

TREE-MENDOUS TREES – Part 3

We have all heard of the splendid Wellingtonia Avenue of giant sequoia trees, but did you know about the Barkham Lime Tree Avenue? Possibly not, as it is a little out of the way and only visible from certain locations. One of the best spots to view it is from the North Eastern edge of Rooks Nest Wood: Map Ref SU 79051 66389. To find the viewpoint use the circular footpath that goes around the outside edge of the country park and at the northern most point look for a metal gate with a large sign that says "**NO PUBLIC or DOG ACCESS**"



The avenue was planted in 1886 by John Walter the 3rd who was the proprietor of the Times Newspaper, and he lived at [Bearwood House](#) in Sindlesham which is now the Reddam Private School. The avenue consists of both large and small leaved lime trees.

This is an unusual avenue in that it once consists of a long row of Lime Trees that are four abreast rather than a normal avenue of just two rows of trees. Once it used to have a central track, but this has disappeared as the field that it is in has been used livestock pasture for many years. There are now about 80 trees or tree remains at the moment, but indications are that the avenue once continued much further to the North West and was possibly twice its existing length, so the avenue could have been up to 200 original trees when it was planted. It is thought that there is only one other lime avenue with a 4 tree width in the UK and that is in Wollaton Park, Nottingham.

Although, our lime tree avenue is still an impressive sight, unfortunately, many of the trees have either fallen or are in poor condition, particularly at the NW end of the avenue. This is probably due to a fungal disease called, *Phytophthora plurivora*, that limes are susceptible to, and it looks as if the disease is very slowly progressing down the avenue. The trees decline is not due to old age as Lime Trees can live to the ripe old age of about 800 years,

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For more information visit: <https://www.wdvt.org.uk>