



Wilder Wenhaston
Pathway to a Greener Future

Wenhaston Heritage Trees Project 2023



The oldest oak in Wenhaston at Oakhurst

Background

Wilder Wenhaston is a network of villagers who have joined forces to help local nature recovery and improve our neighbourhood environment for people and wildlife within the context of the wider climate emergency. It was established after several villagers identified a need for action. During the Covid pandemic several villagers carried out surveys with around 40 weekly records collated. As well as recording over 100 bird species (some were just one individual) the surveys also recorded a wide range of other wildlife seen within the parish boundary, however it did highlight how much was missing. No one recorded frog or toad spawn seen either in their gardens or the wider countryside and hedgehogs were confined to just a few locations.

It's widely reported how depleted our wildlife is, climate change, urbanisation, pollution, intensive agriculture has caused a 41% decline in all UK species since the 1970's with a real risk of some species becoming extinct in the very near future and we are one of the least wooded countries in Europe. Shifting baselines has become a familiar term meaning that each generation thinks that what it's experiencing is normal when in fact there has been tremendous change in our wildlife experience over the years. Despite stating they are committed to restoring nature our government is unlikely to implement changes anytime soon, conservation charities cannot make change on their own and so it's down to all of us to play our part reversing this catastrophic situation.

This is where Wilder Wenhaston wants to help everyone do their bit for the natural world locally. It's proven that a healthy countryside creates a healthy population reducing stress and mental illness so it's in everyone's interest to take part.

The first project instigated by the group is a 'Heritage Tree Project' looking to find and record the trees in the village that are significant, that's not necessarily an old or rare tree but one that is a feature in the landscape. It can be an old oak standing in the middle of an arable field a reminder of the once extensive network of hedgerows or just one that you see daily and regard it as a part of your surroundings. However as so often happens if these features are not recorded it's not until they are threatened or gone that their importance in all our lives is realised which is often too late. This project aims to locate and record all that are regarded as important.

What is a 'Heritage tree'

Across the UK there are many special trees. They may be outstanding because they are old, provide important habitat, are the biggest of their species, are linked with an important historic event or have some exceptional cultural significance. Often it is obvious why they are so special – their appearance is so out of the ordinary or their heritage value is so long established. However, there are circumstances when we want to make it absolutely clear that a tree has special interest so for our project, we have called them 'Heritage trees'.

Trees are officially aged as Ancient, Veteran, Heritage, Champion, Notable, Mature, or young. The project looked to find as many examples of the first five categories but also record some rarer trees that have been planted in the past fifty years such as black poplars.



Measuring the veteran ash at Hall Farm

The Project

On the 4th December 2022 a group of 12 volunteers gathered at Hall Farm courtesy of Bob and Annie Jellicoe to learn about tree identification and measuring. Hall Farm was a superb location as it hosts one of the oldest oak trees in the village along with some impressive and healthy ash trees.

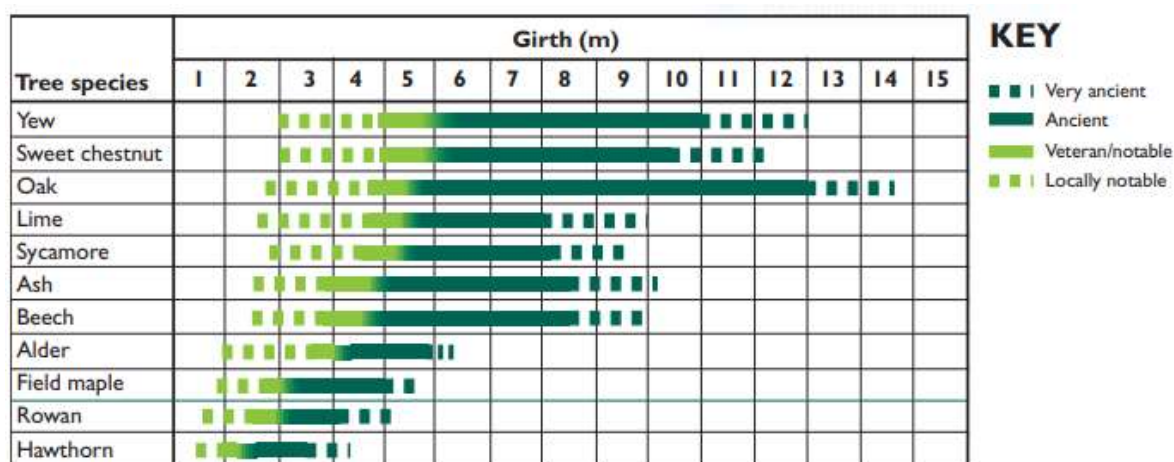
It was decided it was easier to carry out the survey in pairs for both practical and health and safety reasons. The village was split into Ordnance Survey tetrads and each pair allocated one or two tetrads depending on their preference, often it was part of a daily dog walk for others it was a chance to explore different part of the parish.

