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.

Leaflets generously sponsored by: The Fearon Family
Cherry *Prunus sp.* The effusive blossom of the cherry makes an arresting sight in spring as seen in the picture here. The blossom may be short-lived, but there are several streets in Welwyn Garden City where cherry blossom can provide an uplifting sight for a few weeks after a long winter. See the ‘City of Trees’ website for notifications of when to see seasonal highlights in the town.

Whitebeam *Sorbus aria* ‘Magnifica’ See the main description of whitebeam at number 3. This particular variety ‘Magnifica’ grows to a maximum height of around 12m with a rounded and compact shape which makes it ideal for parkland settings.

Wild service tree *Sorbus torminalis* The traditional name for the green-brown fruits of this native deciduous broadleaf tree are ‘chequers’. A word preserved in the name of the A1000 running into the south of Welwyn Garden City and possibly the country residence of the prime minister in the nearby Chilterns. The leaves are similar in shape to the maple, but do not have their distinctive lobes. They are relatively rare trees (although there are two specimens on The Campus) and often indicate that there was once an area of ancient woodland in the vicinity.

Turkey oak *Quercus cerris* This is a relative newcomer to the UK in terms of trees – it was introduced in the 1700s as an ornamental tree. It is faster growing than native oaks but not as valuable to wildlife. A good way to tell the difference between this oak, and English and sessile oaks, is that the acorns of the Turkey oak have a hairy-looking acorn cup which make them appear as if they are covered in moss.

London plane *Platanus x hispanica* Reflecting its name, this tree is common on the streets of the capital. It is a hybrid form of the American sycamore and the Oriental plane. It is thought that one of each species had been planted in the London nursery garden of John Tradescant, the younger, which cross-pollinated to produce a new hybrid. Although not a great host for wildlife, the London plane adapts well to urban conditions.

Ornamental cherry *Prunus* ‘Snow Goose’ A splendid sight in April are the row of ‘Snow Goose’ cherry trees along Guessens Road. These are larger than many other ornamental cherries and have pure white flowers. Their branches grow vertically so that the canopies do not get congested in a street environment where space is limited.

Hawthorn *Crataegus sp.* This tree has many common names: hawthorn; May-tree; quickthorn or hawberry among them. The word ‘haw’ comes from the Old English term for a hedge and also applies to the name of the deep-red berries it bears. Hawthorn, commonly found all over the countryside in hedgerows, woodland and scrub, provides a haven for wildlife from bugs to birds.

Crab apple *Malus sp.* See entry for number 2 on other side of the leaflet. This is another variety of over 50 species within the Malus genus.

Common lime *Tilia x vulgaris* Common lime is a hybrid between the small-leaved and large-leaved lime, and is rarely found in the wild in Britain. The dark green, heart-shaped leaves have white-cream hairs in the base of the veins on the underside. In winter it can be identified by its hairy red twigs. Limes work well planted in avenues – a striking example can be found in the Beehive area of Welwyn Garden City in the road called The Limes. See separate Beehive Walk leaflet.

Avenues of limes in parkway

Dawn redwood *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* The autumn will be the best time of year to appreciate this tree when it grows to maturity. Its leaves turn brownish-pink and yellow. It makes a narrow conical tree and can reach 25m.
TREES ON THE THE CAMPUS

1. Pyramid hornbeam*Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata'  Native to the south of the UK, the hornbeam is a deciduous, broadleaf tree. The leaf buds are similar to beech, oval with pointed tips. The leaves of the hornbeam have finely serrated edges (whereas beech leaves have wavy edges). They become golden yellow to orange in colour in autumn. The ‘Fastigiata’ displays a distinctive ovoid shape with a narrow crown and stays compact which suits its location here on the traffic island. This tree was given to the Council from the set of the film ‘Saving Private Ryan’ that was filmed at Hatfield.

2. Crab apple*Malus* 'Directeur Moerlands' Crab apple trees are an ancestor of cultivated apple tree varieties. The blossom develops into small, yellow-green apple-like fruits around 2–3cm in diameter. The fruit is eaten by birds, including blackbirds, thrushes and crows. Crab apple trees have traditional folklore associations with love and marriage. The trees here sweep round the outer curve of The Campus.
Whitebeam  
Sorbus aria  Found more commonly in domestic settings (parks and gardens) than in the wild, whitebeams are another favourite with birds. Compact and domed, this deciduous broadleaf tree can reach a height of 20m in the open. The five-petalled flowers appear in loose domed clusters in May. The whitebeam form much of the inner arc of trees around the edge of The Campus.

