



Treesresponsibility Newsletter



Dongria's daughter and grandchildren at the Solstice Tree Planting Day

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STOP PRESS Video of the Asylum Link tree-planting in December is available [here](#)

Hello all. I feel a little bit bad about the long delay since the last newsletter, but only a little, because it is nigh on impossible to give everyone updates about what is going on with treesponsibility, because things are changing more or less the entire time. (For example I planned to write the intro first thing this morning, but as soon as I had done the first sentence, my daughter rang up because she is trying to work and child-mind at the same time, and I ended up trying – not entirely successfully – to entertain a three-year old grandchild via zoom).

So here we are in lock-down again, with all our plantings cancelled until further notice. Any attempt at putting together a diary dates page would be so speculative as to be a complete waste of time. Christina will email when things are going to get going again. So why write a newsletter at all? Well:-

- 1) Some things have actually happened – such as our successful bid to the Environment Agency for riparian tree-planting. There will be plenty of work to do, even if Covid has stymied our volunteering days. (See page 4).
- 2) Some important things are happening behind the scenes (see article on pages 5-6 about the succession process from treesponsibility to Forus Tree)
- 3) There are still matters to discuss - our fund-raising bids for hedging failed, but more hedgerows are desperately needed (see page 7). There is also an article about tree-guards on page 8, discussing the quandries of using plastic tubing, and some interesting developments.
- 4) There is still work to do on a host of issues. The campaign against a third runway at Heathrow Airport needs support, after the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the airport. Details of the petition are on Page 9. I also thought it would be a good thing to update everyone with what is going on with the Dongria Kondh tribe in India. (I have filched an article from Survival International – see pages 10 and 11). In the absence of diary dates, the back has the transcript of an Open Letter calling on the UK Government to redirect renewable subsidies from biomass burning to genuinely renewable energy.
- 5) And finally, my health has taken a nosedive.

Actually the last reason is what has spurred me into action on the newsletter front. The bald facts are that although immunotherapy helped keep me up and about for the past year and a bit, my cancer is now progressing and I have been taken off the trial. Although there is a chemotherapy option which might keep me going a bit (at the risk of side effects and hair loss), I have decided that this is not for me. I am going to do the CBD oil thing (which will mean that I will be in no fit state to edit newsletters for the next couple of months). I have absolutely no idea what my prognosis is, but you will all be glad to hear that I am in excellent spirits (and still dreaming about a trip to Provence in May, should I be so lucky).

All things considered, I think the sensible thing now, is to say that Volume 3 Issue 6 will be the last edition of the treesponsibility newsletter (86 issues is a pretty respectable innings, after all). This will give me an excellent opportunity to have a "end word" and tell you all how much I have loved working with you, and what a blessing it has been to have treesponsibility in my life. I have taken the liberty of putting my (other) grandchild's write up of the Solstice tree-planting on the page opposite. For me it feels like the wheel has turned full circle, which gives me a warm glow of satisfaction and "job done."

Bye bye lovelies – I am not sure if I will see you soon (but I might well do, lets see how the CBD works!). x Dongria

Oh! oh! I nearly forgot. The most exciting thing happened. Slow the Flow are instigating an annual bursary for MA research into Natural Flood Management, and they are planning to name it after me (using my "legal" name of Penny Eastwood). It is not official yet, so please do not contact them about it until after the launch announcement on their website in a few weeks.

Help the Planet



we went to Hebden ~~to~~ Bridge to plant
Some trees. We planted Birch and oak trees.
We made a hole in the ground with a
spade. We made a T shape with a spear. Then we
Put the tree in, next we put a stick in and
bashed it down with a post driver. we put a
rabbit guard around the tree and mulched
it. we saw a rainbow and lots of
animals. It was fun and muddy.

Treesponsibility Work Programme for the 2020/2021 Work Season

One of the things that is massively enhancing my mental well-being at the moment, is the knowledge that tree-planting in the Upper Calder Valley is on a secure footing. In spite of everything that Covid has thrown at us over the past year, our tree planting will continue, with the help of Forus Tree, see opposite. We are on track to plant over 18,500 trees this season, as well as Natural Flood Management stuff for the Rapid Response Catchments programme. After treesponsibility's twenty five year stint is done (on 9th March 2023) Forus Tree will "pick up the baton" to continue the work into the future.

