



The Somerset Wood



In 2018, to mark the centenary of the ending of the First World War, Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton Parish Councils with support from then Somerset County Council, created The Somerset Wood.

The vision for The Somerset Wood from the beginning has been to create a Wood to cover 9.5 hectares (23 acres) and to comprise of 11,281 trees, to match the number of names listed in The Somerset Book of Honour kept in the South Transept of Wells Cathedral recording every Somerset man and woman who lost their life in The Great War, including those who were born in Somerset, those who were resident in Somerset at the time of their enlistment, and those who served in Somerset-based units, including Canadians.

The Somerset Wood within Maidenbrook Country Park which is located in the largely rural parish of Cheddon Fitzpaine and immediately west of West Monkton parish and is intended to provide a haven of tranquillity for people, flora and fauna.

Progress so far

With the support of donations, including those received from Somerset Town and Parish Councils the following progress has been made:

- 3,500 trees have been planted in the Somerset Wood.
- Benches have been installed.
- A dedication area has been created for those for the fallen of Somerset.
- A Falklands War dedication area has been created.
- A 40 Commando Royal Marines memorial for Somerset Forebears who fought and fell in the First World War has been created.
- Remembrance Services take place throughout the year.
- Work has commenced to acquire further land adjacent to Maidenbrook Country Park to expand and continue tree planting to realise the Somerset Wood vision.



The Poppy of Honour National Memorial

The Poppy of Honour, created in 2018, is a National Memorial that honours British and Commonwealth Servicemen and Servicewomen listed as killed or missing in World War 1. It incorporates 1,117,635 individual remembrance handwritten poppies inside its encasement – one for each British and Commonwealth Servicemen and Servicewomen listed by the



Commonwealth War Graves Commission as 'Killed in Action' or 'Missing in Action' together with those 'Shot at Dawn' then later pardoned and those who died from their wounds after the Armistice of the Great War.

On Thursday 9th November 2023, the ownership of the Poppy of Honour was assigned to 'The People of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and all the other Realms and Territories of His Majesty King Charles III and all the Commonwealth Countries.' The ownership certificate states 'The Poppy of Honour Memorial Group are to be the Custodians of The Memorial in perpetuity and are responsible for its maintenance. The Custodians are entrusted to register The Memorial with the relevant authorities as a War Memorial. The Custodians are further to ensure that The Memorial is installed in the Somerset Wood within Maidenbrook Country Park, Maidenbrook Lane, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8JT for The People to view free of charge.



Planning Permission has been obtained to install the Memorial in a Pavilion at the Somerset Wood within Maidenbrook Country Park, Maidenbrook Lane, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton, TA2 8JT for the people to view free of charge but to be able to install it £100,000 is needed.



It is a great honour and privilege that the Poppy of Honour will be located in Maidenbrook Country Park, but help is needed to raise the money to enable installation.

We need your help and support

Up until this financial year, Somerset Council have been collecting donations from Town and Parish Councils towards tree planting at the Somerset Wood. It has been agreed with Somerset Council that the Parish Councils will now administer this fund. Therefore if you are a Parish / Town Council that has previously donated to the fund and would like to make a donation in the future please use the details available below to do so. If your Parish / Town Council hasn't made a donation, it would be great if a contribution could be considered. If agreed, please also use the details below.

Please also help our fundraising efforts to raise money to build the Poppy of Honour Pavilion by sharing information about The Memorial in your newsletters and websites. If you are able to do this, please contact Amy Shepherd, Clerk at West Monkton Parish Council for pictures, information and a QR code that has been established to fundraise.

To make a contribution:

- By BACS: Bank Account Name: West Monkton Parish Council
Bank Sort Code: 30-98-45 Bank Account Number: 01013078
Reference: Somerset Wood or Poppy of Honour depending on the nature of your contribution.
- Cheque: West Monkton Parish Council – please write 'Somerset Wood' or 'Poppy of Honour' on the back of the cheque. Please send cheques to:
West Monkton Parish Council, Brittons Ash Community Hall, Bridgwater Road, Bathpool, Taunton, TA2 8FT.

If you have any queries regarding this information please contact Amy Shepherd
clerk@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk or 07380912775.