per cent. We know we can work together to do better. Understanding more about our waste has helped us develop a Westonbirt waste action strategy.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus created a backlog of tasks and halted some of our ambitions, but we're determined to continue improving the way we handle rubbish on-site. We're putting some plans into action 'behind the scenes', but also keep your eyes peeled for changes around site, including:

-  **Reviewing our waste management contracts to ensure we're making the best environmental choices.**
-  **Sourcing bins with more recycling options and installing these at rubbish 'hot spots'.**
-  **Researching recyclable takeaway cups and how to effectively recycle them.**
-  **Investigating plastic-free dog poo bags.**

In the meantime, we would ask all our visitors to take a second to think about whether your rubbish can be recycled before putting it in general waste. If you can't see a waste stream for something you know you can recycle at home, please take it away with you.

We would like to say a big thank you to all responsible owners of our four-pawed friends for always putting poo bags into bins – you help ensure that bags don't break down into harmful microplastics in our tree collection.



The hibernators

As the shorter days approach, we look at some of the woodland creatures who tuck up for the winter to conserve energy and survive hard times. As they take refuge, the breathing and heart rate of hibernating animals drops. Some animals' metabolism can fall below five per cent, a state known as torpor.

Bats use a lot of energy as they fly around hunting food. All British bats hibernate when food becomes scarce in the winter. They find a quiet place to hibernate, often in old barns and derelict buildings.



For **reptiles** such as the grass snake, brumation (the term used for their version of hibernation) is essential. Not only is food scarce but warmth from the sun is insufficient to regulate their body temperature.



Frogs, toads and newts hibernate at the bottom of ponds during the winter months. However, there are risks if the water freezes as decomposing leaf matter can release toxic gases with fatal results.



Insect hibernation is known as diapause. **Butterflies, ladybirds and bumble bees** are among the species that hibernate.

However, the honey bee takes a slightly different approach. They huddle together around the Queen, taking it in turns to be on the colder outside edges.

Take a walk through Westonbirt in wintertime and try to imagine hibernating in its landscape!



FAMILY FUN!

Nature's kaleidoscope of colours



In winter time, the cold winds, ice and snow can damage trees. If the ground freezes, tree roots can't take up water from the soil! Deciduous trees drop their leaves to help them survive the winter.

Hannah Griffiths, Learning Officer, Forestry England

What is chlorophyll?

Leaves contain a green pigment called chlorophyll that helps them to absorb energy from the sun to grow. In autumn, the trees slow down their production of chlorophyll, allowing other colours to be seen. The leaves often change colour slowly, revealing the different pigments in changing patterns.

Trees drop their leaves at the right time so they can enjoy the best of the sunlight but avoid winter damage. Trees shed their leaves when daylight becomes shorter in the autumn.

Leaf chromatography

Chromatography is a way of separating the parts of a liquid. By dipping filter paper into a liquid, it will slowly absorb it and show each colour as a separate band on the paper.

With leaf chromatography you can separate the different pigments found in a leaf and see their hidden colours. If you do this when the leaves are still green, you can tell what colour they will turn in autumn!

What to do

- 1 Choose a coloured leaf of your choice.
- 2 Cut the leaf using scissors into little pieces.
- 3 Place the leaf pieces into a jar and add a little water.
- 4 Mash up the leaf in the water. The leaf pigments will change the colour of the water.
- 5 Cut a coffee filter paper, paper towel or kitchen paper into strips.
- 6 Place the filter paper strip into the jar.
- 7 Leave for a few hours or overnight. You may see bands of green chlorophyll, red anthocyanins, brown tannins, yellow and orange carotenes.




Colour spotter

How many of these colours can you spot in the arboretum this autumn? Can you come up with some interesting names for the colours you see?




news



Soaring high above Westonbirt

Welcome Volunteer Ken Lewis recently took to the skies with fellow member and neighbour, Dave Fry, in Dave's Chipmunk aircraft. They have shared these magnificent photos from the sky above Westonbirt.

The conditions were perfect for the 25 minute flight, getting up to a flight speed of 100 mph and climbing up to 2,000 feet to clear Highgrove's airspace!



Privacy Policy

We've recently made changes to our privacy policy regarding membership card scanning at the Welcome Building.

Full information can be found at fowa.org.uk/privacy

News on the blog

Find out all the latest behind the scenes news about how your support is helping to protect trees and enrich lives at Westonbirt Arboretum at fowa.org.uk/blog

Give a little more...?



As a member, when you visit Westonbirt you can enjoy free activities and services such as hiring a mobility scooter, taking a guided walk or enjoying a learning activity. We have now provided a convenient way for you to show your support. Our new hybrid donation boxes enable you to donate by cash or card at the Welcome Building and the Great Oak Hall. Your donations are protecting trees and enriching lives.

