



The Isle of Wight Red Squirrel Trust

Charity No: 1112374

2024 newsletter

2023 a busy year for The IOW Red Squirrel Trust



Message from the chair, Helen Butler MBE BSc

On behalf of our precious red squirrels on the Isle of Wight, I thank all you supporters, volunteers and trustees for your input, the job cannot be done without you!

We welcome new trustee, Tanya Rock. Tanya has been attending shows, giving talks and helps manage the hide.

We are also very proud to have Axel Scheffler as an honorary patron and look forward to meeting him in the future.

We need more people to help with talks and shows, so don't be shy give me a ring on 01983 611003.

Superman Simon Howes!

Simon is an absolute hero and everyone must be in awe of someone who rowed the Atlantic on his own and unaided at the age of 67. Plus he broke the record by 43 days!

The target of £100,000 was met and is going towards The IOW Red Squirrel Trust either buying a field so trees can be planted to create a new woodland, or if we are really lucky, to buy a woodland.

In gratitude from the trustees, Helen presented Simon with a globe showing his route across the Atlantic.



Kitemark for businesses that support us

Red squirrels are used to promote businesses and attract tourism on the Isle of Wight but apart from Island Biscuits the charity does not receive any support towards our work.



We are quite high profile which will help businesses on the Island – and the red squirrels. By signing up to the kitemark scheme your business will have a certificate with the kitemark on and will show how much you have raised.

This may be displayed at your business as well as appearing on our website and Facebook pages, thereby providing publicity and encouraging people to use your firm as it supports our iconic red squirrels. Ring 01983 611003 to join us.

Education

We are pleased have a new children's book for you. It's called 'Ginger finds a new home' by Helen Butler MBE BSc and is aimed at very young children. Graphic artist Kate Northover did the illustrations and design.

The story is based on the true life happenings of red squirrels and there are 12 facts, with pictures, after the story. The book is distributed in shops around the Island.



The pocket book, '200 fascinating facts about red squirrels' and 'Red squirrels on the Isle of Wight' are also both available in Island shops.

As part of our charitable giving, The Trust funded a free copy of 'Red squirrels on the Isle of Wight' to Island libraries, colleges and High Schools. This is the culmination of Helen's work since 1991 and give a detailed insight to research, squirrel care and post mortem results. If you know of a university who would like a free copy, get in touch with Helen by emailing: wightsquirrels@hotmail.com

The online auctions have been successful thanks to Debbie and Beth, who work really hard to make them run smoothly. Debbie has been a stalwart at the shows and generously buys most of the items sold from her own money. She was also awarded the 'volunteer of the year trophy'.



Events

Thanks to Nicky Eaton we had a Bluebell day again. Sadly Iain Eaton passed away shortly before the event and the trustees sent their condolences. The event raised ££552.84., so thank you to all who helped and especially to Nicky for letting us see her beautiful – and private – wood at Knighton.



One of our original trustees, John Gurney-Champion, had his 100th birthday this year. Many congratulations John! Dorothy and Helen attended the party, which was a very enjoyable day. John still comes to our meetings.

Television programme, The Jewel in the South, featured red squirrels in the second programme. Helen and volunteers Rod and Steve were filmed at the hide and camera trapping (a non-intrusive survey method) at Briddlesford.

All publicity helps raise awareness of red squirrels on the Isle of Wight and their national importance in the conservation of the species.

Online adoptions

After all our efforts there are still glitches in the hard copy system of the 'Adopt a red squirrel' scheme., although the majority of adoptions go smoothly.

Royal Mail has had its own troubles, which didn't help us. Adoptions are online now, which will solve the glitches, just click to choose which squirrel you would like to adopt:

><https://iowredsquirreltrust.co.uk/product-category/symbolic-red-squirrel-adoption>

Admin

We no longer have paid admin support but Beth has agreed to keep Facebook, the website and online auctions going for us. Meanwhile Dorothy and Helen are doing their best to keep the admin up to date until we find a new administrator.