

Editorial

What is it about the British and woodland and trees? From conker championships to coppicing and conifers, from canopy dwellers on road protest to aristocratic park planters, our countryside is thankfully well barked and branched. The landscape in many places is 'made' by the variety and volume of our trees, including the largest number of old and ancient trees in Europe. Recognising the detail and the input we can have to looking after and raising awareness of trees, can teach us a lot.

I can remember, umpteen years ago now in a hard winter, a park ranger felling a tree to reveal a cavity containing a small huddle of wrens, frozen to death before their hideaway was disturbed. A sad tale perhaps but the wrens had turned to the tree for survival and I'm sure other trees enabled wildlife to survive that tough winter. The event for me highlighted how the lives of trees, people and wildlife can never be separated.

This issue of Ranger has a strong trees and woodland theme. Read on for examples of national, regional and local projects capitalising on the links between trees, people and wildlife. The Small Woods Association's 'Woodland Initiatives' have focussed on people who are normally seen as 'hard to reach'. Schemes have targeted older people; young people; people with mental health issues and mothers with young children. National Bean Pole Week encourages buying local and using what grows in the local wood. Find out how Epping Forest District Council has encouraged residents to celebrate our veteran tree heritage. Knowing the history and cultural significance of woodland and trees helps us manage them successfully. In this issue Sheffield Hallam University shows how a valuable resource has been developed to help woodland research.

These are exciting times for CMA with a new structure in the offing. CMA is planning to register itself under the UK Companies Act. By doing this, it will protect the assets of the existing CMA and will also minimize the personal liabilities of its members. The move recognizes the fact that CMA needs to change the way it conducts its business as a modern, forward-looking organization. Once formed, the "new" CMA intends to seek full charity status. You now have your own training officer, Alexis Pym, so look within to find out how Alex can help you get the training you need. We have also found a 'letters Czar' in Jim Stevenson. Jim awaits your correspondence and promises to put a bit of passion into letters and replies. Don't let him down, let's network! The appeal in Ranger 82 for roving reporters able to feed in the latest news has also paid dividends, with a key source ready to share its countryside management successes. How can you afford not to be with CMA at such a time?

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