Alternatively you can make a donation online at fowa.org.uk/donate

A royal day out: The King's Coronation

There was great excitement in the office of the Great Oak Hall when Emma, our CEO, gasped with delight after receiving an email from Clarence House stating that Her Majesty The Queen had allocated five grandstand seats on the day of The Coronation for representatives from our charity.

Helen Turner, Finance Director, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

The email was quite explicit that the invitation was to be extended to the whole charity, so we decided the best way to allocate the tickets was names in a hat. As a result, three of our Trustees – Martyn Smith, Sian Troupe and Rachel Walker – as well as Jill Francis, who works in the Westonbirt Shop, and I were selected.

We had to take up our positions in the grandstand between 6:30 and 8:30am, which turned out to be a close shave for two of our group relying on an early morning train from Chippenham. Many of the streets of London were closed for the occasion and it was surreal to walk out of Pimlico Underground, following Stephen Fry in full morning suit, onto deserted roads. There was a lively, carnival atmosphere as we approached Buckingham Palace which, again, was strangely deserted except for those of us in the grandstand seating, security and the press.

We settled into our seats and just after 9am it started to rain. Despite Clare Balding's positive assurances that the rain was just a light drizzle which looked as if it was drying up, it rained persistently all day...thankfully Buckingham Palace kindly issued us with plastic ponchos which provided some protection against the elements! Despite the typically British rain, it was an amazing day and we all felt very honoured to have witnessed the event from such a privileged position and to now be able to say, 'Yes, I was there'. Not only there, but close enough to see the Buckingham Palace staff vacuuming the balcony beforehand and watch all the comings and goings and waving of Royal hands afterwards.

Thank you Her Majesty The Queen!



We were warned that the grandstand seating would be outside with no cover and when the possibility of rain was mentioned one Trustee very confidently said, "It won't rain, it's the King's Coronation!"



Staff in the spotlight

Protecting a rich and diverse habitat



I'm Ross Martin and have recently joined Westonbirt as the new Wildlife and Conservation Ranger. My focus is to protect our valuable specimen tree collection as well as the research plots, coppice coups and ancient woodland, whilst conserving the existing flora and fauna within the arboretum.

With special international protection, the habitats within the tree collection alongside the green areas of meadow and downs support a large and diverse number of flora and fauna. We have over 1,400 species of fungi independently recorded on-site. The arboretum is a wonderful habitat for birds, such as the hawfinch, crossbill and red kite, as well as being home to a wide variety of insects, spiders, and beautiful butterflies. Across the whole site, there are also roe and muntjac deer, foxes, rabbits, stoats, badgers, weasels, shrews, bats and, of course, the cattle that come to graze.

I am looking forward to meeting members and visitors, volunteers and our neighbours to communicate what we do and why. We are keen to further our story telling and have a crucial role to play in protecting our trees and habitats, so future generations can continue to enjoy Westonbirt.

Ross Martin, Wildlife and Conservation Ranger, Forestry England

Subscribe to The Friends eNews to learn more about Westonbirt's conservation work by emailing membership@fowa.org.uk

Never a dull day

I have been working for The Friends for 17 years, and there really is never a dull day! When I started back in 2006 there were just four of us situated in the offices upstairs in the Great Oak Hall working alongside the wonderful team of volunteers who were based downstairs in the foyer.



I literally was the membership team, alone! Now, there are four of us processing memberships and dealing with all related aspects.

I have so many fond memories of my time with The Friends – too many to just pick one, but more recently, I have been part of the project team which created the Great Oak Hall permanent exhibition (read more on pages 8&9). It was a long process gathering all the information but a great experience to go through the archives of the charity's 37 years of history. A fun fact: we have a copy of every Westonbirt Magazine we have ever produced – 122 editions in total!

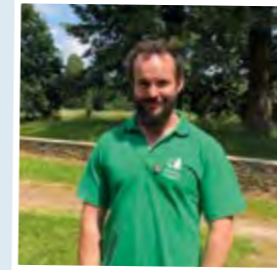
If I had to pick a favourite season, it would be spring. The old arboretum is truly spectacular with the pinks and purples of the rhododendrons and the camellias, and this year in particular the bluebells have been stunning!

I am extremely proud to have been a big part of history of The Friends, having worked with some wonderful colleagues over the years.