It was up to the volunteers to decide if a tree was worthy of recording, some were obvious because of their size or rarity others because they were a feature in the local landscape. It was decided to spend a year on the project but most of the recording was undertaken in the first six months.

Methodology

The recording method used was a standard used by arboriculturist's, principally establishing the tree's location using an 8-figure grid reference, a description of the location and then measuring the trees girth, its approximate height and condition, noting the landowner and taking photographs. See Appendix for example of the recording form and the results of the survey. To view the complete spreadsheet with condition comments etc see the website [HERITAGE TREES – a sub-project of Wilder Wenhaston » Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet \(onesuffolk.net\)](http://HERITAGE TREES – a sub-project of Wilder Wenhaston » Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet (onesuffolk.net))

All the forms were analysed, and trees were given their status i.e. ancient, veteran etc, using the Woodland Trust's ancient tree guide.



Ageing trees is not an exact science as similar species growing in different soils, differing rainfall etc will vary the growth rate. However, an online guide www.tree-guide.com/tree-age-calculator gave us approximate ages to within a few years.

Results

A total of eighty-two trees of ten different species were recorded, measurements taken, and the information gathered onto a single spreadsheet. A eight-figure grid reference was noted so each individual could be easily located in the future. Permission was granted by landowners over most of the parish but a few areas access was denied or was too difficult for surveyors, many of the trees were on roadsides or adjacent to public footpaths and so easily accessible.

As to be expected **English oak** *Quercus robur* dominated with three classified as ancient meaning they were between 500 -550 years old. Imagine when these acorns first sprouted Columbus was about to discover America. A further eleven were classed as veterans aged between 300 - 450 years old. The remainder were categorised as locally notable. In several cases the ancient and veteran trees were ancient boundary markers.



The ancient 'Smugglers oak' on the village boundary



Veteran oak pollard on Old Hall Farm

Common Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* came second with six significant individuals with one classed as ancient (a very old, coppiced individual at 450 years old) and two aged as veterans. Given the dramatic effect of Ash die back *Chalara fraxinia* caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* which has decimated the ash population in the past twenty years it's important we monitor the health of our local trees. These may in the future prove to be resistant and so could provide a viable seed source in time.

Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* is more often thought of as a hedgerow shrub however it can grow to a great age and one on Old Hall marshes measured out at 150 years old and a second was found on Fox Hill which was classed as ancient as its measurements concluded it was more than 200 years old. Who knows how many ancient specimens were grubbed out in the past when the push in the 1960/70's was to remove hedges to increase the size of arable fields in the name of efficiency.

Small leaved lime *Tilia cordata* are not a particularly common tree in the parish with a few alongside Black Heath Road however an example in the garden of the Old Vicarage was classed a veteran and estimated to be some 240 years old.

The same garden had a veteran 410-year-old oak on its boundary and a **Holly** *Ilex aquifolium* estimated to be 100 years plus old.

