

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 February 2017

The directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 28 February 2017.

Review of business

The principal activity of the company continues to be that of managing a Community Woodland for the benefit of the Tarvin Community but also the wider public from surrounding villages.

This second report will be presented to members of Tarvin Community Woodland Trust Limited at its second annual meeting in April 2017.

Purpose: to hold the woodland in Trust for the community and to ensure it is well managed and developed. It provides outdoor recreation for young and old in a safe environment; its central pathway, some 2km in length, is certainly well walked. The woodland is educational in providing access to a wide variety of flora and fauna, for example it has a varied and healthy population of bird species. These are viewed from hides and at bird feeding stations. Education in natural history is one of the Trust's main aims and being adjacent to the primary school provides learning opportunities to its pupils.

People: A wide variety of people contribute to the success of the woodland for which we are grateful. The Trustees have wide and varied backgrounds, which allow for efficient management, maintenance and growth. They have wider career experience in engineering, business management, legal issues, education and communications so the Trust is well served. The Members, many of whom are also Volunteers, have a wide practical skill base and are well placed to offer constructive advice to the Trustees on both woodland improvements and new initiatives. However, Trustees felt the need for more professional support in both Botany and Ecology and so are grateful for being able to retain the services of a professional consultant in these areas. In recent years most practical work has been done on weekdays as most volunteers are in retirement. A recent initiative has been to attract younger people as volunteers who because of their careers contribute on the weekend. Importantly we have a number of regular and ad hoc events often related to fund raising which also need volunteers; our annual plant sale and coffee morning examples are well supported.

Communication: We are convinced that the success we have seen in recent years has been greatly aided by good communications between TCWT and the community. This is achieved through notice boards, twice yearly delivery of our newsletter directly to the majority of households and public relations exposure in the local press and the village website, Tarvinonline.

Overview:

Our Community Woodland is well used and appreciated by Tarvin residents but also by our neighbouring communities. Our long stated aim of managing the existing woodland for sustainability at affordable cost has been achieved in recent years but our ambition is taking us further:

- In April we will take ownership of the "new woodland" within the Saxon Heath development.
- Our weekly volunteer workforce on Thursday mornings now regularly numbers 5 or 8.
- In recent weeks the new weekend volunteers have contributed much to the new woodland area especially in terms of thinning new tree growth and hedge creation through transplantation.
- Never has any woodland boasted so many habitat piles!
- Thanks to the generosity of our Community and the maintenance funding attached to the new woodland adoption arrangement with Taylor Wimpey we have finally been able to purchase a sit-on (in) substantial mower capable of dealing with brambles and longer growth. We are also working on establishing a safe storage area for the mowers and other kit in the Woodland.

Our cooperation with TW on acquiring and developing the new addition to the woodland has been mutually very successful. Other organisations are studying/planning further housing developments in Tarvin and see the potential benefits of working with TCWT. However, this gives the Trustees food for thought. A common cause of organisational failure is overstretch and this we must avoid so will consider further woodland expansion very carefully and will strive to do what is best for both TCWT and the Community. Certainly, for the next year or two, we can concentrate on consolidating the existing/new woodlands and integrating the work of the volunteers to continue our strategy of sustainability at minimum cost.

In addition to Woodland development we have always been committed to be part of the social fabric of our Community through our support for the school, access to nature through bird boxes/hides and wildlife habitats! We envisage these activities not only continuing but growing.

Finally the directors thank the local community for its generosity of time and its funding support.

Stuart Exell