	Area	Trees	Notes
Riparian Sites – Funded by DEFRA			
Bents Head Farm 1	0.33	425	Fencing
Bents Head Farm 2	0.49	625	Fencing
Cock Hill	0.4	800	Fencing
Cote Clough	0.6	750	Fencing and 80m of living willow
Withen Hill North	1.5	1925	Fencing
Calf Lee	0.7	900	Fencing
Acre Barn	0.35	448	40 metres of Living Willow Revetments
	4.37	5873	
Trees For Climate – Funded by DEFRA			
Turner Wood	TBC	2500	
Making Place Estate	0.6	1500	
	0.6	4000	
Woodland Trust Funded Sites			
Crimple Lodge	0.5	800	
Highstones	0.2	660	
Throstle Nest	0.25	830	
Old Edge	0.35	700	
Old House Farm	0.8	1600	
Whitley Royd	0.4	1000	
Stiperden Bar	0.9	2100	
Higher Horsewood	0.8	1000	
	4.2	8690	
Own Funds			
Monk Hall	0.28	700	
Plantation Barn (Ramsden	0.2	500	
Moorside Farm	0.1	250	
Knoll Top Farm	0.1	250	
	0.68	1700	
Rapid Response Catchment Project – Funded by The Environment Agency			
Banks Farm			Treatment of Landslide
Stiperden Bar			Fencing By Forustree and Living Willow
Cock Hill			Wooden Leaky Dams
Hugeons Croft			Wooden Leaky Dams
Whitley Royd			Fencing By Forustree
Harleywood Gate	0.8		Willow Coppice – completed in April
High Hirst	0.1		Willow Coppice
Dean Head Barn			Living Willow and 1 leaky dam
Hebden Roys Town Coucil Hedges			
High Hirst			400 metres of hedge
Wadsworth Bank			160 metres of hedge- funding to be confirmed
TOTAL TOTAL	10.07	18563	

In the footsteps of Treesresponsibility – Our first year as Forus Tree



The Calder Valley is already home to a number of well established organisations and businesses that actively work with the community to lay the foundations for a more creative, innovative, and environmentally sustainable future. Over the years, we've seen organisations such as Treesresponsibility, Calder Future, Slow the Flow, Straw Works, LiveWild, Handmade Parade and Incredible Edible bring about a lot of positive changes in the local environment and people's attitude towards our community, each other, and the world we live in. We endeavour to work in harmony with these organisations and contribute further towards a greener and more sustainable future.

As an organisation that aims to be very inclusive, we are very fortunate to be situated in the Calder Valley, where there is a rich cultural and ethnic diversity. We would like to provide a positive learning and working environment for people of all backgrounds and to support and collaborate with organisations that work with vulnerable people in our community. We want to encourage and nurture healthy woodland management by supporting and training people with the vital skills they need to succeed.

All the Forus Tree founding members worked for in various capacities Treesresponsibility, but mainly doing tree planting, fencing and leaky dams. We also have close working relationships with local authorities, ecologists and arboriculturists, supporting us with a vast body of knowledge and expertise.

Forus Tree was established on 20th January 2020 as a workers cooperative and a not-for-profit social enterprise. Our aim is to mitigate the effects of climate change and restore biodiversity in the Calder valley and beyond. We have been very fortunate to be able to deliver on a large number of projects during such difficult circumstances which was largely due to the fantastic support we received from other local organisations and of course the commitment of our wonderful workers that gave it their best in all weathers (perhaps working even harder when it's cold to keep warm)!

So far in our first year we have planted 24,221 trees (most of which were on behalf of Treesresponsibility at a site in Wainstalls in quite challenging weather), created 26 willow leaky dams and we have several sites for willow and timber leaky dams this year.

Hand pulled Himalayan Balsam at:

- Colden Clough for **Calderdale Council** including a day with full harnesses and rope access
- Lumb Bank for **Arvon Foundation**
- Jumble Hole Clough, Hippins Clough, parts of Nutclough Woods and associated water sources to prevent it spreading any further into the upper catchment for **Calder Future**.

