



ORE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Seeking to acquire land in the Upper Ore Valley to save and enhance urban woodland and green space for community use and to protect animal habitat



NEWSLETTER – December 2012

If you did not receive this newsletter by email but have an email address, please let us have it so we can save money and time on future mailings.

Great News! Hastings Local Plan to Protect a Large Part of Speckled Wood



On 5th November, Hastings Council's Cabinet approved the draft Development Management Plan, which would give protection from development to most of the Upper Ore Valley - 'Speckled Wood'.

Two small development sites are proposed and land next to Victoria Avenue, which already has planning permission for 51 homes, is excluded. This is a big step forward and the first time that a definite proposal has been made by the Council to formally designate land in Speckled Wood as

'protected urban green space'.

However, the proposals will need to be ratified by Full Council in December and the Public Enquiry to be held in 2013. There is certain to be opposition from the developers who have acquired much of the land in question. They can also make planning applications, based on the current development designation, until the new Local Plan is adopted in 2014.

We are very pleased that the Council has listened to local people and responded to eight years of campaigning by our organisation and other groups. We will strongly oppose any new planning applications that may be submitted and we will also be making a detailed submission to the Local Plan Public Enquiry to show how much Speckled Wood is now being used by local people and what a valuable community resource it could become. The plans showing the proposed protected area and the current development status - are available on our web site, facebook page and the notice board.

Speckled Wood as a Community Woodland

Once the urban green space protection is in place, Ore Community Land Trust will seek funding to purchase the protected areas in the valley so that it can be made available and enhanced for public use.

We plan to improve the footpaths, create children's play areas and viewpoints with seating and will support the route of the Hastings Greenway (for walking, cycling and disabled access) which would run through Speckled Wood to link the Academy and Ore Village with the Town Centre.

Further amenities are proposed such as a Village Green behind the Salvation Army Hall, an area for food growing and the creation of ponds and woodland management work to encourage wildlife and a greater diversity of flowers and vegetation.

These plans will be subject to full community consultation and we recognise a balance has to be struck to preserve the woodland and animal habitat.

Village Green and Allotment Project

We are currently working to clear two plots in the area of abandoned allotments behind Old London Road. These plots are on unregistered land, which means there is no known legal owner. The idea is to start growing vegetables and fruit to show what could be achieved by a larger scale community food growing project.

In addition we hope to get funding to clear an area behind the existing Green owned by Hastings the Council, to create a much larger Village Green in the heart of Ore Village.



If you would like to help with this work and join our volunteer team, which also works on keeping the footpaths clear and improving public access, please contact us.

Friends of Speckled Wood

This is a new local group that was formed in July of this year with similar aims to Ore Community Land Trust. This group has adopted a different stance over the woodland and a different approach to campaigning. We recognise that this has caused some confusion in the local community and in Hastings and we need to make it clear that Friends of Speckled Wood is an entirely separate organisation to Ore Community Land Trust and not linked in any way.

Speckled Wood – A Local Nature Reserve?

This was proposed to the Council Cabinet meeting in November. Councillors agreed that it was a good idea but decided that seeking to designate the woodland as an LNR, or as a higher protection status, should wait until the proposed urban green space protection has been adopted.

PUBLIC OPEN MEETING – Saturday 15 December - 10am to 12noon

Ore CLT is holding an open meeting and public information event at the **Salvation Army Hall, 418 Old London Road**. We will explain the Council's proposal for urban green space protection in Speckled Wood, the stages that these proposals will have to go through and our campaign aims

New Notice Board, Web Site, Twitter and Facebook

We are grateful to Hastings Borough Council for donating a surplus notice board for our use. This has been erected by the seats overlooking the Green, next to the Salvation Army Hall in Old London Road, Ore and is already getting a lot of attention.

Our web site – www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk has been re-launched in a more accessible and interesting format and we will be adding more information over the next few weeks.



In addition we now have a facebook page www.facebook.com/OreCommunityLandTrust and twitter account @OreCLT to make use of the rapid growth in the use of social media.



Village Green Status

This is another way of getting legal protection for parts of Speckled Wood.

Have you ever played, partied or picnicked in what is now known as Speckled Wood?

If so, we need you to record your experience of leisure uses there in support of our Village Green application under the Commons Act 2006. All sorts of leisure use of the woods can count from tree climbing to blackberry picking, from hide and seek to bird watching and we need evidence over the last twenty years, though before 1992 will also help.

You could also ask your neighbours and friends or family members who have lived in the area if they could help with this. If you can help with this application please contact us by post or email.

Footpath Registration: We also want to hear from people who have used any of the footpaths in Speckled Wood back to 1992 or earlier.

OCLT Volunteers

Our volunteers have been doing great work in the Wood over several months. Derek and Alan have built steps making it so much easier to get around and enjoy the tranquil atmosphere.



If you would like to help, please get in touch.



Members & Supporters Meeting Launches Membership Drive

At the well attended Social & Information Event for members and supporters on Saturday 24 November, it was suggested that all members should aim to recruit at least one new member to help to strengthen our campaign voice.

We know that some previous members have forgotten to renew their membership and we think many more local people would like to join now that the future of Speckled Wood is looking very promising. It only costs £5, £2 for the unwaged/retired and £1 for junior members.



There is a membership form below which is also available on our web site. The form can be posted or emailed.



This is what the Wood looked like last winter. What will this winter bring?

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (April 2012)

SURNAME: **FIRST NAME(S):**

ORGANISATION (if applicable):

ADDRESS:

..... **POSTCODE:**

TEL. NO: **E MAIL:**

SIGNED: **DATE:**

Payment enclosed: £ **Cash -** **Cheque-**

Individual £5, Unwaged/Retired/Student £2, Under 16 yrs £1, Organisation £20
(cheques should be made payable to Ore Community Land Trust)

PLEASE RETURN TO: OreCLT, Ore Centre, 455 Old London Road, Hastings TN35 5BH

Contact details:

Ore Community Land Trust, Ore Centre, 455 Old London Road, Hastings TN35 5BH
email ore.clt@hotmail.com Website: www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk