

Woodland relief

In the course of ‘repairing’ woods damaged by recent storms, new allies have joined us in the great conservation cause. Bonio, the firm that makes those delicious dog biscuits, has weighed in with its ‘plant-a-tree-for-doggy’ campaign. Young trees, say Bonio, ‘provide ideal locations for outdoor walks with your dog’. I think we all know what they mean by that. If Fido had no tree to cock his leg against, he might well choose some less ideal location. It is nice to learn that trees still have their uses. Though perhaps it’s just as well they don’t have any feelings. Carry on, Fido. Free vouchers come with ‘mini-chop biscuits’ and ‘yummy cheese crunchies’.

Meanwhile Andrex, the toilet-paper people, are unrolling their own campaign to save our woods. It is called ‘Woodland Releaf’, which really is extremely amusing. Perhaps they intend to remove those festoons of lavatory paper which are such a regrettable part of *today’s* woodland scene. I hope so. It is hard to see Andrex’s products as a worthwhile adornment to our woods, even their environmentally coloured ‘spring green’ paper for caring bums.

But if Andrex really have the best interests of the woods at heart, they should be encouraging people to make the best use of the natural amenities. If you are caught short during a woodland ramble, dock leaves are the best, but any bunch of sycamore or beech will do *in extremis*. The Romans always used to thrash themselves with stinging nettles afterwards. I’m told it is most invigorating, should you feel like giving it a try.

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