City of Trees
HANDSIDE & STANBOROUGH
www.wgccityoftrees.org.uk

2020 marks one hundred years since the founding of Welwyn Garden City. It embodies Ebenezer Howard's ideal of a marriage of town and country.

The Welwyn Garden City Foundation was established to develop a programme of events and to create a legacy. One of the ideas was the establishment of a town wide arboretum – The City of Trees.

One of the greatest pleasures of the town is the beauty and variety of the 20,000 trees in its streets and public places. The City of Trees project seeks to make this legacy accessible to all by providing information about the trees and to encourage a full appreciation of the environmental, health, economic, aesthetic, and educational benefits.

The town is most fortunate to have not only a legacy of a large number and diversity of trees but an active and enthusiastic Landscape and Ecology Department within the local council. Information from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council has been made available to the Project Team and has been invaluable in devising the tree walks and in the preparation of maps for use in the walk leaflets and on the web site – www.wgccityoftrees.org.uk.

The website gives a description of the trees in the town, highlighting those of particular interest and the best seasons for viewing them. It gives details of a series of walks and information about the trees with links to web sites where additional information can be found. It also contains a photo gallery and children’s section.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this leaflet is correct, the treescape in Welwyn Garden City is changing all the time – old and diseased trees are being removed and new ones planted. Please keep this in mind when using our leaflets and website.

Welwyn Garden City Centenary Foundation
www.wgc100.org

Welwyn Garden City Horticultural Society
www.wgcHORTsoc.org.uk

Welwyn Garden City Society
www.wgcSOC.org.uk

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
www.welhat.gov.uk

Centenary Walk
www.wgc100.org/centenary-walk/

Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

(Free tree ID app for Android and iPhones available)

Sherrardspark Wood Wardens Society
www.sherrardsparkwoodwardens.org.uk

Other walks in this series:

- Beehive
- The Campus
- Sherrardspark Wood

Leaflets generously sponsored by: The Fearon Family TESCO

HISTORY OF TREES IN WGC

Trees have long been at the visual heart of Welwyn Garden City. When the site was first laid out in 1920, the location of each existing tree was marked on the survey maps and the road layout was planned to protect, and incorporate, the old oak trees. All the new roads were planted with trees, with other trees planted between the building plots. Great care has been taken to preserve some of the older oaks with bases having been filled with concrete, or skilfully boarded over.

The avenues of limes along the wide boulevards of Parkway and Howardsgate were planted early and provide a strong backbone to the town centre. Closes were often formed round particularly striking feature trees such as in The Quadrangle. With no pre-established churches with spires, a feeling of height was achieved by the planting of Lombardy poplars which became symbolic of the town.

Sadly, this species is not long-lived and most of the original specimens have had to be felled for safety reasons. Also, several of the larger horse chestnuts in Parkway have succumbed to disease. But the removal of some trees gives an opportunity for renewal – the sweet gum trees (Liquidambar) that have been planted in their stead will become a stunning sight as they mature. It would be hard to find a more fascinating collection of trees, in an urban setting, than can be found in the Garden City.
A wealth of tree variety

Raywood ash *Fraxinus angustifolia* ‘Raywood’. There are several of these in Turmore Dale which have striking autumn colour.

Sweet gum *Liquidambar styraciflua* ‘Worplesdon’. A recent (2014) planting along Parkway which form an avenue along with a few remaining mature horse chestnut trees. Nationally, horse chestnut trees, *Aesculus hippocastanum*, are suffering from ‘bleeding canker’ and attacks by a moth known as the horse chestnut leaf miner. There used to be an avenue of horse chestnuts along Parkway, but most have had to be cut down because of attacks by these pests and diseases.

Two horse chestnut trees *Aesculus hippocastanum* at the bottom end of Elmwood. These trees appear to be in good condition and, hopefully, are a safe distance from other horse chestnut trees. So, if you’re looking for conkers, you’ll know where to go!

A weeping willow *Salix babylonica* and honey locust *Gleditsia triacanthos* located in Honeycroft.

Seven northern Japanese magnolia *Magnolia kobus* and two *Ginkgo biloba* ‘Mayfield’ in Fordwich Road. When mature, the magnolias will have pure white flowers in spring. These trees were planted in 2016.

Fastigate hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* ‘Fastigiata’. A very fine mature example of this tree in Turmore Dale.

**Stanborough Lakes**

Due to heavy traffic along Stanborough Road, this area is best approached from the lakeside.

Kozo paper mulberry *Broussonetia kazinoki*. A tree native to Korea and Japan.

*Koelreuteria paniculata* – Pride of India, Chinese rain tree. Produces small yellow flowers in large panicles followed by bronze fruits.

Ginkgo/Maidenhair *Ginkgo biloba* – by the small pond - an older specimen and rather untidy.

Bald cypress/swamp cypress *Taxodium distichum*. The leaflets are thinnish and spaced randomly. This tree can be confused with the *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* ‘Dawn Redwood’, which is another deciduous conifer, but the leaflets are exactly opposite each other and larger.