Kelly Hough, Supporter Services Co-ordinator, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

Find out more about The Friends Team at fowa.org.uk

Creating a community woodland



I'm Oscar and I am the Project Manager for the Silk Wood Community Planting Project. I've worked among trees in Devon, Cumbria, and the West Midlands, and

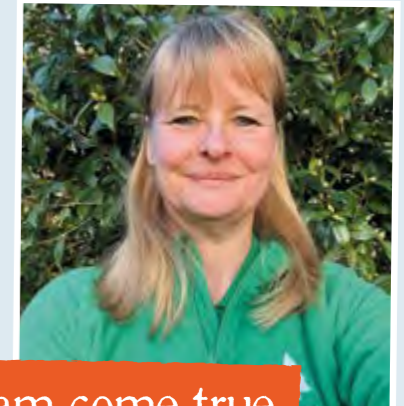
as of January 2023 I have been very lucky to start working among the lovely trees here at Westonbirt Arboretum.

My role is funded by The Friends, thanks to your generous donations, and will kick start the creation of Westonbirt's very first Community Woodland! In the areas where we have cleared ash trees due to Chalara ash dieback, we are hoping to engage schools, community groups and volunteers, not just to plant trees but with the aftercare, monitoring and management of the regenerated woodland. The team and I have been busy submitting funding applications this year to various charities and organisations, including The Friends. We look forward to keeping you updated in future magazine editions as the project progresses over the next 3 years.

The project has gained a lot of interest from the community, with schools and community groups from Bristol, Gloucester, Cheltenham and the local area keen to get on board. We hope to see the first trees planted this winter.

Oscar Adams, Project Manager, Silk Wood Community Planting Project, Forestry England

Keep up to date about the developments of this project at fowa.org.uk/blog



A dream come true

My name is Mandy Leivers. In January 2023 I took up the role of Community Co-ordinator. Having grown up locally and visited Westonbirt Arboretum regularly throughout my life, it's a dream come true to be working here!

Working with our fantastic team of talented and extremely knowledgeable volunteers, my job is to deliver a diverse programme of on-site and outreach activities designed to support positive mental health and wellbeing. We work with a wide range of under-represented and often overlooked audiences who may traditionally face barriers to visiting the arboretum. The Community Programme aims to support people to live a better quality of life through the therapeutic benefits of Westonbirt Arboretum.

I've only been at Westonbirt for a short while but it's been brilliant so far! My role is funded by The Friends, through your membership and donations, so a huge thank you to all of you for supporting The Community Programme.

Mandy Leivers, Community Co-ordinator Forestry England

Find out more at: forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/community-programmes

The Friends' Quiz

Well done everyone who had a go at last month's quiz. We've been compiling another quiz (over cake!). We want to share our enthusiasm for Westonbirt by encouraging you to look for some of the answers in the arboretum itself.

By Malcolm Potter and fellow Westonbirt Volunteer Guides Alan, Helen, Liz and Sue.

BONUS: This month we are giving away a complimentary annual membership subscription to the first person who emails in correct answers to magazine@fowa.org.uk

We hope that you will have a go at all questions and see your name in print in the next edition. Why not team up with family and friends and make a game of it by looking for clues in your favourite part of the arboretum on your next visit.

So, to make this easier the questions are grouped, as before in three sections, but this time geographically:

1 The Old Arboretum

2 Silk Wood

3 The Downs and arboretum wide

For additional help, some of the questions include Arboretum Map grid references. You can find these on the Arboretum Explorer, essential in locating individual trees, plants and maybe other facts.



Simply scan this QR code to access the Arboretum Explorer or visit westonbirt.arboretumexplorer.org

HINT: Google will NOT provide many answers!

The Old Arboretum

1. How many *Rhododendron loderi* are planted at map reference F17?

Clue: Find out where F17 is located on the arboretum explorer or on the visitor map available at the Welcome Building

- a. One
- b. Seven
- c. Eight

2. What is the name of the space-related magnolia near the large, sculptural western red cedar on Main Drive between Pool Gate and Duke's Cut Gate?

- a. Sputnik
- b. Venus
- c. Star Wars

3. What does the sign say at the Westonbirt Troll Bridge? (Not the Treetop Walkway!)

- a. Shhdon't wake the Troll
- b. Quiet, Troll asleep
- c. Troll on holiday

4. The arboretum has 10 specimens of the Wollemi pine but only one of these was planted by David Noble; the person who first rediscovered it. Where is it located?

- a. Loop Walk/20/50 Glade
- b. Circular Drive
- c. Specimen Avenue

Silk Wood

5. A pair of slender trees form an elegant gateway to Sand Earth. What species are they?

- a. Corsican pine
- b. Norway spruce
- c. Scots pine

6. What is special about the Sargent's cherry on Broad Drive? (Map ref L12)

- a. It has blue blossom
- b. It is the only Sargent's cherry at Westonbirt
- c. It is held together with wire and rope

7. This cone dropped from a tree with deeply fissured bark found in Sand Earth where there is a distant view of the tower of Westonbirt House (now School) (map ref M21). What tree did it come from?

- a. Coastal redwood
- b. Monterey pine
- c. Douglas fir

8. In 2021 the Tree Team implemented a major felling programme due to Chalara ash dieback. Roughly how many ash trees were removed from Silk Wood?

- a. 1,000
- b. 3,000
- c. 5,000



The Downs and arboretum wide

9. There are nine species of wild orchid at Westonbirt. One is the rare bird's-nest orchid. Why is it so called?

- a. Birds use its leaves to line their nests
- b. It is used in China as an ingredient for bird's-nest soup
- c. It's roots resemble a bird's-nest

10. Why is yellow rattle a valuable plant on The Downs at Westonbirt?

- a. The seeds are a nutritious food for birds
- b. It is parasitic on the roots of grass
- c. It is a rich source of nectar for bees

11. These are all found at Westonbirt: Which is the odd one out?

- a. Snake's-head fritillary
- b. Marbled white
- c. Silver washed fritillary

12. The arboretum is home to a number of national collections. Which of these species are included?

- a. Oak
- b. Spruce
- c. Bladdernut



The answers will be published in The Friends' November eNews and will include some associated and interesting facts, some of which may surprise!

Don't forget to email your answers to magazine@fowa.org.uk to be in with the chance of winning your next membership subscription for free!



A legacy for the future of Westonbirt

A lasting legacy to the woodland and wildlife you love

Have you ever wondered how you can make a positive difference for generations to come? A legacy with The Friends will protect nature, inspire minds, and create a greener future at Westonbirt Arboretum.

To learn more about leaving a legacy gift, please contact our Legacy Team today, we'd love to arrange a call with you. Alternatively, why not visit our website to request your free guide to gifts in wills.

Already written your will? It is easy to make an amendment by speaking to your solicitor, who will make the change by using what's known as a codicil.

Email: Legacy@fowa.org.uk

Visit: fowa.org.uk/gifts-in-wills

*The information provided is for general guidance only.
We recommend consulting with legal and financial professionals
to ensure your will accurately reflects your wishes.*



▲ Credit: Paul Groom

The power of monthly donations for a sustainable Westonbirt

We are pleased to introduce a new way to support our vital work at the arboretum. You can become a champion for nature by making a regular monthly donation by Direct Debit. Please help us to nurture, protect, and enhance the UK's National Arboretum.

How monthly donations make a difference

Sustain Nature's Beauty: Westonbirt Arboretum is a living tapestry of extraordinary trees and flora. By providing a consistent monthly contribution, you directly support the ongoing care and conservation of this breath-taking landscape.

Empower Environmental Education: Learning lies at the heart of our mission. Your monthly gift will enable us to expand Westonbirt's educational programmes, host captivating events, and inspire young minds to become stewards of the environment.

Enhance Visitor Experiences: With your support, we can continually enhance the arboretum's facilities, improve accessibility, and develop engaging exhibits. Together, we will create an unforgettable experience for every visitor.

Making monthly donations by Direct Debit are simple to set up and make a very positive contribution. Even £5 a month can make a world of difference. By committing a regular monthly gift, you become an integral part of our conservation efforts, ensuring the arboretum thrives now and in the future. We'll send you annual updates about the impact your gifts have at Westonbirt Arboretum, so you know exactly how you are helping to protect trees and enrich lives.

Take the first step in cultivating a greener future today. Visit our website to set up your monthly gift. Visit: fowa.org.uk/donate Email: donations@fowa.org.uk

Monthly giving is subject to your personal financial circumstances. We recommend reviewing your budget and consulting with financial professionals as needed. If you are aged under 18 and wish to set up a Direct Debit, please seek parental guidance first.

Westonbirt Guided Walks

Enjoy guided walks through the seasons



As a visitor for many years before I worked here, the arboretum was always a lovely way to spend a few hours appreciating the outdoors and looking at beautiful trees. But that was where my understanding of the arboretum stopped. If you've had a similar experience of being a regular visitor for many years but feel you could learn more, I think you will find our guided walks enjoyable and fascinating.

By Claire Bradley, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Forestry England

Before I persuaded the person who is now my manager, to employ me, I was a volunteer. I went through the Volunteer Guide Training Programme. I think it's fair to say that our guide-trained volunteers are some of the most informed people on-site at Westonbirt, with the exception of a few long-serving staff colleagues.

The Volunteer Guide Training consists of five days of learning that includes lots of practical sessions. Trainees then go through a period of 'on the job' mentoring, culminating in an assessment. Having started the guiding journey most of us find it hard not to become completely obsessed with all things Westonbirt. You will find that most guides have huge tree-book libraries!