When it comes to notable trees, driving down Narrow Way you cannot miss the **Sweet chestnut** *Castanea sativa* standing on the corner. Measuring 3.8m around its trunk its estimated to be 220 years old and will have seen many changes taking place under its boughs.



The Narrow Way Sweet chestnut

Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* are often regarded as weeds and yet they have been with us since the Roman times and it's probably because of this that few reach an old age before being removed. It was good to find one example on Church Common which has been coppiced in the past and so some 220 years later it still survives.

English Elm *Ulmus procera* trees are now a rare sight following the arrival of Dutch elm disease in the 1960's, mostly elms are seen as hedgerow shrubs which succumb to the disease once they reach 3-4m in height. However, two healthy trees approximately 50 years old were found on Old Hall Farm beside an overgrown pond. Their isolation is probably the reason they have escaped disease having been sheltered amongst some mature oaks.

Field maple *Acer campestre* like hawthorn is more often found as part of a hedgerow and so a 125-year-old specimen on Black Heath was a nice find.

Hazel *Corylus avellana* is another species more thought of as a shrub or forming a significant part of a coppiced woodland as in Vicarage Grove. However, there is one hazel tree clad in ivy on the Black Heath boundary that is around 140 years old.

Alder *Alnus glutinosa* is a common tree beside rivers and marsh ditches however many are cut down or coppiced when work is carried out restoring these wetlands and so few reach beyond 80 years old. We did find one 140-year-old example on Old Hall marshes that stands beside the Thorington Brook.

The brook has several old trees lining its banks and the largest is a **Crack willow** *Salix fragilis* which we estimate is around 140 years old.

Blocking part of the brook is an **Aspen** *Populus tremula* which has fallen over many years ago and continues to grow and is around 240 years old and covers a large area with its prostrate main trunk sending several large stems sky wards.

In the 1980's it was realised that the **Black poplar** *Populus nigra betulifolia* was a very rare tree in Britain and Suffolk held a good proportion of the remaining trees. It's thought there are only 430 mature black poplars in Suffolk and only 80 of the rare females in UK with 40 of these in Suffolk. Edgar Milne Redhead along with the then Suffolk Trust for Nature Conservation (now Suffolk Wildlife Trust) set about propagating new trees and planting them in suitable locations around the county. In Wenham in 1992 helped by Heather Philips and the Wenham Commons Group they planted the row of 25 trees alongside the old railway line which now stand some 50 feet tall and creating the boundary along the marsh plus one closer to Laurel Farm.

Surpassing the black poplar for rarity locally is the **Wild Service tree** *Sorbus torminalis* the nearest mature example grows in the neighbouring parish of Bramfield. However, to address this, four trees have now been planted in Grove Woods by Blyth Woods and so in the future hopefully they will mature but are still likely to be the rarest trees in the parish.



Good example of a hedgerow tree that was left when the rest of the hedge was allowed to deteriorate but now new planting will help restore the original landscape.