English oak  
Quercus robur  The quintessential tree of England – the oak. English oak is the second most common tree species in the UK, after birch. It supports more life than any other native tree species in the country. The oak carries easily identifiable lobed leaves, growing in bunches, on short leaf stalks. In autumn it forms acorns, 2–2.5cm long, which sit in cupules (the cup-shaped base of the acorn). In time, the green acorn turns brown, loosens from the cupule and falls to the ground, sprouting the following spring if left undisturbed. Oak leaves feature in the emblems of many environmental groups, including the Woodland Trust and the National Trust.

Common beech  
Fagus sylvatica  Beech trees can grow to be tall and stately, with mature specimens reaching 40m with huge domed crowns. Young leaves are lime green with silky hairs. The hairs are lost as the leaves age and become darker. Triangular beech nuts form in prickly four-lobed seed cases and were once used as pig food. As beech trees can be long lived, they provide a broad range of habitats for moths, butterflies and other insects.

Silver birch  
Betula pendula  Its white bark is the most distinctive feature of this medium-sized deciduous tree. The bark can peel off in layers and, as the trees age, it develops dark diamond-shaped fissures. The leaves are small and triangular and fade to yellow in the autumn. As it is not an overly large tree in most locations, it is often planted in gardens, and is tolerant of a wide range of temperatures. Silver birch provides food and habitat for more than 300 insect species including aphids which are eaten by ladybirds. Woodpeckers and other hole-nesting birds often nest in the trunk.

Horse chestnut  
Aesculus hippocastanum  The horse chestnut is one of the country’s most recognisable trees and its seed, the conker, most widely recognised by children! It is worthwhile remembering that these conkers are not edible – it is the sweet chestnut tree Castanea sativa that produces the chestnuts for eating. This is not a native British tree but was introduced from southeast Europe in the 17th century. The flowers make an arresting sight in spring: the white flowers (with a pink blotch in the centre) are held in distinctive tall upright candelabras. These trees, which can grow very tall, can live up to 300 years. There are threats to horse chestnuts from fungal diseases and the larvae of the horse chestnut leaf miner which bores into the leaves causing them turn brown and drop early.

Common ash  
Fraxinus excelsior  The ash is one of the most common trees in the UK but is under great threat from ‘ash dieback’ which is sweeping through the country. This is a disease caused by a fungus that usually results in the death of the tree. It is an easy tree to identify in the winter by looking for black, velvety leaf buds arranged opposite each other on smooth twigs. In the late summer and autumn, the female flowers develop into winged fruit known as ‘keys’. When they fall in the winter and early spring they are dispersed by birds and animals.

Purple beech  
Fagus sylvatica ‘Riversii’  Known commonly as both the purple beech and the copper beech. The leaves start as deep purple and become more reddish in the autumn. The flowers are rather inconspicuous in spring. The female flowers grow in pairs in a cup which becomes woody and encloses one or two reddish brown beech nuts in the autumn. The way to recognise the tree in the winter is to look for sharply pointed buds, a feature it shares with common beech. These trees don’t occur naturally but have to be planted as ornamental specimens. Their strong colouring can be striking or unharmonious depending on the eye of the beholder!

Tulip tree  
Liriodendron tulipifera  The origin of the common name of this tree is obvious if you look at the flowers produced in the summer - they are shaped like tulips. The flowers are about 4cm in length and are greenish-yellow and orange as seen in the picture here. Their strong colouring can be striking or unharmonious depending on the eye of the beholder!

Hornbeam  
Carpinus betulus  The hornbeam is the stalwart of many woodlands. It often mixes together with oak as can be found in nearby Sherards Park Wood. It is both ornamental and useful – for both man and wildlife. The wood of the hornbeam is extremely strong and was used by Romans to make their chariots. It is the hardest wood of any tree in Europe. It was also coppiced and pollarded to provide poles. The wood also burns well and makes good firewood and charcoal. It is now used for furniture, flooring and wood turning.