

Woodland *focus*

KTAT FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

First Newsletter!

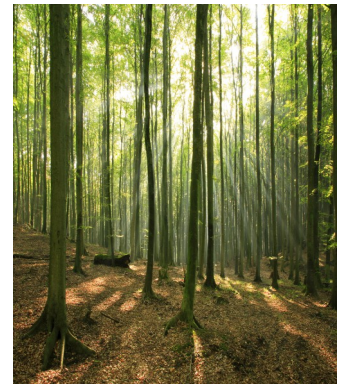
Welcome to our first *Friends* Newsletter! The Trust now has 15 friends and we are very grateful for the support they have shown us in this challenging first year. KTAT was registered as a company in October 2010. Since then we have been very busy. The 6 subscribers to the Memorandum and Articles of Association have formed the current Board and are acting as Trustees until our first AGM.

These have been joined by 2 more members of

the Trust. It is the members who are allowed to vote at the AGM and who will elect the Trustees for the following year. We will be encouraging more people to take on this necessary democratic role.

Our 8 acting Trustees have put in over 400 hours of voluntary work to set up and register the company and the bank account and start the process of finding woodlands to buy, manage or lease. We have been to look at quite a few woodlands for sale

and been to several auctions but the prices have been too high or the land unsuitable. We then turned our sights towards managing a woodland ... p2.



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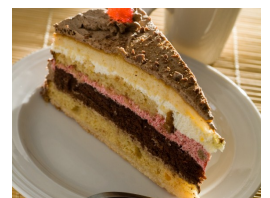
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First Annual General Meeting!

The AGM of KTAT will be held on Tuesday 27th March 2012 at the Offa's Dyke Centre, Knighton, Powys at 7p.m. After the business meeting there will be an opportunity to meet with one another

over refreshments. A film 'The Man who Planted Trees' will be shown. Do come along so that we can thank you personally for your support — and please bring anyone with you who may be interest-

ed or keen to be involved in the KTAT project.





"The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The next best time is now!"



Manage rather than buy?

We are putting a great deal of work into visits and negotiations to manage woodlands. This also includes drawing up a 10 year management agreement which we need in order to access grants to enable us to hire a woodland manager and start training volunteers.

In the meantime, we have been offered 3 small patches of wood-

land to manage - 2 on the English and 1 on the Welsh side of Knighton. They are each only an acre or less and one is not suitable for us yet but they are allowing us to start some practical work.

We held our first work session at the **Mill Race Woodland** on Friday December 9th and started clearing undergrowth and dead wood along a

disused mill race. We hope to clear the rubbish that has been accumulated, open the old race for a footpath and improve the woodland patch with some judicious thinning and re-planting. More on managing a woodland p3.

A popular woodland ditty

Logs to burn,
Logs to burn,
Logs to burn,
Logs to save the coal a turn,
Here's a word to make you wise,
When you hear the woodman's cries.
Never heed his usual tale,
That he has good logs for sale,
But read these lines and really learn,
The proper kind of logs to burn.
Oak logs will warm you well,
If they're old and dry.
Larch logs of pine will smell,
But the sparks will fly.
Beech logs for Christmas time,

Yew logs heat well.
"Scotch" logs it is a crime,
For anyone to sell.
Birch logs will burn too fast,
Chestnut scarce at all.
Hawthorn logs are good to last,
If you cut them in the fall.
Holly logs will burn like wax,
You should burn them green,
Elm logs like smouldering flax,
No flame to be seen.
Pear logs and apple logs,
They will scent your room,
Cherry logs across the dogs,

Smell like flowers in bloom.
But ash logs, all smooth and grey,
Burn them green or old;
Buy up all that come your way,
They're worth their weight in gold.

Anon

Weir Cottage woodland

Following advertising KTAT in the local press and asking if anyone wanted their woodland managed, we had 2 responses. They were both from the English side of the border. **Weir Cottage wood** is about 1 mile from the town on the Llanfair Waterdine Road and is about 1 ½ acres in size. It is a mixed woodland of mostly ash interspersed with sycamore, elm, hazel and thorn and has not been

managed for a number of years. It is on a south facing slope about 100 yards above the River Teme. Brian Barker from Shropshire AONB, has done a brief management plan for us. The owners have agreed to sign a 10 year agreement with us and once this is done we hope to roll up our sleeves and get in there! We will clear some undergrowth and put in a path to ease access and

then hopefully start taking wood out next winter by thinning and allowing light through to existing saplings. The other Shropshire site is on the lower bank of the Clun Road just outside Knighton. It is very steep and there are a lot of service wires passing through so we feel we cannot manage this until the Trust has grown and developed and employs its own forester.