Acknowledgements

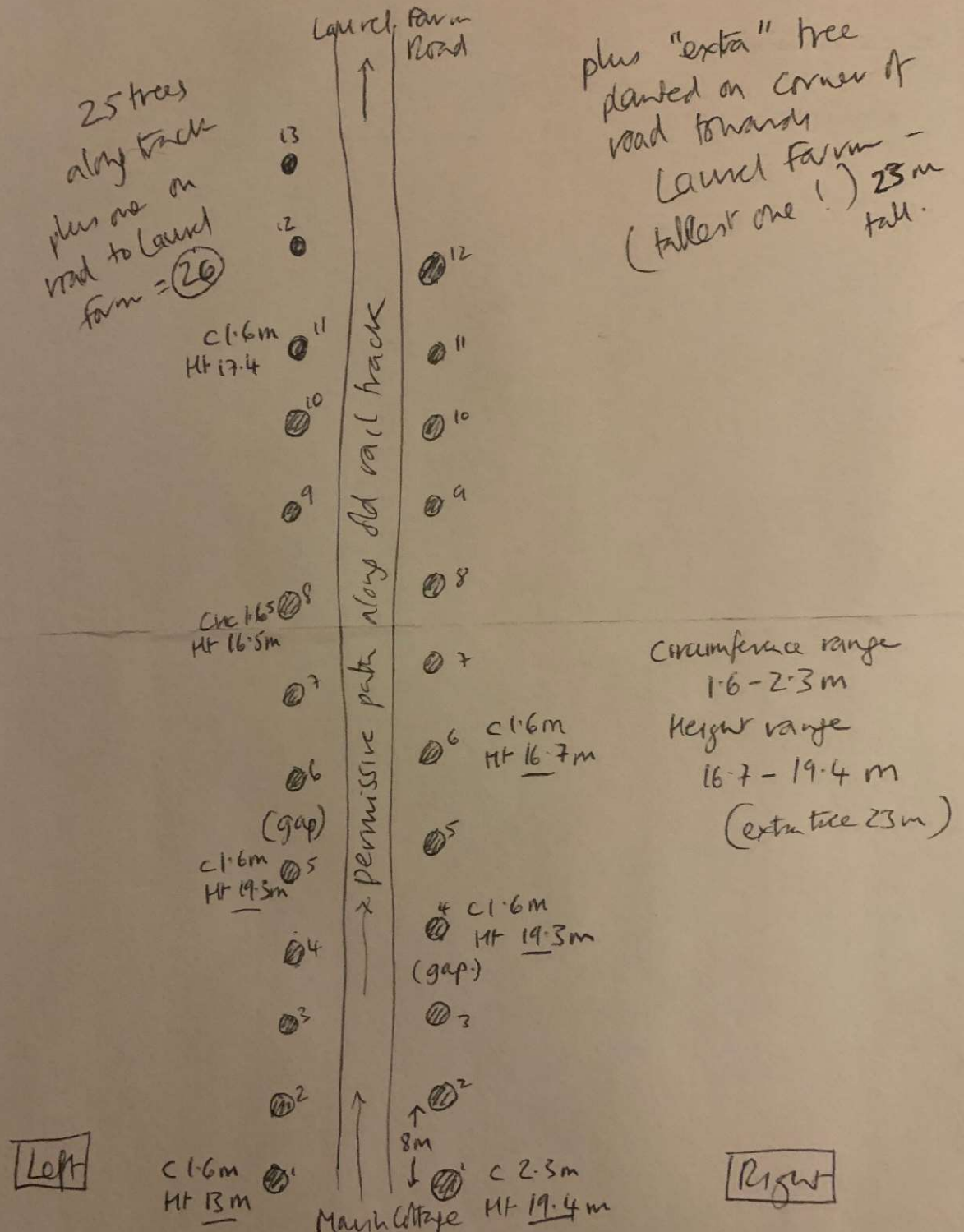
Thanks to all the tree surveyors who braved the cold and the brambles to collect all the data. Kate and Myles Archibald, Jo Small, Bryn Raven, Jonathan Alder, Bob and Annie Jellicoe, Sally and Nick Amery, Michael Gower, Rachel Kellett, Christina Ballinger, Judy and Alan Miller.

Appendix

The complete spreadsheet with all the results and comments is available on the website <https://wenhaston.onesuffolk.net/village-life/environmental-groups/wilder-wenhaston/wilder-wenhaston/heritage-trees-a-sub-project-of-wilder-wenhaston>

