

Come along to
**Tarvin Community Woodland Trust's
Spring Fundraising Event!**

PLANT SALE

and Raffle

with Chapel Cake Stall and Bacon Butties

at Tarvin Methodist Church

between 10.00am and Noon

on Saturday 18th May 2013.

**An excellent selection of shrubs,
perennials, annuals, vegetable plants,
tubs and hanging baskets all at very
competitive prices.**

The Trustees will also be on hand to talk about the work we are undertaking in the woodland and will be able to further explain anything which is still unclear after reading this leaflet!

***It is YOUR Woodland! Come along
and help to support our efforts.***



Tarvin Community Woodland Trust
Created by the community for the community

www.tarvincommunitywoodland.org

Email to: info@tarvincommunitywoodland.org

Tarvin 740337

"Crowsfoot Cottage,"

Old Moss,

Stapleford,

Tarvin,

Chester.

CH3 8HR

April 2013

Dear friends.

In the six months since our last newsletter in September 2012 nature has been both kind and cruel. Growth of new plantings and undergrowth has continued apace but at times I felt we were moving into hydroponics; the water table has been on the surface and our test bore holes remained full for much of the time. I am sorry that walking in the woodland has been such a muddy affair but the solution is now in hand. Maintenance has been impeded but, as Spring is late starting, we will soon catch up. Much of the Trust's effort has focussed on development projects in recent months and as these come to fruition this year we will be busy. Projects include:

- The new pathway through the woodland. We are grateful to both CWAC and WREN for their appreciable financial support and to the Tarvin community whose generosity has meant the Trust is able to top up the budget. Hopefully work will start in June/July this year when we hope for drier weather. The work should take about two weeks. For reasons of safety it will be necessary to close access to the pathway and you will be asked to bear with us and use the bridleway during closure.
- Our plans to extend the woodland from Broomheath Lane to Austin's Hill as part of the new housing development have been incorporated into the planning consents and we have had fruitful discussions with Taylor Wimpey on implementation later this year. The Trust plans to play an active part in this and is considering its future role in the development and maintenance of the extension once completed. However, our involvement will depend on the interests of the Trust and the Community being protected from the points of view of both liability and on-going funding.
- After a year of monitoring water levels we are close to deciding where to site our planned water features in the woodland. We will learn lessons from the new ponds being installed by Taylor Wimpey as part of the housing development. Our aim is to increase the diversity and amount of wildlife in the woodland and provide extra features of interest for the school.
- We are soon to begin building a bird feeding and watching station behind the school, initially for woodland users but, with the school's agreement, it will also be extended to a hide in the school grounds.

As always, the Trustees welcome your views and the chance to meet with you – perhaps at the Plant Sale on 18 May. Do come along and bring your friends. See you there or in the woodland!

With best wishes

Stuart Exell

Chairman of Tarvin Community Woodland Trust

News from the Woodland.

At this time last year, we were beginning what we expected would be a 'long haul' to obtain grants to improve the main woodland footpaths – known as 'Grogan's Walk' – to bring them to a standard suitable for use by the whole community. Many of you responded to our plea for letters of support – to the extent that we were told by one of the bodies to which we applied for a grant that they had never had so much concrete evidence of community support for a project! **And your efforts have been amply rewarded!** We have just heard that **both our applications have been successful**, a contractor has been appointed and so work should be able to begin in June or July this year. One of the applications was to WREN, the waste recycling body who administer the landfill tax, and the other was to Cheshire West and Chester Council for Rural Support funding. For a project costing in the region of £20,000, both of the funders will each supply approximately 43% of the total cash needed, with the balance of 14% coming from Tarvin Community Woodland Trust funds, which have been donated for exactly that purpose by our friends. We are tremendously grateful to WREN, to CWaC and to the many, many members of the Tarvin community who have put hands into pockets and pens to paper to help enable this tremendously worthwhile project to be accomplished. If you look at our logo, it says, "By the community, for the community". Absolutely! Isn't it wonderful what we can collectively achieve? We can all now look forward to the newly surfaced path being in use. And, when it is, you will all be invited to one of our "Woodland Celebrations" to mark the event!

Less felling has been done through this winter than in previous years, but a few more of the sycamores have been removed and some ash and hazel trees have been coppiced. This is in order to produce a thick, dense growth of poles that will provide screening as they grow and can then be harvested for bean sticks, a few at a time, here and there, before they get too large.

This is the time to begin the routine mowing in the woodland – weather permitting! Strips alongside the 'Grogan's Walk' paths will be kept short and the grass pathways through the woodland itself will be mown occasionally, to keep them useable. The rest of the woodland will during the year receive one or two 'conservation cuts' – mowing at a height of between 4 and 5 inches, to enable small creatures to survive whilst keeping the more rampant vegetation under control.

The wild flowers in the woodland go from strength to strength. Across the woodland, our snowdrops have provided a splendid show this year, wood anemones, foxgloves, ragged robin, cowslips, ox eye daisies and loosestrife all promise to give good displays at different times and the blossom on the hawthorn and quickthorn should again be spectacular. This year, the wild flower areas that have been sown should continue to show how well they are developing. It takes at least ten years for a meadow to establish and the newest one is only two years old, so there is a long way to go, but we can all appreciate the colour and the beauty as we walk through the woodland - and a good range of wildlife should find it attractive.

Enjoying our birds in the Woodland

From the very beginning, there have always been bird boxes in the woodland. The original ones were made of wood and we found that they suffered at the teeth of squirrels, which treated the eggs or fledglings as a useful meal! Despite the greatly increased cost, we began to buy "squirrel-proof" boxes and these have been much more successful, to the extent that 16 of our bird boxes (and a further 5 bat boxes) have now been sponsored by villagers. The boxes are cared for by our parish tree warden, Peter Maiden.

But having more birds in the woodland is only part of the objective. We also want to enable people (and especially the school children) to be able to enjoy having the birds living with us. Therefore we have decided to establish a bird feeding station, complete with two 'hides', one in the woodland (for members of the public) and another at the boundary of the school field (to enable pupils to watch the feeding birds during their breaks and lunchtimes). What better way to come to appreciate the other living things with which we share our countryside?

When this is all completed, we hope to establish a feeding rota, involving both pupils (when the school is in session) and villagers. Initially, the Trust will organise both the feeding rota and the purchase of food, but the ongoing cost of such an enterprise will be beyond the Trust's resources and so we are hoping that, later on, someone will volunteer to set up and run the rota and that a good number of folk will be prepared to sponsor the cost of the food.

If we were to do nothing about feeding birds, it would be cost-free. Setting up and running such a scheme is bound to be expensive – of both time and money. We hope that many others share our enthusiasm for a really worthwhile and beneficial project and will want to help us.

Volunteers

As a routine matter, I keep a record of the time which has been given to the activities involved with running the woodland each month and I have now calculated the totals for 2012. Trustees, volunteers and friends have, together, invested 1,280 hours – and, were this to be paid for at the National Minimum Wage, would be worth in excess of £7,600! Such a donation of time and effort is truly remarkable and underlines the fact that we are Tarvin Community Woodland. To everyone who supports our work, in whatever way, large or small, we say a very sincere, "Thank you!"

Our volunteers meet as a group at a time to suit themselves (often on a Thursday morning) and enjoy excellent companionship whilst also enjoying the fresh air and beautiful surroundings – and, of course, improving the woodland into the bargain! The wide range of tasks to be done ensures that all fitness levels can be accommodated. If you are interested and are able to give some help, occasionally or regularly, you can make contact with the Trust through the telephone numbers in the woodland notice boards or by having a word with Trustees at the Plant Sale on Saturday 18th May.