





Ore Community Land Trust
Saving and enhancing green spaces in the Ore Valley

NEWSLETTER Spring 2026
www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk info@oreclt.org

From our Chair, Peter Chowney



Spring is here: fresh, green leaves on the trees in Speckled Wood and our gardens on Church Street and behind Ore Village Green have burst into life. Blossom on the fruit trees has been spectacular.

Recently, we have campaigned against the proposal to include land in Speckled Wood as a housing development site in Hastings Council's draft local plan. We will know the outcome later in the summer when the next draft of the plan is published. Work has been continuing in the woodland, community garden (see over) and village green, through well-attended volunteer sessions. At our land on Church Street, we've installed a small pond, which will help to attract wildlife. One of our volunteers has cleared an area by the community garden to build structures to house invertebrate and small vertebrate species. Our next project, funded by High Weald Nature & Community Fund, is to restore an old well on Church Street, to provide water for the gardens and pond there.

We have been successful at attracting grants to fund specific projects but raising money for our day-to-day activities is harder. You can help by joining Ore Community Land Trust, via our website — you'll receive a regular newsletter about our activities and new developments or you can just donate what you can to enable us to maintain Speckled Wood for local people to enjoy.



The Community Garden



As temperatures rise and the days lengthen, plants in the community garden are growing fast with a wonderful show of daffodils this year. As always, we struggle to keep on top of weeding, as do all gardeners!

One exciting development has been the clearing, landscaping and planting of a previously scrubby site of nettles and brambles. This has been backbreaking but rewarding work, thanks to the commitment of our volunteers. We have now planted over forty shrubs and trees with a grant from High Weald Nature & Community Fund to increase diversity and interest in our garden. By 'our garden' we genuinely mean a garden for all of us in the community of Ore and beyond. It will take a few years to flourish; have a look at what's been done, and watch the progress. Having a water supply installed has made it much easier to keep new plantings alive, particularly given the dry weather. The connection to our volunteer centre was installed last year, again with a grant from the High Weald Fund.

We hope you continue to enjoy the community garden throughout the coming year. Stopping and listening to birdsong is another delight on offer a way of calming the mind in this busy world. It will always be pleasure to pass the time of day with you, when we're there. But if we're not, just take a moment to pause and relax, and enjoy.

Join our Volunteers in Speckled Wood

We run volunteer sessions **from 10.00am—12pm every Thursday** and also on the **first Saturday in the month** from our volunteer base, which is below Ore Village Green next to the Salvation Army Hall in Old London Road. Everybody is welcome to come and do whatever they can, with tea, biscuits and chat afterwards. Why not join us?

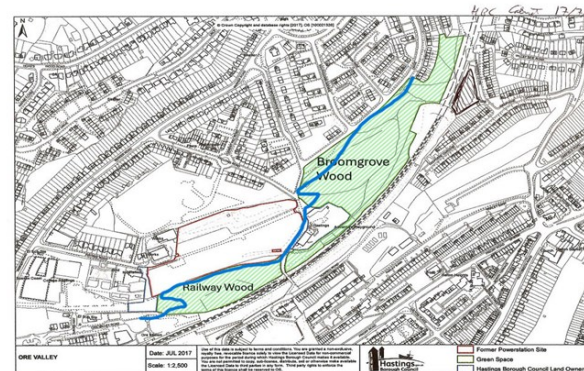
Broomgrove Woodlands and a Greenway Route to Ore Station

We are taking over the woodlands and green spaces in the Lower Ore Valley (see map below) to manage and enhance for community use, including amenity projects to protect wildlife habitat, encourage biodiversity and improve access.

One aim is to recruit volunteers from the Broomgrove Estate and surrounding area to help to carry out this work and to engage with local communities to develop our plans and organise activities for all ages. Funding that should soon be transferred from Hastings Borough Council will also allow us to employ a project worker.

One significant project is the construction of a direct 'Greenway' route from Chiltern Drive to Ore Station and the College Annex, for walking, cycling and wheeling, including disability access – as shown in blue on the map below. This project, which will involve collaboration with Hastings Greenway Trust, will provide a direct and attractive route for a large residential area to increase travel by rail, reduce car use and provide health benefits.

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), have cleared the Greenway route corridor shown on the map and have created an informal footpath. This will enable surveys and detailed route design work to be carried out leading to funding applications to get the Greenway constructed.



We have also installed a tool store, leafleted the whole Broomgrove estate, held several information events and recruited local volunteers to continue the work to clear existing paths, open up new ones and help with other projects.