Common name	Location	Grid reference	Date	Surveyor	Pollard, Coppice	Grth mm	height m	Age	Class	Comments	
1 English oak	Nowhere House	WM4311 2745	29/11/2022	AM/SA	Pollard	6600	17.6	520	A	Likely a boundary oak, hollow but with very little die back on main boughs. Known	
2 Common ash	Hall Farm Wenhasht	TM43261 7488	04/12/2022	WW	Standard	2900	22.9	120	V	Good condition, no signs of disease (Chalara etc)	
3 English oak	Hall Farm Wenhasht	TM43261 7493	04/12/2022	WW	Pollard	4900	29	380	V	A boundary oak in good condition	
4 English oak	Hall Farm Wenhasht	TM43261 7493	04/12/2022	WW	Standard	3800	19.3	150	N	Has a few dead branches, in the shade of adjacent larger ash Barn owl box	
5 English oak	Hall Farm Wenhasht	TM43418 7493	04/12/2022	WW	Pollard	6750	29.9	530	A	Hollow trunk, many rot holes, some dead boughs, old barn owl box and edge of	
6 Common ash	Hall Farm Wenhasht	TM43332 7493	04/12/2022	WW	Standard	3400	26.7	140	N	Good condition, no signs of disease (Chalara etc)	
7 English oak	Oakhurst, Black Heat	TM42690 7484	04/12/2022	WW	Pollard	7000	50.0	550	A	Hollow centre, but very healthy regularly maintained by professional tree surgeon	
8 English oak	Low Farm Wenhasht	TM43257 756	11/04/2023	KA	Standard	4300	16.7	172	N	Field boundary, within hedge. Heavy ivy cover. No signs of disease	
9 English oak	Low Farm Wenhasht	TM43257 756	11/04/2023	KA	Standard	4200	14.3	168	N	Field boundary, within hedge. Heavy ivy cover. No signs of disease	
10 English oak	Low Farm Wenhasht	TM43257 756	11/04/2023	KA	Standard	4200	15	168	N	Field boundary, within hedge. Some ivy cover. No signs of disease	
11 English oak	Vale Farm Wenhasht	TM426758	11/04/2023	KA	Standard	4100	17.1	164	N	Field boundary, adjacent to track. No signs disease	
12 English oak	Vale Farm Wenhasht	TM426759	11/04/2023	KA	Standard	3200	19	128	N	Field boundary, adjacent to public foot path. No signs disease	
13 Sweet chestnut	Narrow Way	TM42700 754	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Standard	3800	18.6	220	N	Roadside tree at junction. No signs of disease	
14 English oak	Church Common	TM42764 7555	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Pollard	3710	17.3	290	N	On eastern edge of the common, several dead boughs and splits Boundary tree	
15 English oak	Church Common	TM42663 7556	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Old Coppice	5780	19.2	450	V	On north edge of common, large old coppice, several dead boughs, boundary	
16 Sycamore	Church Common	TM42654 7555	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Coppice	3900	19.6	220	N	In eastern compartment good condition, surrounded by lots of seedlings	
17 Small leaved lime	Old Vicarage garden	TM42416 755	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Standard	3500	31.1	240	N	One of 8 times in the garden, lots of epicormic growth	
18 English oak	Old Vicarage garden	TM42438 756	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Pollard	5200	30	410	V	Boundary fence, some dead boughs	
19 Holly	Old Vicarage garden	TM42519 7555	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Standard	1950	19.2	100+	N	Largest holly in the immediate area	
20 English oak	By Grove View footpath	TM42190 753	19/04/2023	AM/KN	Standard	3050	24	240	N	Hedge row tree	
21 English oak	Old railway path	TM43547 56	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	2000	17	164	N	Adjacent to permissive path. Largest of oaks that line that path.	
22 English oak	Blowers common up	TM43119753	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	2700	15	208	N	On common raised dyke border with field	
23 English oak	Blowers common up	TM43209754	17/04/2023	KA	Coppice	5200	17.9	Coppice?	V	On common raised dyke border with field	
24 English oak	Blowers common up	TM43183754	17/04/2023	KA	Coppice	5300	12.6	Coppice?	V	On corner of existing common next to field on line of old border	
25 English oak	In field on line of con	TM43176754	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	3400	11.2	136	N	In ploughed field in line with remaining upper border of Blower Common upper	
26 English oak	Blowers common up	TM43185754	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	4750	13.8	190	V	On lower corner upper Blowers Common, looking towards corner of lower Blo	
27 English oak	Track to Low Farm, p	TM4322754	17/04/2023	KA	Coppice	3500	18.1	140	N	On right edge of track looking towards Low Farm on edge of Blowers Common	
28 English oak	Track to Low Farm, p	TM43006754	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	3600	13.5	144	N	On left edge of track looking towards Low Farm on edge of Blowers Common	
29 English oak	Track to Low Farm, p	TM43110754	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	3500	10.3	140	N	On right edge of track looking towards Low Far, ivy clad.	
30 English oak	Next to footpath site	TM43220756	17/04/2023	KA	Standard	3500	16.8	140	N	Footpath from south of Low Farm across field towards Laurel Farm	
31 English oak	Middle of field below	TM43003752	24/04/1993	KA	Standard (hollow	4200	14.7	168	N	On border on transect 12. Hollow tree, very near oak detailed below (? Split o	
32 English oak	Old Hall marshes	TM41263744	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	2770	26	218	N	Oak with barn owl box attached some dead boughs	
33 Ash	Fox Hill south bound	TM41665747	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Coppice	4170	23	221	V	Healthy no sign of Chalara	
34 English oak	Fox Hill south bound	TM41750748	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3050	25	240	N	Healthy	
35 English oak	Fox Hill south bound	TM41725747	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3650	22	288	N	Limb lost on west side	
36 Crack willow	North side of Thoris	TM41712174	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3900	27	140	N		
37 English oak	Fox Hill south bound	TM41692747	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3070	23	242	N	Barn owls nesting in hollow	
38 English oak	Fox Hill south bound	TM41673747	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3300	18	260	N	Stag headed	
39 English oak	The Drift	TM42743746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3750	33	296	N	Ivy covered dead overhanging branches over foot path	
40 Field maple	Black Heath south	TM42504746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Standard	2040	22	125	N	Healthy	
41 English oak	Black Heath south	TM42542746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Pollard	4500	33	355	V	Few dead branches	
42 Aspen	Church Farm marsh	TM42625745	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3050	25	240	N	Fallen over party boundary river and subsequently regrowing vertically	
43 English oak	Church Farm marsh	TM42295746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Coppice	4100	20	323	N	Previously was felled measuring 2900 and regrown 1200. dia limit Boundary	
44 Alder	Black Heath south	TM43232746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Standard	2500	30	113	N	Has had tree surgery at some time	
45 Hazel	Black Heath south	TM42522746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Coppice	3250	17	173	N	Healthy	
46 English oak	Black Heath south	TM42459746	04/07/2023	JA/AM	Pollard	4200	45	168	N	Ivy covered dead overhanging branch	
47 Alder	Old Hall Farm	TM41688743	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	3100	24	140	N	Ivy covered healthy	
48 Hawthorn	Old Hall Farm	TM41301744	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	2150	17	150+	N	Healthy	
49 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41180745	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	2550	26	200	N	Healthy	
50 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41004748	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Pollard	2800	27	220	N	Few dead branches	
51 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41191747	02/05/2023	JA/AM	Standard	4080	27	320	V	Stag headed 1 limb shattered off dieback in crown	
52 Ash	Old Hall Farm	TM41901749	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Standard	1970	34.5	105	N	Healthy	
53 English oak	Black Heath western	TM41927748	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Standard	4000	40.5	315	N	Ivy covered healthy	
54 English oak	Black Heath western	TM41917747	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Coppice	4000	39.5	315	N	Possible boundary oak	
55 Ash	Black Heath western	TM41927748	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Standard	2600	33	138	N	Healthy	
56 Hawthorn	fox Hill/Bramfield fu	TM41902747	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Coppice	4000	3	200+	A	Many rot holes and dead limbs	
57 English oak	Junction Black Heat	TM41819746	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Standard	2680	33.5	120	N	Healthy	
58 English oak	Black Heath opposite	TM41934747	03/04/2023	BR/JA	Standard	4900	28.5	386	V	Few dead branches	
59 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41516749	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	2060	20.5	160	N	Healthy	
60 English oak	Church Farm	TM42297532	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	3330	30.5	262	N	50% of crown missing lightning!	
61 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41797499	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Pollard	4480	18.3	353	V	Hollow ancient tree! Lots of evidence that small mammals are using it as home	
62 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41807495	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Pollard	3390	23.9	310	N	Hollow centred. Multi stemmed from not upwards, 3 ling and 2 short dead br	
63 English oak	Old Hall Farm	TM41897495	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Coppice	4840	25.8	389	V	Hollow centre with rot. 3 main trunks covered in 3 long and 2 short dead br	
64 English oak	Church Farm	TM42097544	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	3030	29.8	239	N	Field maple has seeded at its base	
65 English oak	Church Farm	TM42197536	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	3050	25.5	245	N	Healthy	
66 English oak	Church Farm	TM42277534	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	2790	24.8	220	N	Healthy	
67 English oak	Church Farm	TM42167530	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	2940	31.7	230	N	Healthy	
68 English oak	Church Farm	TM42197531	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	3340	28.2	240	N	Healthy	
69 English oak	Church Farm	TM42247532	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	2800	21	221	N	Healthy	
70 English oak	Church Farm	TM42257532	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	2910	23.3	229	N	Healthy	
71 English oak	Church Farm	TM42277533	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	2710	24	118	N	Lots of dead wood from half way to crown. Little life above that.	
72 English oak	Church Farm	TM42297532	29/03/2023	J5/BR	Standard	3330	24	260	N	Lots of possibly 50% of crown to possible lightning strike. Evidence of use by	
73 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM40612746	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	4200	290	331	N	oak boundary multi stem	
74 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM402337651	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	3800	299	299	N	large pollard oak golf	
75 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM402317652	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	3500	276	292	N	pollard oak inside	
76 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM402207653	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	3700	296	296	N	oak pollard golf	
77 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM401567662	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	3000	230	230	N	small oak	
78 Ash	Melts roadside by	TM401117664	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	8500	450	450	A	Coppice ash	
79 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM401027664	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	3370	255	255	N	oak 2 Halesworth side	
80 English oak	Melts roadside by	TM401327663	27/03/2023	RC/CB	Standard	3300	250	250	N	oak 1 Melts lane	
Surveyor											
	Kate Archibald	KA									
	Sally Amery	SA									
	Alan Miller	AM									
	Judy Miller	JM									
	Jonathan Alder	JA									
	WW surveyors	WW									
	Byrn Raven	BR									
	Jo Small	JS									
	Rachel Kellert	RK									
	Christina Ballinger	CB									

26 Black poplars planted by me 9/11/2
 walking from Marsh Cottage / Low Farm end.



Lewis Leech recalls date of tree planting - conversation
 DIAGRAM DRAWN BY KATE ARCHIBALD June 2023

Kate Archibald's survey map



Wenhaston Heritage Trees Project

Survey Form

Tree species

Location including (8 figure grid reference)

Tree type (Standard, pollard or coppice)

Measure the girth mm

Measure approximate height

Take photograph

Tree condition Dead branches, presence of fungi/disease, rot holes etc

Landowner & contact details

General comments

Recorder

Date

Instructions

Tree species. Ensure you are happy with your tree identification, use a guide is necessary alternatively collect sample of leaves and buds for confirmation,

Grid reference.

A grid reference finder is available free for all smart phones
Android phones Grid Reference OS -App on GooglePlay
Or iPhones App Store GPS OS Grid Reference
Wenhaston grid reference will start TM

Measuring girth

1. Always measure at 1.5m (5 ft) from ground level on the upper side of any slope.
If the tree forks or abnormally swells at or below 1.5m, then the smallest measurement below 1.5m should be recorded and the height from ground noted.
A 1.5m long stick is useful to stand upright next to a tree for accuracy and handy to gain access through bracken or nettles!
2. Always make sure the tape is level.
3. If possible, always use a metric tape.

Measuring height

Use a set square, piece of paper or card cut at 45 degrees



Stand where you can see the base and the top of the tree, measure the distance from you to the tree and add your height at eye level and you will have the height of the tree.