So, if you join a guided walk at Westonbirt you can be assured that you are in safe and knowledgeable hands. The walks are not scripted and every guide has their own style and passion, but you can be sure to learn about the Holford family history and how Forestry England manages and cares for this world-renowned tree collection with the help of The Friends.

Guided walks are free to join after entry and run all year with more during peak seasons. The walks naturally change with the seasons and even in the depths of winter there are plenty of things to see and learn about. Autumn is without doubt spectacular with the trees in all their wonderful autumn colours. However, spring is also incredibly colourful and many guides might well say, even better than autumn!

Find out more about the Old Arboretum walk, Discovery and other themed walks, Sensing Nature and Wildflower walks at forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/events

Why not get under the skin of Westonbirt Arboretum and join one of our walks. Our Volunteer Guides will be delighted to welcome you!

When you next visit, ask at the Welcome Building for details about guided walks.



If you enjoy one of the free guided walks, please consider making a donation to help support the arboretum.

A poem by Mark Corcoran

If peace is every step
and every breath
is a new chance, listen

so you might attune
to the blended birdsong
and the heart's promptings.

Sight needs no champion,
so let us awaken the subtler senses
by a mindful opening of our windows.

Feel your connection to the earth,
let it gather you back into its rhythms.
It is ego that seeks separation and hierarchy.

Let us realise that we have
the conditions we need
to be happy here,
rooted in Westonbirt.

Inspired after participating in a Sensing Nature guided walk at the arboretum



Throughout the seasons our guides will show you trees you are not so familiar with and tell you fascinating facts about different species and specimens and very probably some great folklore tales like this one...



"A long time ago there was a large fire in the forests of the American Northwest. Tiny mice, not fast enough to outrun the fire, were trying to find shelter in the trees. The mice approached many trees asking for their help but were denied. They approached the mighty Douglas fir and asked if they could take shelter amongst its branches. The Douglas fir agreed and allowed the mice to hide in its cones. The mice survived the fire, and to this day, if you examine a Douglas fir cone you can see the tails of the mice sticking out of the scales of a cone."

Enjoy learning new skills

The Westonbirt Woodworks



Looking down from The Tree Top Walkway you will notice a yard of open workshops, hear the clicking of pole lathes at work and smell the smoke rising from the stove. This is Westonbirt Woodworks, one of the arboretum's hidden treasures, where chairs are made and sold, courses are run, and apprentices are given the opportunity to become professional woodworkers.



Chairmaker, Paul Hayden, has been running courses for more than 20 years, teaching students, many of them beginners, how to make a 'Windsor' in six days. Paul likes to ensure the courses are enjoyable as well as informative.

"We are teaching people real skills but we also make sure the courses are always fun and inclusive," he explains.

About 2,500 participants have made chairs with Paul and his team of assistants. Students learn how to use a pole lathe, an adze and a shaving horse, as well as a travisher, spokeshave and kettle. By the end of the week every student takes home a chair, each one unique to the individual maker.

Nick Gibbs is the Editor of Quercus Magazine, a publication specialising in working with wood by hand. Nick decided to come along to the one of Paul's courses and loved the experience.

"Despite having done a lot of woodworking in my time," Nick says, "I learnt some really useful new techniques on the course. It was fun to meet 10 other chairmaking newbies, although one or two were on their second course, having enjoyed their previous one so much. I've always wanted to use a pole lathe, and I am pleased to say that I now can."

All of the timber for chairmaking and woodworking courses comes from the arboretum. You may have noticed the sawmill located below the Treetop Walkway. The Westonbirt Woodworks was restored a few years ago thanks to funding support from The Friends. The mill was also kindly funded by The Friends and provides milled timber for the courses.

Nick says

“

It was fantastic to be shaping wood from a tree that came from the arboretum. I now have a chair made from such beautiful timber that I have decided to return in the autumn and make a second one. I am looking forward to returning to enjoy the fun and satisfaction of chairmaking all over again!

”

Westonbirt Woodworks also trains apprentices, who learn techniques and skills that will one day qualify them to run their own courses. Paul's passion for woodwork is passed on to young people, helping to ensure skills and techniques are kept alive for generations to come. A few years ago one of Paul's former assistants, Pete Murray, was chosen as the Young Craftsman of the Year.

Courses are run twice a month during the summer, for up to 12 enthusiasts each week. During the winter, the workshop is used to teach apprentices chairmaking skills.

Paul is widely recognised for his excellence. Later in 2023 he makes an appearance on the TV programme *Salvage Hunters: The Restorers* replacing a missing top from an antique chair. Also, in collaboration with the famous European Design House, Paul was commissioned to create chairs for the salon at the Milan Design Expo which were sold off on the first day!