In total we hand pulled a total area of over 50ha! We have also been actively engaging with local landowners with extensive Himalayan Balsam on their land along watercourses to get permission and assistance to tackle the balsam from the top down to prevent seed distribution.

We secured a grant for £4,000 from **Bettys Trees for Life** in order to plant hedging in the upper catchments for NFM, biodiversity and creating nature corridors on sites which would have tree planting ruled out due to SSSI or Species Rich Grasslands. We are hedging 3 sites as part of the grant with a total of 680 metres.

Fencing has been a big part of what we do, so far we have done over 3km of stock and deer fencing to protect sites for this season. We are very keen to get some additional machinery and equipment to help us move materials across difficult terrains and often over long distances which we are currently carrying by hand!

We had a lovely change of scenery when we did 2 river clean-ups with **Calder Future, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust** and **Calder and Colne Rivers Trust**. We have agreed to continue doing river clean-up work when the weather permits in spring this year which we are very excited about!

We will be planting an additional 27,489 trees by the end of March 2021 (14,425 on behalf of **Cheshire West and Chester Council**, 8,964 trees on behalf of **Treesresponsibility** and 4,100 trees for our Bettys Trees for Life hedge grant).

Finally, some particularly exiting news: we have been offered use of some land at Daisy Bank in Mytholmroyd to establish a community tree nursery which will be alongside a community allotment. We aim to have regular volunteer days doing a whole variety of wonderful tasks from seed collections to planting. We started a regular volunteer day on Fridays which has been one of my favourite days. Unfortunately this will be on hold for the time being but I'm sure we'll be up and running in no time.

We've always enjoyed working outdoors but it's different when you have to deal with the constant bureaucratic background fluff that Dongria so often refers to as the three legged stool! So with some gentle encouragement and some hand holding for all the new stuff hurtling our way at light speed, Forus Tree was born with a lot of inspiration and some persuasion from Dongria, following in footsteps of Treesresponsibility will be a mammoth task after all! We would be very grateful if you could please take a moment to **LIKE** and **SHARE** our Facebook page www.facebook.com/forustrees

Thank you from the bottom of our roots for all the help and support we received from so many of you!

The Problem of Plastic.

On 27th April, we received an angry email saying treesresponsibility neglected to "land manage" because we leave plastic deer shelters in situ long after planting our sites – "tantamount to dumping plastic". A picture was also attached, which showed two horizontal tubes at Mount Skip – which, it was claimed, had not been used to protect the sapling trees, but simply dumped in the grass. The emailer asked us to go back and check our sites, and also suggested the use of biodegradable tubes.

The tone of the email was somewhat accusatory, and it could have done with a bit of fact-checking (two stakes had broken and the tubes at Mount Skip had blown over, and we do go back to our tree-planting sites), but the issue of plastic pollution in tree-planting is a very real one. This article is all about how treesresponsibility and other groups are addressing the issue.

To begin with deer and young trees do not mix. We are aware of one group which grows all its own trees and plants them without protection. They expect a failure rate of roughly 85-90%. Planting 10 trees for every one you expect to grow is definitely one strategy. Another one would be to shoot the deer. A further strategy, most suitable for huge sites, is to exclude deer with (very expensive) deer fences. None of these options is a very good "fit" for treesresponsibility.

Which means that the remaining option is to use deer shelters. The problem here is that shelters need to remain on trees absolutely as long as possible. The picture on the right shows a tree which have had its shelter removed ten years prematurely, and which has been immediately gnawed by deer. Biodegradable shelters simply would not last long enough, so we are stuck with using plastic.



That is not quite the end of the story, though, because we DO have a long term strategy for dealing with our tubes. We have been able to build up a site maintenance reserve – this can be used for cash flow when we know we will have grant money coming, but it can only be "spent down" on the long term care of our sites, including plastic removal. We have a list of every site we have planted, with grid references and we are always glad to hear from people who are aware of tubes having blown down so we can get them sorted. When Forus Tree takes over from treesresponsibility in 2023, the maintenance reserve will pass to them along with the responsibility for ensuring all plastic is eventually removed. In the past it was not possible to recycle these tubes, but in a new and welcome development, Tubex have announced that they will take back used tree-shelters for recycling.

