

SKELSMERGH WOODLAND MANAGEMENT NEWS

A woodland plantation will always be in need of management in some form or other and our Skelsmergh Parish Woodland is no exception. Ash die-back more or less forced on us a regime of felling over recent years in which we were greatly helped by the expert chainsawing of Scott Elbourne, who paid us annual visits funded from firewood and sundry sales so that no cost was borne from the parish precept.

Advice from Cumbria Woodlands in October 2023 recommended that further thinning should be undertaken over the next few years to give the best maturing trees a chance to grow and extend their canopies. In order to do this a Forestry Commission Felling licence has recently been obtained and we have granted a Licence to Scott to deliver chain-saw certificate courses in the woodland. His students will fell the trees at no cost to the parish and the timber will be offered for sale as firewood in 4'x4' stacks (1 cubic metre, approximately) at £60 a load, buyer to collect, thus producing a modest income.

At the same time, small interventions in the form of coppicing and creation of habitat piles will still be possible for volunteer parties in the usual way, both forms of activity complimenting one another with the ultimate aim of creating a feature, to be enjoyed by the community as a whole for its appearance in the landscape, for its trees flowers and wildlife .

To that end I am inviting volunteers for a work-party on **Sunday 17th November, 10.00-12.30** to tackle a range of tasks, including: clipping brushings for habitat/windrow piles, stacking felled timber ready for sale/collection, painting the gate and shed with preservative, cleaning bird-boxes and sundry other small tasks. Tea, coffee, soft drinks and flapjack will be provided as always and if the weather is kind a good time can be guaranteed. Parking is available at the layby on the A6 between Strawberry Bank and Joiner's Lane above Garth Row. Please make sure you are dressed for any weather, bring your own work gloves and secateurs, pruning shears and hand saws, if you have them.

If you would like to join in it would be helpful if you would let me know so we can cater for the numbers.

John Chapman, Skelsmergh Tree Warden

01539731863 or Mob. 07881402753