KTAT is still actively seeking to buy woodland! If you or anyone you know can assist us in this then please do contact us!

Samatha Trust woodland

On 9 December 2011 some of the Trustees walked around an 88 acre woodland owned by the Samatha Trust at Greenstreete in Llangunllo.

Chris Westrup, the Reeve, showed us the excellent work they have done there and discussed the possibility of us helping to manage the woodland and setting up a management plan to enable the Trust to supply firewood on a sustainable

basis. We organised a survey by Kath McNulty (a forester from Bangor) accompanied by several of the Trustees on 19th January 2012. The larch plantation that Chris seemed to think the Samatha Trust would be interested in us managing is of poor quality timber but would be useful for on-site building materials and for firewood. There is plenty of ash coppice underneath that could replace the larch

taken out. We will soon be putting in a formal proposal for their Trustees to consider. If we can get a 10 year lease from them we can start the process of registration with Environment Wales, the preparation of a full management plan and maybe even start work next winter.

Kindling

Sweet Chestnut and Scots Pine, despite spitting and pine sooting the chimney, make the best kindling. Both dry out quickly and split well as does Birch, which will kindle well even when green. A good log delivery should always contain a percentage of these woods for this purpose. Poplar is never a decent firewood. It burns

slowly to produce a black choking smoke even when seasoned and requires skill to use and assess, requiring a lot of heat to burn. For more tips see poem on p2.



Knighton Tree Allotment Trust (KTAT)

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The primary objective of KTAT is to create woodland allotments for local people living in and around Knighton to provide for their present day needs of fuel, fruit, nuts and timber, as well as maintaining a sustainable and healthy ecosystem that will ensure a viable forest for future generations to enjoy.

Why wood?

Part of KTAT's constitution refers to growing wood for fuel. But what are the benefits and drawbacks of growing wood for fuel? Does it help to reduce carbon emissions - or does it in fact cause increased emissions? Very briefly, here are a few answers:

Burning wood is not carbon-neutral. Woodsmoke contains carbon and methane, a more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon. Unless the wood burnt has been grown from seed, there is not a direct equivalence between carbon captured from the atmosphere by growing trees, and carbon emitted by burning them. Even fast growing trees take time to grow, and an old tree will over its lifetime have sequestered a large quantity of carbon, which if it is burnt, will immediately be released into the atmosphere. That will not be recaptured by planting a new tree until it has grown to the same size as the old one. So if some of the wood can be used e.g. for making furniture, or put into buildings that will last many years, rather than being burnt, that will directly save carbon.

Gas is often quoted as being a clean source of energy, since it gives off about half the emissions produced by burning coal or oil. But gas often travels long distances, and pipelines frequently cross over zones of conflict. Moreover the refining of gas for domestic use produces a cocktail of toxic and climate-warming gases, as anybody who has been in Milford Haven or Grangemouth knows.

So how can the growing of wood for fuel fit into a sustainable low carbon economy? Firstly and obviously we are growing and distributing our wood fuel locally, so we are not causing extra emissions and pollution by transporting it for long distance. We are not interested in producing biomass for distant places, or planting fast-growing trees that will be clear-felled and sold for profit outside our local area. The need for good insulation and energy efficiency is just as important whether we are burning wood or gas. We shouldn't just burn wood because it is there. The slower we can extract the wood the better. So our management plan for taking out timber slowly and selectively is right. We can sequester carbon by using some of the wood for building or other woodland products, rather than just burning it all. Of course, the more time we spend outside working (and playing) in our sustainably managed woodland, enjoying the creatures and plants it supports, the less time we need to spend burning wood to keep ourselves warm indoors!

For a more in depth discussion of these ideas, please refer to the Land magazine, issue 11, Winter 2011-2012, The Future of our Forests, www.thelandmagazine.org.uk

