

News

No. 8 Spring 2019



Welcome to the latest edition of News from Knighton Tree Allotments Trust (KTAT). In this annual newsletter you can find out about the Trust and what we have been doing over the last year.

First of all, we would like once again to say thank you to all our Volunteers, Trustees and Members for all their hard work, enthusiasm and company. KTAT is an entirely voluntary organisation so everything we achieve is due to good people giving up their time.

It has been another interesting year for KTAT. At the time of the publication of our last newsletter we were awaiting the outcome of a re-submitted funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The bid included having recognised experts train volunteers in biodiversity surveying and in making woodland products such as hurdles, charcoal, 3-legged stools and hazel baskets. Those trained would then be able to embed and practice the skills learnt through expanded volunteering opportunities with KTAT. We also planned to do a lot more outreach work with Knighton Primary School and Scout & Guide groups.

Unfortunately the re-submission was also unsuccessful, meaning that we are unable to offer the training or outreach. We were also unable to take on the management of additional woodlands at Knucklas Castle and the Samatha Centre, Llangunllo, as we had planned – which was disappointing for all involved.

KTAT is now taking the approach of raising funds to cover its running costs through more sales of goods and training. We have looked at how to add value to some of the woodland products we generate and how we might increase the range of goods to include traditional besom brooms and charcoal.

We are also offering more training courses following the success of our "Introduction to Woodland Management" course in January 2019. We will be repeating this course in November 2020 and offering other courses on hedge laying and possibly one on making a shave horse. If you are interested in attending any of these courses please keep an eye on our website (address overleaf) for further details.



KTAT Volunteers extracting wood at the Samatha Centre

Gary Cowell has continued to fulfil much of the Co-ordinator role, now in a voluntary capacity, and other volunteers have stepped in to maintain our weekly task day programme. This has allowed us to continue woodland management activities at Castle Ring and Weir Cottage woods as outlined in our last newsletter – mostly coppicing and thinning – but we have paused in our work at the Samatha Centre.

One great success this year has been the increase in volunteers who are First Aid trained and volunteers who are qualified to use a chainsaw. KTAT successfully applied for training subsidies from the EU / Welsh Government funded Forestry Focussed Future scheme but we would like to thank the trained volunteers for the donations they made to KTAT that allowed the training to take place. Nine volunteers attended various chainsaw courses and passed the assessments; twelve volunteers have achieved First Aid + Forestry qualifications. This will make our work safer and increase our work rate. It also means that task days are less dependent on certain qualified individuals attending in order to go ahead.

Despite the funding knock-back, KTAT is in a strong position with volunteer hours at an all-time high – 1,983 were contributed in 2018-2019, which is 568 hours higher than the last record set in 2017-2018. We look forward to reporting how we have continued to develop in our 2020 edition of KTAT News!

Woodland Conservation Volunteering

Knighton Tree Allotments Trust is a voluntary, not-for-profit group that manages woodlands. In coming together and sharing and learning woodland skills we aim to sustainably manage woodland for the benefit of wildlife and our members.

It is a common misconception that unmanaged woodland is always best for wildlife. In fact, by managing the woodland through traditional practices such as coppicing, we can increase the variety of habitats and the richness of wildlife. In ensuring that the trees that we fell for fuel or timber are replaced with new plants, we are creating a sustainable supply of woodland products.

In sustainably growing firewood and other woodland products we can meet some of our fuel and timber needs as well as reducing our carbon footprints. At the same time we are joining cooperatively with other local people to enjoy, conserve and enrich our local environment. There are four different ways in which you can support Knighton Tree Allotments Trust:



1. Volunteer. We are always looking for people who would like to learn about woodland management and ecology. Volunteering with those who are as passionate about a cause as you are is a great way to meet like-minded people. You can get plenty of fresh air and exercise and learn new skills. We need help with hands-on woodland management such as tree planting and firewood processing, regular flora and fauna surveys as well as administrative tasks such as writing this newsletter. If you are interested in also having access to woodland products from the Trust, such as logs and timber, then you could become a Member Volunteer (see below).

2. Become a Member. When you become a member you get a say in how the Trust is run; you can help decide policies that guide how we operate. You'll also become part of an active community of like-minded people who are working towards sustainable development. And that's not all. You can attend members' meetings, such as our AGM, where you can raise issues that are important to you and find out more about how the Trust is doing. Plus, you can vote for someone to represent your views as a Trustee. And if you fancy it, you can even stand for election yourself as a Trustee – it's a great chance to represent your fellow members. Membership costs just £10 a year.

3. Become a Member Volunteer. Why not combine volunteering with membership and become a Member Volunteer? It's a great way to actively support the Trust's woodland management activities whilst also having your say in how it is run. Member Volunteers of the Trust can also access the woodland products – such as firewood and timber - generated by our activities.

4. Become a Friend of Knighton Tree Allotments Trust. If you support our aims but are perhaps too busy or too far away to play an active role then you can become a Friend of the Trust. In return for your donation you will receive regular updates on the Trust's work and be invited to our Open Days and events. Donations to support our work are always welcome. If you wish to contribute please send a cheque made payable to "Knighton Tree Allotments Trust" to our registered address below. Thank you!

For more information about KTAT, or to enquire about becoming a volunteer or member, please contact woodland@tveg.org.uk or 01547 520374.

For our latest news and up-to-date information on our training courses and products please visit our website:

www.tveg.org.uk/wordpress/what-we-do/woodland-project

KTAT is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (Company no. 7416851) established for the benefit of wildlife and local people in and around Knighton and the upper Teme valley.
Registered Office:
The Toot, Garth Lane, Knighton, LD7 1HH