Visit westonbirtwoodworks.co.uk for more details about upcoming courses. Follow on Instagram @[@WestonbirtWoodworks](https://www.instagram.com/WestonbirtWoodworks)



Paul introduces students to the pole lathe



The pole lathes in use



Paul explains how to shape a chair seat

Supporter Stories

Send us your stories!

We love hearing your stories about visiting Westonbirt. Please share with us at magazine@fowa.org.uk

You can also share your four-legged friend pictures with us on Instagram @FriendsOfWestonbirt using #WestonbirtWalkies



Credit: Ron Cousins

Buster and Riley's daily visits

Buster the border collie is well known at Westonbirt but he now has a new doggy companion, Riley, who joined us in August last year. Riley was a rescue dog. Sadly, his previous two owners didn't want him. When I collected him he was really underweight and very nervous of people and other dogs. However, thanks mainly to Buster, who accepted him, he has settled in well.

We visit Westonbirt every day. It's Buster and Riley's favourite place and we have made lots of two-legged and four legged-friends. We stop between walks for breakfast at the Westonbirt Restaurant, where Buster and Riley share a sausage. One of the highlights each day is our daily visit to the Westonbirt Shop to say hello to the friendly team. Buster and Riley always receive a great welcome along with a doggy treat.

Buster has also proved himself as a bit of a star dog at Westonbirt – he has found two sets of car keys and was rewarded by one of the owners with a sausage!

On behalf of Buster and Riley I'd like to thank all the Westonbirt staff and volunteers as they make all of our visits so special.

Greg Townsend, Member of The Friends

Follow Buster and Riley's adventures at Westonbirt on Instagram at @GregTownsend75



Buster

Riley



The Westonbirt Shop Team with Buster & Riley

We love reading your comment cards...

When visitors leave comment cards behind, we do read them. Here are just a few lovely examples.

Our first visit

What an incredible place! Coming from London it's a welcome treat. We heard about Westonbirt only a week ago and it lives up to expectations. Thank you for being dog friendly.

A happy place

We think this is the most beautiful and happiest place in the whole world! Everyone from the very young to the very old are always smiling.

Keep Westonbirt's wildlife thriving

Deer, ground nesting birds, butterflies, and lambs in surrounding fields are just some of the species that make Westonbirt a wildlife haven.

Please help to keep Westonbirt's wildlife thriving and your dog safe when visiting:

- 1 Please keep your dog on a lead in The Downs, The Shop, The Treetop Walkway, The Great Oak Hall on open days and in the car park.
- 2 Dogs are permitted off lead in Silk Wood, except play areas, if kept in sight and come when called.
- 3 Only guide dogs are permitted in The Old Arboretum, Welcome Building, Restaurant and Exploratree Play Area.
- 4 Please pick up, bag and bin your four-legged friend's poop.