Tree condition

Note signs of disease or damage photograph fungi, signs of die back, stag heads as in oaks etc

Health & Safety

Volunteer responsibility. As a volunteer, you are under no obligation to participate or continue with a survey or scheme. Volunteers are responsible for their own health and safety and should not put themselves in a position that could place them, or others, in danger. You should never undertake any work if you have concerns about your own or others' health and safety.

Access permission. Always obtain permission from the relevant landowner or tenant to enter any private land not subject to open access legislation, before commencing fieldwork. Do not continue fieldwork if access permission is later revoked.

Risk assessment. Before undertaking any activities, every fieldworker should consider the particular health and safety hazards associated with their individual study sites and whether their individual circumstances and medical conditions expose them to particular hazards. Individuals

should assess any potential risks arising from their fieldwork activities, which should include considering the risks specific to individual sites. You should think about what precautions should be taken against any risks.

Mobile telephones. It is advisable to carry a mobile phone, which may be useful in case of an emergency. Please note that mobile phones may not work in some remote areas, and are only of any use if you are conscious and capable of operating them.

Lone working. If going to a remote place, always leave a note of your whereabouts with a responsible person. This should include: date and time of departure, method of travel to and around the site, proposed itinerary, expected time of leaving the site and return to base, and vehicle identification details. The person to whom these details are given should be told whom to contact if you do not return and at what time to raise the alarm. If possible, do not work alone

Livestock and agricultural machinery. Take special care when entering areas with livestock, especially cattle, rams and horses. Do not enter fields containing bulls and be especially cautious with farm dogs. Rutting deer can also be aggressive in the autumn. Avoid undertaking fieldwork in close proximity to working agricultural machinery

What to do if an unfamiliar dog approaches you. • Stay still – do not run away. Drop anything you are holding in case this is what has attracted the dog to you. Do not shout or wave your arms. Calmly and softly give a command such as ‘sit’ or ‘stay’, as many dogs respond to these. • Avoid eye contact – Do not look the dog directly in the eye as this can be seen as a form of aggression and a challenge. Watch their chest, shoulder or look at the tip of their nose. • Ignore the dog if it jumps up – do not shout or push the dog down, as it may think it is a game. Stay still and do not respond and it may eventually get bored and walk away. If you are knocked to the ground, remain motionless in the foetal position and protect your face by crossing your arms above your head. • Move very slowly – when you do move, move slowly and stay facing the dog.

Diseases. Surveyors may be exposed to disease during survey work. If a disease is suspected, then it is important to inform your doctor that you may have been exposed to diseases associated with outdoor activities. Typical diseases that may be encountered are:

- Lyme disease. A bacterial disease transmitted by animal ticks associated with rank vegetation, which leads to severe symptoms if left untreated. A variety of animals act as hosts for the bacteria, including domestic mammals, wild mammals and birds. For more information see:

www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk or www.lymediseaseuk.com .

- Tetanus may result from the infection of even minor wounds and scratches with Clostridium tetani, a common micro-organism in soil and one likely to be carried on talons and beaks. • Weil’s disease (leptospirosis) that can be fatal if left untreated. The organism is carried by rats and excreted in their urine, and persists in water such as in puddles and slowmoving rivers in rat-infested places.

COVID-19. A highly infectious respiratory disease. Please see www.gov.uk/coronavirus for current information. Any volunteer fieldwork must be conducted in line with any country specific government guidance and restrictions as well as BTO guidance. Links to individual country advice can be found here: www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm

Minimising the risk of such diseases requires straightforward actions. For example: • Immunisation against Tetanus and Poliomyelitis. • Remove ticks from the skin as soon as possible, wear light-coloured clothing so that ticks are visible, tuck trouser bottoms into socks so that ticks cannot attach or climb up the leg, and make regular checks of skin and hair. During fieldwork, cover cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing.



Ancient black poplar



Wilder Wenhaston – pathway to a greener future