**Time to pop over the road to the cafe for a cup of tea/coffee or an ice cream!**
The Campus
Bridge Road
Valley Road
Guinessens Road
Parkway
Bridge Road
Hands Side Lane
Youngs Rise
Yellows Rise
Handside
Appledrove
Barleycroft Road
Youngs Rise
High Oaks Road
Attimore Road
Elmwood
Applecroft Road
Hands Side Lane
Marsden Road
Stanborough Road
Hands Side Lane
Lemsford Lane
Stanborough Green
Stanborough Road
Hands Side Lane
Lemsford Lane
Stanborough Road
Boating Lake
Stanborough Lakes. See map overleaf

Indian bean tree top with a close up of beans.

Pink tinged leaves of Acer pseudoplatanus 'Brilliantissimum' in spring.
1 Six trunked oak. Outside Woodside House (flats) and opposite 35 Bridge Road. An unusual specimen, which has been coppiced.

2 An interesting range of trees on The Campus (See separate leaflet). Don't miss the tulip tree Liriodendron tulipifera, flowering cherry trees, the wild service tree Sorbus torminalis and a tree dedicated to golfer Nick Faldo, born in Welwyn Garden City.

3 Red oak Quercus rubra. One red oak in a small group of trees and the only one with a split trunk.

4 Massive 250-300-year-old oak in The Quadrangle. The size dwarfs the neighbouring houses. There are several other large oaks along Handside Lane, which predate the Garden City.

5 Ornamental cherry Prunus 'Snow Goose'. An avenue of spring flowering trees along the north end of Guessens Road.

6 Three crab apple trees Malus species in Wigmores North; outside John Lewis. Very colourful spring flowers.

7 Purple beech Fagus sylvatica 'Riversii'. Two very large, impressive trees on Valley Road opposite Russellcroft Road.

8 Honey locust Gleditsia triacanthos 'Sunburst'. At the end of Russellcroft Road, junction with Valley Road. With light green leaves in spring, which darken through the summer. These trees can also be seen at the Valley Road/High Oaks Road/Youngs Rise junction.

9 Indian bean tree Catalpa bignonioides. At southeast corner of Russellcroft Road and Handside Lane (pictures on map - top left). This specimen has an unusual rope like growth spiralling round its trunk and nobody seems to know exactly what it is. There are four more of these trees on the south side of Russellcroft Road going towards Valley Road, two more in Valley Road, and three more in Youngs Rise.

10 Judas tree Cercis siliquastrum. There are four along Russellcroft Road, two each at the corners of Guessens Road and Homerfield. Stunning when the unusually bright purple flowers are produced directly on the trunk and branches in early May.

11 Oak with concrete filling the hollow trunk. At the bottom of the tree in Russellcroft Road. This practice is now discontinued, and timber boards used instead. Probably done to prevent people throwing rubbish into the tree and/or lighting fires.

12 Plum tree Prunus domestica. At the end of Guessens Road, opposite Russellcroft Road. Very large, impressive trees on Valley Road. With light green leaves in spring, which darken through the summer. These trees can also be seen at the Valley Road/High Oaks Road/Youngs Rise junction.

13 Seven fastigiate oaks Quercus robur. ‘Fastigiate Koster’ at the southern end of High Oaks Road, at the junction with Valley Road. These trees seem to be being used more frequently around the town, instead of the shorter-lived Lombardy poplars.

14 Tree of heaven Ailanthus altissima. Two trees opposite each other in Valley Road, immediately south of the junction with High Oaks Road.

15 Walnut tree Juglans regia. At the front of No. 65 Handside Lane, walnuts can be seen in July and August. It looks as though the tree is in the front garden of the property, but it is actually the responsibility of the local Council.

16 Black locust Robinia pseudoacacia. A group of three trees along Guessens Road with distinctive bark.

17 Bird cherry Prunus padus. Avenue of trees at the top end of Longcroft Lane.

18 Fastigate beech Fagus sylvatica 'Dawyck Purple'. Recently planted in Parkway Close.

19 Poplar A very large tree at the junction of Attimore Road/Elmwood Road and Applecroft Road and thought to be a hybrid black poplar.

20 Persian ironwood Parrotia persica 'Vanessa'. There is also another one at the end of Handside Lane at the junction with Lemsford Lane and more in Fordwich Road.

21 Oak in Handside Lane. The hollow trunk has been partially filled with concrete, and in about 2017/18 a ‘barbecue’ fire was lit in what remained of the base. Following the fire, the remainder of the hole was very skilfully boarded up. The tree now seems to be as well protected as possible but, nonetheless, appears to be in decline.

22 London plane Platanus x hispanica. There are several of these large trees on the West Side; an example of which is in Barleycroft Road, near the junction with Turmore Dale.

23 Old oak and lime trees. Between The Old Drive and Handside Lane.