

What is a veteran tree?

A tree that is of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically because of its size, age or situation.

Put simply a veteran tree is one that makes you think *WOW!*

Some of the distinguishing features of a veteran tree include holes and cracks to support wildlife, deadwood, fungal growth, or ancient pollards and coppice stools.

The trees in Lullingstone Country Park are a mix of ages – ranging from newly planted to some over 500 years old.

Useful terms

Coppicing

A traditional method of woodland management that involves periodically cutting back trees to their base (stool) to encourage regrowth. This is carried out rotationally so that there is always a mixture of different aged trees.

Pollarding

The method of removing the growing branches of a tree above the height that is browsed by deer or other ruminants to prolong the life of the tree. This method was often used on boundary trees.



SITA Trust Enriching Nature Programme

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SITA Trust is an ethical funding organisation dedicated to making lasting improvements to the natural environment and community life. The Trust is a not-for-profit company, a registered and accredited environmental body that operates under the Landfill Communities Fund distributing funds donated by the recycling and resource management company SITA UK.

For more information visit:
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Kent Country Parks

Kent Country Parks are 13 country parks owned or managed by Kent County Council, many of which are situated within the county's finest Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

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Kent Country Parks

Lullingstone's Veteran Trees



naturally, a great day out



www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks



Veteran trees in Lullingstone Country Park

- 1 *Tea Garden Oak* This tree shows most of the factors that signify a veteran tree.
- 2 *Boundary Field Maple* Trees that look relatively young are considered veteran if they are a short lived species, like this ancient field maple. Before trees, were planted to mark boundaries.
- 3 *Monolith Beech* This beech suffered from fungal decay. As a result, it was mechanically reduced to a monolith (trunk only) to enable it to be a habitat for a variety of creatures.
- 4 *Natural Monolith Beech* This is an example of an old tree that has naturally become standing dead-wood (the term used to describe a natural monolith). It has lost the majority of its top – possibly as the result of a storm.
- 5 *Beeches and Chestnuts* In this area of beech and sweet chestnut veterans, the sweet chestnut can be clearly identified by the twist in the trunk. The beech in the open glade has a bee's nest in a hole near the top – a good illustration of the conservation value of veteran trees.
- 6 *Phoenix Hazel* This tree fell in the 1987 storm that ravaged South East England. The parts of the trunk that touched the ground rooted and have become genetically identical offspring. The branches have now become trunks and the tree is a multi-stemmed hazel. This process is known as phoenix regeneration.

- 7 *Story-teller's Horse Chestnut* This wonderful tree makes a perfect shelter tree in summer when in full leaf. Its low branches are very inviting for children and it certainly has the WOW factor of a true veteran.
- 8 *Henry VIII Oak* One of the oldest trees in the park – around 600 years old – this oak would have been a sapling that survived the deer that browsed the woodland at the time of Henry VIII.
- 9 *Sentry Box Oak* Standing proudly alone on the edge of the golf course, this tree gets its name from the large hollow in the trunk that it is possible to stand in.
- 10 *Golf Course Ancient Oak* Possibly the oldest tree in the park, this magnificent oak stands modestly along the edge of one of the fairways of the golf course. During the winter, this tree is revealed in its true majesty as it is not sheltered by those around it.



- 11 *Hart Dyke Sycamore* Planted as a memorial to Percival Hart Dyke by the Hart Dyke family – the owners of Lullingstone Castle – it stands alone. Viewed from the castle, it dominates the skyline of the ridge.
- 12 *Mast Straight Beech* Here are many beech trees that have grown tall and straight due to competition from other trees. In coppice compartments, these slower growing trees were planted to grow straight for use as ship's masts.