Another interesting development is that Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust have just been awarded funding through **EOCA** for their "Plastic Free Woodlands" project. Some of this is simply maintenance funding to remove redundant tree guards engaging local communities, but some of it is also to trial alternatives and encourage the development of sustainable products. We are on their mailing list, and will follow developments with interest.

An Upper Calder Valley Hedge Fund? Can you help?

The Upper Calder Valley is famous for community spirit, beautiful steep-sided valleys and... flooding. Over the past 5 years, local groups in the SOURCE partnership have been working to minimise the area's vulnerability to climate change, but there is a long way to go and significant hurdles to overcome. Although planting new woodlands is an excellent way to provide interception and infiltration of surface water run-off, landowners often want the land for other purposes, and there are biodiversity issues to consider (species rich grassland, ground nesting birds, etc).

We think the humble hedge can help.

- There is minimal encroachment on grassland areas. The nationwide dramatic losses of unimproved species-rich grasslands is well documented. In upland Calderdale, losses have been due to changes of land use, 'improvement', drainage and under and over grazing. What remains are a small but important resource. In Calderdale, such grasslands are of high ecological importance with species-rich assemblages of flora and fungi.
- Similarly large areas of Calderdale are of great importance because of the internationally significant breeding populations of ground nesting upland birds, like curlews and lapwings. Mature trees can offer vantage points for predatory bird species. By contrast, managed hedgerows can provide a rich habitat for bird and insect life, without growing tall enough to provide high roosting points for predators.
- There is less bureaucracy involved than with NFM interventions like floodwater attenuation ponds
- Providing that we can fund stock-proofing it will be easier to get landowner consent - like woodlands, hedges impede surface water run-off, but they also have the advantage of taking up less ground, so that land can continue to be used for agricultural purposes. Livestock will actually benefit from wind-breaks.

Calderdale is way below the national average for hedgerows. A study conducted for Calderdale Council in 2006 found that:- "The greatest length of hedgerows per square kilometre was less than 2 km/km², which is significantly less than the national average of 2.91 km / km² quoted by Barr, 1993. This suggests that there may have been a significant loss of hedgerows". ("The Calderdale Hedge Hunt -2006; a Survey of the hedgerows of Calderdale. Colin Duke, Hugh Firman, Christine Tansey).

A realistic but challenging target is to achieve 100 kilometres by 2040 (5 kilometres per year over the next 20 years). I like the idea of a **Upper Calder Valley "Hedge Fund"** which could be supported by local businesses, but I am not well enough to pursue this at the moment, and am hoping someone else might step up. We will discuss this at the next SOURCE partnership meeting. The priorities for hedegrow planting should be:- 1) planting across contours 2) creating wildlife corridors.

Hedges provide a habitat for many birds, insects and mammals. By criss-crossing the countryside, they enable wildlife to move about the landscape, connecting populations that would otherwise be isolated and vulnerable.

- Bats use hedgerows as feeding sites and as flight paths to commute between their roosts and other suitable foraging sites.
- Butterflies and other flying insects take advantage of the shelter hedges provide.
- Dormice, which are predominantly arboreal, rely on the connections of good hedges to move between other suitable habitats to breed and feed.
- Bees benefit from hedgerows. A study carried out by Dr Philip Donkersley, of Lancaster University, (Trees for bees. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment, 2019) found that planting hedges could be more effective than wildflower strips.

A letter from Friends of the Earth, following the Supreme Court ruling on the Expansion of Heathrow Airport.....

I'm really sorry to have to tell you that the Supreme Court has just overturned our historic legal victory against the government's decision to support expansion at Heathrow Airport.

This decision brings the airport a step closer to building a third runway. If that happens it would mean a dramatic rise in flights and greenhouse gas emissions. But for the sake of people and planet, we're not giving up.