A poem by Pat Collins



Ode to a new beginning

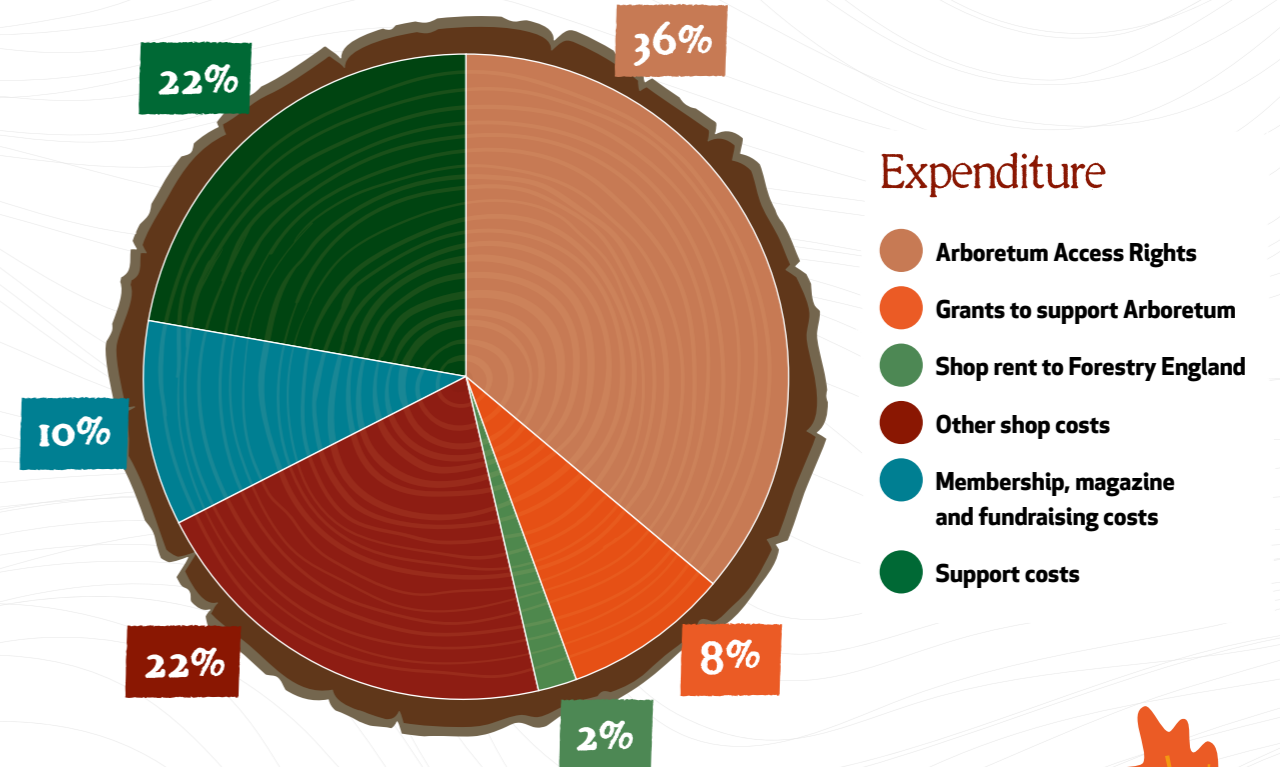
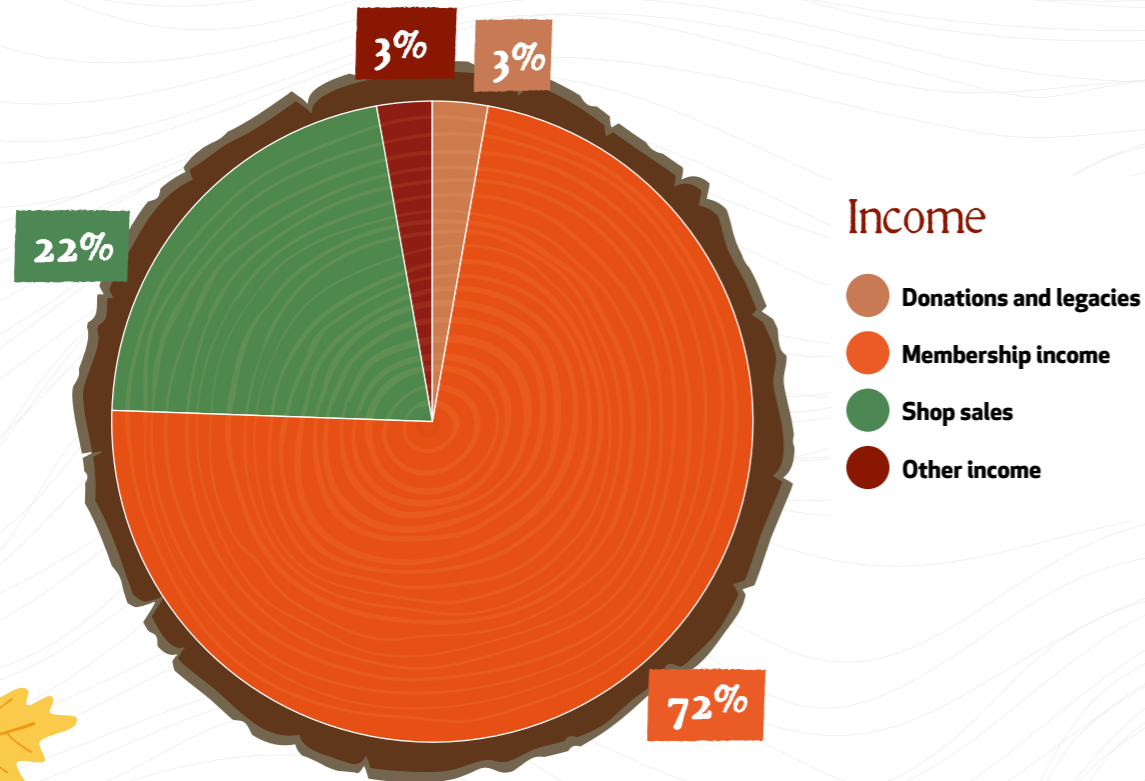
Thing of beauty, thing of strength thou art.
You stretch and reach and pull the sky to you.
The ground grows up and twines around your heart.
The sky, the earth, it's you who link the two.
Send me your strength, possess me with your power.

Let it infuse my body with its love.
With you I lose my fear of what's to come.
The viral strands of fear you help me move.
I pull them down with every passing hour
And build a place of joy, and love, a tower
Of all things safe and sure – I call it home.

