

Come and join us for our Autumn

COFFEE MORNING

with Cake Stall and Raffle!

at Tarvin Methodist Church

between 10.00am and Noon

on Saturday 12th October 2013.

Your support is hugely important. Do come and talk to us!



WREN
resourcing >>>
your projects



**Cheshire West
and Chester**

**You are invited to a celebration of
the completion of our footpath!**

Come and join with the Trustees and children of the school as
we officially open the magnificent Grogan's Walk footpath.

**Meet us at 2.00pm on Saturday 19th October 2013
at Tarvin Primary School, Heath Drive, Tarvin CH3 8LS**

This is your chance to meet our generous sponsors
from WREN and from CWaC.



Tarvin Community Woodland Trust
Created by the community for the community

www.tarvincommunitywoodland.org

Email to: info@tarvincommunitywoodland.org

"Crowsfoot Cottage,"
Old Moss,
Stapleford,
Tarvin,
Chester.
CH3 8HR
Tarvin 740337
September 2013

Dear friends,

As the summer draws to a close and we anticipate renewed maintenance activity in the community woodland in the autumn, it is an opportunity to take stock of "where we are" in the evolution of the woodland and what we hope to achieve in the coming twelve months. Now the revamped pathway is complete, I believe the village facility is looking established, well maintained and is certainly fit for purpose. Comments from users and neighbours are overwhelmingly positive and Trustees try to respond positively, in the interests of the majority, to concerns such as loss of light due to excessive tree growth. In the attached News from the Woodland our secretary summarises our recent achievements and project aspirations for the existing woodland and refers to our continuing efforts to greatly expand the woodland from Broomheath to Austin's Hill; this is at least a two year project, the detail is still subject to negotiation but we are optimistic of a positive outcome recognising the extra financial and volunteer effort that will be required.

In managing the woodland the Trustees regularly seek external advice from supporters and friends as they themselves continue to learn and their own knowledge grows. As part of this, following our success in securing the latest Green Flag Community Award (2012/13) we received the detailed report from the Field Assessors. Whilst it is gratifying that this is in the main both detailed and positive, based on their wide experience of assessing many sites, they do make a number of recommendations to the Trust including:

- Encouraging feedback from users of the woodland on possible improvements and problems such as the appearance of noxious weeds and infestation such as ash die back.
- Raising the Trust's profile in the community to ensure a future pipeline of volunteers and trustees. This should include informing home buyers on the new estate about the existing woodland and its extension and hence encouraging their integration into the established community.
- On conservation and biodiversity to continue wild flower planting, the wetland project and especially tree thinning to reduce competition in accordance with good silvicultural practice.
- Create a succession plan which looks at how the woodland can be protected and managed for the future including plans that address trustee replacement and a sustained volunteering ethos.
- Continue to seek local and wider funding opportunities.

Much of this the trustees have in hand but the Green Flag assessor's comments and guidance are none-the-less very welcome.

So my main message here is to ask you, the community, to give us feedback, to continue to support your Trust and to encourage everyone to be involved in both current and future volunteering. The next shared opportunities to do this are at the coffee morning on 12th October and the footpath celebration a week later the 19th October. I do hope to see you there but also I personally would greatly welcome written, email or telephone comments and contributions.

With best wishes,

Stuart Exell

Chairman of Tarvin Community Woodland Trust

Our fourth Green Flag.

It was a proud moment when news came through to Jim Grogan that Tarvin Community Woodland had won its very first Green Flag (then called the Green Pennant). Unfortunately, he was in hospital when that award was presented (although he did see the video of the proceedings) and, sadly, he didn't live long enough to know about the woodland receiving a second award. However, the legacy that he left behind, our lovely woodland, still managed by the body of Trustees that he brought together, has enabled us to move on to a third and, this year, a fourth Green Flag (Community) Award. Recognising as it does the achievement of excellence in voluntary-run public spaces, it is a fitting tribute to Jim, to the love that he had for Tarvin village and to the vision he displayed when he realised what a wonderful community asset a bunch of abandoned fields could become, given sufficient goodwill and effort. Thank you, Jim! And thank you, too, to our valiant team of volunteers!

The footpath upgrade.

The monsoon struck Tarvin at about the same time that W.E. Parsons, the contractor, began work on the pathway upgrade. Three days torrential rain slowed down the contractors and, because of the water-soaked materials, producing a good surface was immensely difficult. Despite all the problems, the final quality of their work looks first class, especially in the seat areas and the spur down to school. The Gods may not have smiled for the whole time that the work was being done but the outcome is wonderful – and a tremendous asset to the Tarvin community. Trustees would like to pay tribute to WREN and to CWaC, our very two generous funders, and to the Tarvin community for their unfailing support – and especially for their tolerance!

