

THE DRAINAGE OF CONNAUGHT AVENUE

The Wokingham Society has been glad to contribute to the project to drain Connaught Avenue, organised by the Holt Copse Conservation Volunteers (HCCV).

Connaught Avenue, the twin rows of red oak trees in Joel Park, was planted in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V. The avenue is an historic landmark throughout the year and the trees are spectacular in the autumn. Unfortunately many of the trees have died and others have struggled, largely because the area has been very wet and the soil waterlogged for much of the year. Originally two drainage ditches parallel and adjacent to each row of trees probably removed much of the excess water, but over the years these ditches had ceased to function.

HCCV recently began to replant the missing trees (with young self-set plants grown from acorns from the original trees), but they were unlikely to thrive unless the area was drained. The ground between the two rows of trees and to the west (lower) side was so soggy that a substantial area was effectively inaccessible for half the year to the many folk who walk, play and exercise their dogs in Joel Park.

With the financial contribution from the Society and others HCCV has been able to install drains to remove the excess water so the existing and replacement red oaks now have a better chance of surviving and establishing respectively, and so the area can be enjoyed by residents for more of the year.



Why HCCV decided to put in drains in Connaught Avenue!



The trenching machine in operation – much quicker than digging them by hand!



Laying the pipe in the main drain.