



“And the lovely countryside through the iron gate down the new road. It’s my favourite walk, and I’ve stopped and looked, and I’ve thought that it’s one thing – if I haven’t money in my pocket, it’s one thing nobody can rob me of. It’s mine. It’s mine for the taking.” ~ Hannah Hauxwell

Winter 2017-18 was without a doubt Teazle Wood’s toughest winter since it has been in our stewardship.

Late November (2017) saw the demolition without a planning application of the Royal Oak public house in nearby Kingston Road. The Royal Oak has featured several times in Teazle Wood’s Heritage Open Days events – it is the pub where the body of the ‘Poor Murdered Woman’ was taken in the folk song of the same name, and John Simms was both landlord of the pub and manager of the Teazle Wood brickyard in the 1800s. The local community has fought hard for a just outcome, and as a result the developer must now submit a retrospective planning application for the demolition.

In December 2017, a major incursion began on the LH07 site immediately adjacent to Teazle Wood. After six days of waste dumping and burning by a large group, the extent of the rubbish was revealed when the group finally moved on (a fire was burning simultaneously and another incursion occurred on the site of the newly-demolished pub). Damage to Teazle Wood itself was limited (it was used as a human toilet, and loose dogs were running in the wood), but the wildlife along the important edge of the woodland must have suffered – certain species we are monitoring would have been hibernating here, and endangered flora is still underneath the waste.

In February 2018 the group returned and the waste importation and fires started again. The network of key contacts established during the first incursion proved incredibly effective during the second, and this time the group moved on after two days.

A great deal has been learned, and the situation remains ‘live’ in the sense that the pub’s future hangs in the balance and the waste remains on LH07 and is hazardous to wildlife and local children.

This is the briefest of summaries of a very complex and drawn-out sequence of events. Rest assured that we have been fully involved almost daily in a great deal of correspondence and numerous meetings, and we are doing all that we can to find solutions and to ensure the best possible ending to this difficult chapter.



In the midst of all the chaos and smoke in North Leatherhead in December, we received the uplifting news that the LINK group of Ashted had raised well over a thousand pounds for the Teazle Wood Trust. THANK YOU to them for this extraordinary achievement. The ladies of LINK had knitted Christmas angels, and one of these decorated a tree in Teazle Wood and is now safely stored to be brought out again when we all need reminding of the power of human kindness in challenging times!



In February, Teazle Wood featured in the new [RSPCA Guide to Animal Kindness](#). Our loyal gang of litter pickers did a clean-up in Teazle Wood - filmed, photographed and recorded by the RSPCA’s advertising agency Arthur London. The focus in relation to Teazle Wood was on how litter is injuring and killing wildlife and domestic pets. Thank you to everyone who turned out in such bitterly cold weather to get this important message across.



Teazle Wood Winter
by Emile de Sousa