

## Farnham Humanists' Tree Walk August 2020



David Hepper led an intrepid band of six on a short walk round the town centre based on the leaflet by Peter Bridgeman, published by Farnham Town Council. We began in Gostrey Meadow. How often have we walked there, enjoying the trees yes, but totally unaware that it is a veritable arboretum?



The walk begins with a pair right alongside Union Road – a tall Lombardy Poplar, and a Ginkgo or Maidenhair Tree. Both are upright in habit, (blame the camera lens for the ginkgo leaning towards her tall companion) fastigate, hence suitable for roadside trees. Next was a Dawn Redwood, near the Wey footbridge. Then along the riverbank towards Longbridge in quick succession Weeping Willow, Alder, English Oak, (pendunculate because acorns hang on stalks, cf sessile where acorns are sitting on twigs), and Ash. David pointed

out signs of stress, as in oaks growing new shoots from the trunk/mature branches, and ash dying back.

We learned that David likes oaks, home to over 1000 invertebrate, but not sycamores.



Crossing Longbridge we met Horse Chestnut, and entered the barren landscape of The Maltings car park. David felt this a missed opportunity, noting that on the continent car parks are often shaded by trees. He gave some points to the Waitrose car park, though as we discovered at the end of the walk few trees are thriving, partly because the tarmac was laid far too close to the trunks.



And so to the churchyard for English and Irish Yews, the wood used for longbows, the machine gun of its day, and Hornbeam. On to West Street for Cedar of Lebanon (deceased) in the library gardens, and further along a Weeping Beech. Up Potters Gate, and round to the Hart car park. The school had planted a variety of trees, including a

Red Oak, to show pupils how they differ. En route to our termination we passed a Silver Birch and Persian Ironwood.

David's knowledge is extensive, and we could have spent twice the allotted 2 hours before running out of trees. You can do the walk yourself by checking out:

<https://www.farnham.gov.uk/things-to-do/getting-outside/walks-and-countryside/tree-trail-2>