Who has not seen you when, at summer's end
Your green leaves slowly turning into brown.
As if you know that just around the bend
Is autumn with its hazy golden crown.
Then winter, leaves all gone. A wondrous show.
Your trunk and branches reaching out to me,
To hold me and enfold me lest I stray.
But I will stay enfolded and yet free,
'Till winter's end and springtime breezes blow.
In every living thing warm blood will flow.
For summer has returned in all its glory,
To start again life's never ending story.

Financial Overview

Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum (2022)



Income:

Overall income for 2022: **£2m**

Membership income for 2022: £1.2m

Gift aid on membership in 2022: £246k

Overall membership income: £1.4m

Including gift aid, membership income accounted for **72%** of our total income in 2022.

Expenditure:

Overall expenditure for 2022: **£2m**

The biggest item of expenditure was the Arboretum Access Rights payment of **£728k**, accounting for **36%** of total expenditure.

Grants

The grant expenditure amounted to **£159k** in 2022 and is broken down as follows:

Car park project: £23k

Coppice Shelter: £22.6k

Community Shelter: £22.2k

Quarantine House: £23.9k

Student Arborist: £20.9k

Global Conservation Consortia: £17.5k

Discretionary small grants: £28.9k

Find out more at fowa.org.uk/agm

STIHL



**MSA 70
CHAINSAW.
CORDLESS POWER.
BY STIHL.**

ONE BATTERY. MANY TOOLS.



Long working times, plenty of power and easy to use. Whether it's mowing, sawing, trimming or clearing, the STIHL AK System has the flexibility to take on any challenge - all thanks to an interchangeable battery that can be used with any tool in the range.

Find out more at shop.stihl.co.uk or your local STIHL Approved Dealer.



CORDLESS POWER. BY STIHL.

Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum Team

Chief Executive Officer
Emma Griffiths

Head of Supporter Journey
Jane Shute

Finance Director
Helen Turner

Finance Officer
Maureen Nisbet

Finance Officer
Natascha Castell

Retail & Buying Manager
Tracey Burgoyne

HR & Office Manager
Debbie Dawkins

Royal Patron
The former Duchess of Cornwall

Ambassador
Hon Beth Rothschild

Trustees
Neil Sachdev (Chair)

Martin Green

Martyn Smith

Rachel Walker

Sian Troupe

Owen Forster

Alaana Woods

Paul Isherwood

Christian Walker

Nigel Frost

Board Secretary
Jo Cummings

Supporter Services Manager
Julia Bartlett

Brand & Content Manager
Jo Murray

Individual Giving Manager
Ellie Davis

**Supporter Services
Coordinator**
Kelly Hough

**Supporter Services
Coordinator**
Rachel Raggatt

**Supporter Services
Administrator**
Anne-Marie Tennison

Keep in touch

Website:
fowa.org.uk

Email:
membership@fowa.org.uk

Facebook:
[@FriendsOfWestonbirt](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfWestonbirt)

Instagram:
[@FriendsOfWestonbirt](https://www.instagram.com/FriendsOfWestonbirt)

Twitter:
[@WestonbirtFOWA](https://twitter.com/WestonbirtFOWA)

LinkedIn:
[@friends-of-westonbirt-arboretum](https://www.linkedin.com/company/friends-of-westonbirt-arboretum)

Arboretum opening times

9am-5pm (last paid entry March - Nov 4.30pm)
(Dec - Feb 4pm) closed Christmas Day

Please pre-book your visit for key dates at
fowa.org.uk/pre-book

General Enquiries Monday-Friday

Tel: 0300 067 4890
westonbirt@forestryengland.uk

Learning Centre

The Learning and Participation Team offers a wide range of fun, hands-on programmes
Tel: 0300 067 4856

Mobility Scooter Reservations

Book in advance, collect from Welcome Building
forestryengland.uk/westonbirt

Volunteering

Tel: 0300 067 4853
volunteer.westonbirt@forestryengland.uk

Westonbirt Shop

Open every day, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day
Tel: 01666 880 787
retail@fowa.org.uk

Restaurant & Pantry

Open 9.30am - 4pm

Smokehouse

Open 12pm - 3pm during weekends, bank holidays and at varying times in school holidays
Closed Christmas and New Year's Day
Tel: 01666 880 787

**Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, Tetbury,
Gloucestershire GL8 8QS**

Gift the Arboretum this Christmas



Give your friends or family membership for Christmas!

Enjoy visits all year round with up to four of your own children or grandchildren. Enjoyment all year around with plenty of other membership benefits on-site.

Single annual membership **£42**

Joint annual membership **£82**

Order before 13 December for Christmas
delivery at fowa.org.uk/membership

Support a square

Dedicate a virtual square of Westonbirt to a loved one this Christmas with a personal message. It's a lovely gift that supports conservation and shows how much you care.

£25 per year

Fowa.org.uk/support-a-square