And there is hope – in fact it's clear from the judgment that this is not a green light to start construction. Far from it. Boris Johnson still has the power to scrap the policy decision to support Heathrow expansion. With the prime minister currently trying to prove his green credentials to the world, now's the perfect time to demand a re-think. If enough of us speak out, Heathrow's third runway can still be stopped.

Heathrow is already one of the largest single sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. Expansion at Heathrow would be a disaster for the climate, as well as an air and noise pollution nightmare for the local communities facing a 50% increase in flights a day if the third runway is built.

But as I said, the judgement isn't a green light for Heathrow to start building. For that, they need planning permission, which they don't have. The judges explicitly stated that the airport's plans would still need to satisfy climate tests during the planning process – something we believe it will be very difficult for them to do.

The world has moved on since the government first made the decision to back the third runway in 2018. Climate policy has been significantly tightened since then. And just last week the government's own climate advisors poured serious doubt on the runway – saying there should be no overall increase in airport capacity in the UK if we are to meet our climate commitments. So with the choice still in Mr Johnson's hands, let's ask him to protect the planet, show real climate leadership, and scrap Heathrow – and indeed any – airport expansion. Today is a setback, not the end. There's everything still to play for.

Please sign our petition **here**:

<https://act.friendsoftheearth.uk/petition/tell-uk-government-stop-heathrow-expansion>

Best wishes,

Katie, Lawyer, Friends of the Earth

PS. Do you remember when Boris Johnson said, "I will lie down with you in front of those bulldozers and stop the construction of that third runway"? We know the prime minister's not always stuck rigidly to his word. But the quote shows he's not entirely sold on Heathrow expansion. That's another reason to keep the pressure up!

Dongria Kondh...

The deep reverence that the Dongria Kondh tribespeople have for their gods, hills and streams pervades every aspect of their lives. They derive their name from dongar, meaning ‘hill’ and the name for themselves is Jharnia: protector of streams.

Ten and a half years ago I played a very small role in the tribe's victory against an open cast mine in the Niyamgiri hills in Orissa in Eastern India. (I did a superglue action at Royal Bank of Scotland who were investing in the project, which is how I came to get the name). This article is an update, largely taken from the Survival International Website.

Following the pausing the mining development by the Government of India, (on environmental and tribal rights grounds) the Supreme Court of India ordered the Odisha Government to consult the local tribespeople, citing the protection afforded to the rights of tribal and forest groups under the Forest Rights Act. Twelve Dongria Kondh village councils were consulted and all rejected the mining proposals. In 2014 the Indian Ministry of Environment refused clearance for the mine. (The state government of Odisha has subsequently sought permission from the Supreme Court to restart the scheme, thus far unsuccessfully).

However winning the campaign against the mine was only part of the story. The Dongria are still campaigning against a hugely polluting bauxite refinery in the nearby town of Lanjigarh. The refinery was approved by the government on the condition that no forest would be used, but this condition was blatantly ignored – 60 hectares of village forest were annexed, and the refinery also completely destroyed Kinari village, displacing over a hundred Majhi Kondh families to a settlement known locally as ‘the rehab colony’ - a walled compound of concrete houses, circled with barbed wire.

Now the Dongria Kondh are facing a new threat.... A controversial Indian mining company whose operations threaten lands, forests and sacred sites vital to thousands of tribal families has opened a residential school for tribal children in Odisha, India in an effort to “transform” them.



The Chief Minister of Odisha and Priti Adani, wife of Adani's founder, at the opening of the new Adani-KISS school, Jan 2020.

Adani, a \$13billion corporation, is embroiled in controversy in India and Australia. In India its coal mines threaten the forests and livelihoods of thousands of Gond, Santhal and Munda tribespeople.

Its new school for tribal children is a partnership with KISS (the Kalinga Institute for Social Sciences), whose existing school for 27,000 tribal children in Odisha is the largest tribal residential school in the world. KISS boasts that the institution turns “tax consumers into tax payers, liabilities into assets.”

Survival International has recently launched a campaign against these kinds of “Factory Schools,” which practice systematic cultural erasure masquerading as education, and which teach tribal children to feel ashamed of who they are and where they come from.

In a statement to mark the opening of the new school, Dr. Priti Adani, wife of Adani’s founder Gautam Adani, spoke of the need for “social transformation” of tribal children.

