



HEREFORDSHIRE PARKLANDS CONFERENCE

1-3 JULY 2026

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME†

Venue: New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE)

Skylon Campus, Canary Drive, Skylon Park, Hereford, HR2 6SR

With site visits by coach to parklands each afternoon

The Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club gratefully acknowledges sponsorship and grants from the following organisations, whose support has made this conference possible:

Herefordshire Community Foundation

Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust

Hereford Council

Howard Bulmer Charitable Trust

The Mumford Memorial Trust



† The programme shown is as arranged at end February 2026.

DAY ONE:1 JULY 2026. HEREFORDSHIRE PARKLANDS: LANDSCAPE HISTORY, FEATURES AND CULTURE

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
08:30	Registration and Coffee	
FIRST MORNING SESSION		Chairperson: Lord Lisvane KCL DL FLSW
08.45	Welcome and housekeeping	
08:50	Introductory Remarks	Edward Harley CBE, <i>Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire</i>
08.55	Woolhope Club 175 th Anniversary	Prof. Keith Ray MBE, <i>Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club President</i>
09:00	Herefordshire Parkland: a brief history	David Whitehead, <i>Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club</i>
09:20	Archaeology of the Parklands	Prof. Keith Ray, <i>Woolhope Club</i> and <i>Cardiff University</i> Tim Hoverd, <i>Herefordshire Archaeology</i>
09:40	Parkland Art	Charles Watkins, <i>Professor of Rural Geography, University of Nottingham</i>
10:00	Discussion	Chairperson: Prof. Charles Watkins
10.20	COFFEE	
SECOND MORNING SESSION		Chairperson: Ian Grafton, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
10:50	Geology and geo-conservation of the parklands	Moira Jenkins, <i>Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club</i>
11:10	Hydrology of the parklands: springs, marshes, water features	Will Watson, <i>ecologist and environmental consultant, Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club trustee</i>
11:30	Mapping of trees, hedges and woodlands	David Lovelace, <i>Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club</i> Neil Ford, <i>Ancient Woodland Inventory, Natural England</i>
11:50	Discussion	Chairperson: James Marsden, former Chair of the Herefordshire Climate & Nature Partnership Board
12.10	LUNCH	
AFTERNOON: SITE VISITS		
12:45	Coaches depart for SITE VISITS. To BRAMPTON BRYAN or GATLEY PARK, depending on preference	
14.00	BRAMPTON BRYAN	Welcome and Introduction: Edward Harley CBE Experts from the Ancient Tree Forum, Woodland Trust, Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club
14.00	GATLEY PARK	Welcome and Introduction: The Right Hon. Philip Dunne Experts from the Ancient Tree Forum, Woodland Trust, Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club
16:00	TEA and CAKE	Brampton Bryan Village Hall or the Church at Gatley
16.45	Coaches return to NMITE	Estimated arrival back at NMITE, Skylon Campus: 17.30

DAY TWO: 2 JULY. PROJECTS AND CHALLENGES FACING TREESCAPES

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
08:30	Coffee and registration	
FIRST MORNING SESSION		Chairperson: Peter Clay, Brockhampton and Perrystone Estates, founding member of Herefordshire Meadows
08.45	Welcome and announcements for DayTwo	
08.50	Vegetation: the skin of the land	Stuart Hedley, <i>County Recorder for Herefordshire's vascular plants</i>
09:10	Flower-rich parkland swards: semi-natural habitats in a designed landscape	Caroline Hanks, <i>Director, Herefordshire Meadows</i>
09:30	Fungi in the life of trees	Lynne Boddy MBE, <i>Professor of Fungal Ecology at Cardiff University</i>
09:50	Tree population sizes required to ensure veteran tree ecological continuity in wood pasture and parklands	Nigel Pilling, <i>Wood Pasture and Parkland Senior Specialist, Trees and Woodlands Team, Natural England</i>
10:10	Discussion	Chairperson: Victoria Heffer, CEO, Radnorshire Wildlife Trust
10.30	COFFEE	
SECOND MORNING SESSION		Chairperson: James Hervey-Bathurst CBE DL, Eastnor
11:00	Acute and chronic oak decline, BACSTOP project	Sandra Denman, <i>Principal Pathologist, Forest Research</i>
11:20	The changing nature of forest pests in Britain	Daegan Inward, <i>Senior Researcher, Forest Research</i>
11:40	Collapsing foundations: The ecology of the British oak, implications of its decline and mitigation options	Ruth Mitchell, <i>Woodland Ecologist, Ecological Sciences Department at the James Hutton Institute, Aberdeen University</i>
12:00	Effects of pollutants and climate change on soil health	Elena Vanguelova, <i>Senior biogeochemist, Soil Sustainability Research, Forest Research</i>
12:20	Panel questions and discussion	Chairperson: Saul Herbert, CEO, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
12.45	LUNCH	
AFTERNOON SITE VISITS		
13.20	Coaches depart for SITE VISITS. To MOCCAS or EASTNOR & BROMESBERROW, depending on preference	
14.00	MOCCAS	Welcome and introduction: Francis Chester-Master Experts: Tom Simpson, Natural England; Action Oak, Geraint Richards; Woodland Trust, Emma Gilmartin or Jeremy Evans

