

RICHARD BLAND OBITUARY - 8TH November 2018

Richard died on the 30th of October, after becoming unwell in September. We knew that he was very ill; however, the sad news of his death still came as a shock to all those who had worked with him through the Tree Forum and other organisations.

We shall all miss Richard very much indeed, as will so many of those connected with trees and wildlife in Bristol. We have such happy memories of working with him and we shall miss him on many counts. His knowledge of trees was a huge resource for the Tree Forum and no-one needed Google, when we could refer to Richard. His enthusiasm was passed on to us all and was a real source of motivation, as was his tenacity. He was always ready to volunteer for tasks, however mundane.

He was a kind and supportive colleague, quietly contributing to committee meetings. His wisdom and common sense were always there to bring us back to earth.

The emails that have come in to the Tree Forum from a number of people have paid tribute to his work with trees in Bristol. Richard was to the fore in identifying and plotting trees in many parts of Bristol and especially on the Downs and the surrounding area. His work on this was a driver for the Bristol Trees website and indeed the Bristol Tree Forum website. As a tree champion for his area, he was able to help others with tree conservation and management; as a member of the Tree Forum Committee, he was able to comment on the wider picture of trees in Bristol and offer informed and sensible advice to the rest of the committee. He became involved with Bristol City Council's educational work and the development of tree trails at Ashton Court.

Richard was respected by officers of Bristol City Council as well as members of other organizations. He was described as an ambassador for trees and council officers were impressed by his knowledge, enthusiasm and supportive approach. It was Richard's idea of have Tree of the Year Competition and this has led to increased awareness of the role of trees in Bristol with several hundred people voting in the competition.

Richard was always there to help and advice and encourage. His contribution was huge, and he was, and remains, an inspiration to us all.