Plans for a celebration.

This year, we have so much to be grateful for that we felt that we would like to invite the whole of Tarvin (and all our friends from the wider area) to join with us in a celebration. Do come along at 2.00pm on Saturday 19th October 2013 to Tarvin Primary School, Heath Drive, Tarvin CH3 8LS for a cup of tea and a piece of cake. You can watch the official 'opening' of the pathway and to hear of our hopes and exciting plans for the woodland and for its new extension.

What changes there have been in our woodland lately!

During the past 12 months, a great many things have happened in the woodland. Not only have we succeeded in obtaining funding for the pathway to be improved – which work is now completed – but we have also installed a new five-bar gate at Broomheath Lane, in order to facilitate our maintenance activities. Further work has been done in planting and maintaining our ever-improving show of wild flowers and the on-going care of the bird boxes has revealed that they have been well-used during the past Summer. In addition to being a very attractive woodland, we are now officially an orchard! Thanks to the generosity of Cheshire Landscape Trust, we can boast of nine apple trees, all local varieties, which Trustees will care for but (once they are of a sufficient size) the fruit from which will be made available to villagers. We have also purchased a number of the very characteristic Cheshire damson trees, which are planted in the woodland hedgerows, and these will also supply folk with fruit. To go with these, we have been given two walnut trees which, in a century or so, should be giving really good crops of nuts! We have also begun the removal of those trees along our northerly boundary

which cast heavy shade on the gardens of our neighbours. It is our intention that this space should henceforth be occupied only by trees that can be kept low by coppicing, thereby restoring what was intended to be the original profile of the woodland, whilst maintaining a dense vegetation screen for both walkers and householders. Completing this will take a long time but, bit by bit, we'll get there.

The Jim Grogan Award.

In July, the annual 'Countryside and Wildlife Award' that the Trust set up in memory of Jim Grogan was presented for the third time. The essence of the award is to recognise the Tarvin Primary School student who has shown the best working knowledge of his or her environment, of the living things that inhabit it and of the relationships between them. Recipients are felt to have demonstrated that they have a genuine curiosity about, understanding of and a feeling for their surroundings, while being able to correctly name and to talk knowledgeably about a fair range of the flora and fauna they encounter. This year, the school staff picked out *Rebecca Ridley Thomas*, a student in year 5 to receive the award and, at a special assembly in July, she was presented with the special, hand-made award book (in which she has the entry for this year), a certificate, a plaque and a gift voucher. Well done, Rebecca! We hope that you and your classmates continue to be fascinated by the wonderful natural world around you and that Tarvin woodland and Tarvin countryside will be an on-going source of interest and enjoyment to you all in the years to come.

Bird feeding and a water feature in the woodland.

You will know that we have had two on-going projects for the woodland – a pair of hides behind the school, one for the students and another for woodland walkers, with a bird feeding station sited between them, and a water scrape or boggy pond, in order to introduce water into the woodland to help its wildlife. Both projects were proceeding independently until we asked a landscape contractor for advice – and he suggested that the water should go where we'd planned to put the hides! So, the timber for the hides has had to go into storage until the issues are reconciled and we will let you know what is happening as soon as we know ourselves!

The new Taylor Wimpey estate.

The builders are moving on apace with the building of the first houses and they will soon be working across much of the site. As a part of their planning application, Taylor Wimpey offered to put in an extension of the woodland through to Austin's Hill alongside the A51 and their agreed plan for the estate now includes that ribbon of woodland, which will be somewhere between 10 metres and 20 metres wide in most places. This will be fenced off from the estate (with fencing that matches that of the existing woodland), from the A51 (with a both a hawthorn hedge and an acoustic fence) and with the access gates on Broomheath Lane, at Austin's Hill and in the estate itself. The builders will arrange for the pathway to be laid all the way through the woodland, putting seats part-way along, and then they will plant a well-chosen selection of native trees. Once Taylor Wimpey leave the village, they must arrange for the long-term maintenance of the amenity areas and Trustees are in negotiation with the builders in order that we might do this for the new woodland, thereby bringing in the new land to form a part of our already existing woodland. This would give Tarvin village the ownership of the entire strip from Townfield Lane to Austin's Hill alongside the A51, making it an even greater community asset. We are optimistic about the outcome and we'll keep you posted!