DAY TWO, Continued...		
14.00	EASTNOR & BROMESBERROW	Welcome and introduction at Eastnor: James Hervey-Bathurst CBE DL Experts: Natural England; Emma Gilmartin or Jeremy Evans, Woodland Trust By kind permission of the landowner, the visit to Eastnor will be extended to take in the adjoining Bromsberrow Park
16.00	TEA and CAKE	Moccas Village Hall or Woodshed Café, Eastnor
16.45	Coach from Moccas to NMITE	Estimated arrival back at NMITE, Skylon Campus: 17.30
16.30	Coach from Woodshed café, Eastnor to Bromesberrow followed by visit	Introduction to Bromsberrow: The Hon. Gilbert Greenall CBE DL MD
17.45	Coach from Bromesberrow to NMITE	Estimated arrival back at NMITE, Skylon Campus: 18.30

DAY THREE: 3 JULY 2026. MANAGEMENT PROSPECTS AND SOLUTIONS

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
08:15	Arrival, coffee, newcomer registration	
FIRST MORNING SESSION		Chairperson: David Daniels, <i>Chair of Plantlife Int.</i>
08.45	Welcome and announcements for Day Three	
08.50	Harnessing the microbiome for tree resilience	James McDonald, <i>Professor of Microbiology, Birmingham University</i>
09:10	The social dimensions of Oak landscape management: Creating opportunities out of challenges	Mariella Marzano OBE, <i>Principal Social Scientist, Forest Research</i>
09:30	Soil rhizosphere and recommendations for naturalistic management strategies	Alice Dibley, <i>PhD Student, University of West of England, Bristol</i>
09.50	Climate change on oaks, My Forest mapping - potential for citizen science	Nathan Brown, <i>Forest Research</i>
10.10	Discussion	Chairperson: Richard Powell OBE, <i>Ancient Tree Forum Chair</i>
10.30	COFFEE	
SECOND MORNING SESSION		Chairperson: Jesse Norman MP
10.50	Tree declines through the lens of Regenerative Arboriculture - new perspectives, with a focus on restoring the health of declining trees.	Geoff Monck, <i>Treecosystems Ltd, Centre for Forest Protection and Birmingham Institute of Forest Research.</i>

DAY THREE, Continued...		
11.05	Managing trees in parklands and heritage landscapes- experience from a practitioner	Reg Harris, <i>Urban Forestry (Bury St Edmunds) Ltd</i>
11:20	Ancient and veteran trees - assessment and management	Ed Pyne, <i>Senior Conservation Advisor for Trees, Woodland Trust</i>
11.40	Averting loss. Recovering life. The restoration of Croome Park, 25 years on	Tom Oliver, <i>Chair, Council for Preservation of Rural England, Herefordshire</i>
SUMMARIES AND NEXT STEPS		Chair: Andrew McRobb, CEO of Council for the Preservation of Rural England, Herefordshire (CPRE)
12:00	Summing up-key issues arising from the conference.	Matthew Wainhouse, <i>Natural England</i>
12.15	A future research agenda	Carrie Brady, <i>Senior Lecturer, Microbiology, Centre for Research in Biosciences, University of West England (UWE Bristol)</i> Sandra Denman, <i>Principal Pathologist, Forest Research</i>
12:25	A future action agenda: final discussion panel to discuss future action for treescapes	Sarah Cattell, <i>Natural England</i> Ed Pyne, <i>Woodland Trust</i> Saul Herbert, <i>Herefordshire Wildlife Trust</i> Elissa Swinglehurst, <i>Herefordshire Council</i> Tom Oliver, <i>CPRE</i>
12:45	Final questions and discussion from audience	Chairperson: Annabel Narayan, CEO Action Oak
12.55	Closing remarks	Prof. Keith Ray, President, Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club
13.00	LUNCH	
AFTERNOON SITE VISITS		
13.30	Coaches depart for site visits to KENTCHURCH or HOLME LACY, depending on preference	
14.00	KENTCHURCH	Welcome and introduction: Joss Lucas-Scudamore and Tristan Gregory (Gardener). Experts from the Ancient Tree Forum, Woodland Trust, Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club
14.00	HOLME LACY	Welcome from Alys Probert (Deputy Head, Holme Lacy College). Experts from the Ancient Tree Forum, Woodland Trust, Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club
16.00	TEA and CAKE	The Bridge Inn, Kentchurch Holme Lacy
16.45	Coaches to NMITE	Estimated arrival back at NMITE, Skylon Campus: 17.30

EXHIBITIONS AVAILABLE ON ALL THREE DAYS

Display tables, banners or exhibitions from specialist organisations, likely to include:

- **Woodland Heritage**
- **The Woodland Trust**
- **Herefordshire Wildlife Trust**
- **Natural England**
- **The Ancient Tree Forum**

The **Woolhope Naturalists' Field** Club will show an exhibition about the geology, history, archaeology, biodiversity, and landscapes of Herefordshire's parklands