The Indian tribal rights activist Soni Sori says: “We resist this kind of education, whoever it comes from – Adani or anyone. They give their kind of education because they want our children to hate jungles. They want our children to hate their own culture. They want to create distance between children and parents.”



Tribal rights activist Soni Sori © Survival

Survival International’s Dr. Jo Woodman said today: “The agenda behind this school is clear: Adani wants tribal lands, and tribal resistance is a major thorn in their sides. This school is a brazen and shameless attempt to ‘reprogram’ a generation of tribal children to see mining as ‘good’ and their spiritual and cultural connections to their land as ‘bad’ or ‘backwards.’ For KISS to partner so closely with a company so notorious on issues of indigenous rights in both India and Australia shows their true colors.”

Survival International Director Stephen Corry said today: “Taking the “tribal” out of tribal children has been a major weapon in the dominant society’s destruction of minorities and theft of their land and resources. It leads to immense suffering. This is now recognized as shameful and criminal in North America and Australia, but it’s not only still going on in India, it’s growing. As usual, it claims to benefit the same victims it’s actually destroying. Adani mining’s partnership with KISS school is another blatant move in the corporate eradication of real human diversity: it should concern all who care for the planet and its peoples.”

Treesponsibility was among over 70 groups signing this open letter calling on the UK Government to redirect renewable subsidies from biomass burning to genuinely renewable energy. The recipients were: Alok Sharma, Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, and Kwasi Kwarteng, Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth.

"The UK spends well over £1 billion a year subsidising burning trees for electricity, with most of the wood shipped in in the form of pellets sourced from high carbon, biodiverse forests¹ overseas. The UK's demand for wood-fuelled electricity contributes to climate change,² forest degradation³ and environmental injustice,⁴ and is destroying the habitats of many at-risk animals and plants. A major expansion of the wood pellet industry is now underway,⁵ supported by subsidies in the UK and several other European countries. The UK remains the world's biggest wood pellet importer.

Therefore, we urge you to initiate proceedings to remove subsidies paid to companies that burn solid biomass for electricity under the Renewables Obligation scheme, and redirect the money to support genuinely renewable wind, solar and wave/tidal power.

Keeping forests standing must be a priority of all governments seeking to address the climate emergency. Burning wood in power stations threatens that priority by leading to more forests being felled. In January 2018, 800 scientists set out the climate impacts of burning wood in an Open Letter to the EU Parliament: *'Even if forests are allowed to regrow, using wood deliberately harvested for burning will increase carbon in the atmosphere and warming for decades to centuries – [...] even when wood replaces coal, oil or natural gas. The reasons are fundamental and occur regardless of whether forest management is "sustainable".'*⁶

Moreover, burning wood causes air pollution comparable to burning coal⁷ and new research has found that burning trees from so-called 'sustainably managed forests' increases CO₂ pollution in the atmosphere for more than 40 years.⁸ This is well beyond the timeframe critical to tackle the climate emergency. Moreover, Drax, which gets over £2.1 million in renewable energy subsidies every day, routinely burns pellets sourced from clearcuts of mature coastal hardwood forests in the Southeastern USA,⁹ forests which lie at the heart of a global biodiversity hotspot.¹⁰

We believe we have a responsibility to act on climate change and to ensure that the UK can meet our international commitments to work towards keeping global temperature rises to 1.5oC.

In 2018, the government made a positive first step by effectively ruling out new subsidies¹¹ for large-scale biomass electricity that is dependent on imported wood. However, existing biomass power stations are due to continue receiving subsidies until 2027.

Fortunately, most of these subsidies can be stopped through secondary legislation. This would free up hundreds of millions a year which, under the Levy Control Framework, must then be spent on genuinely clean and renewable energy".

References can be found at <https://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2020/international-day-of-action-on-forest-biomass/>

Biofuel Watch will be hosting an on-line screening of "Burned" on 18th January, with guest speakers from the southern US joining for a discussion afterwards.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/online-screening-of-burned-are-trees-the-new-coal-with-speakers-and-qa-tickets-133232428781>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/752030842066290>