Ore Community Land Trust

Saving and enhancing green space in the Upper Ore Valley

NEWSLETTER Summer 2019

Ore CLT Volunteer Team Working in Speckled Wood

Ore CLT volunteers have been busy clearing our land in Church Street of under-growth and rubbish & debris that has been dumped there over many years.

They have also repaired the steps that lead up from the centre of the valley to Old London Road and are in the process of removing wood and other materials that have been dumped in the stream.

There is still much work to do and continuing woodland management as the weeds grow in the spring and footpaths need to be kept clear.

We are keen to recruit more volunteers and if you are interested please come along to one of the work sessions - normally on <u>Thursday mornings 10am to 12.30pm</u> or contact Ore CLT (details overleaf)

Very Successful Litter Pick

More than 50 people turned up on a Saturday morning in March to help clear rubbish from Speckled Wood. This was part of Keep Britain Tidy's Great Spring Clean.

15 cubs and scouts from the 4th Hastings group based in Ore joined with their parents and more than 40 local residents with their children and dogs. Between them they filled a skip (generously loaned by French's Skips) with everything from rusty bikes, fast food packaging, bottles, cans, bags of clothes and much more all of which had been dumped in this local "green lung".

"How can people behave like this?" was a common comment as the detritus was collected. "Why can't they just put their rubbish in bins or take it to the tip like the rest of us?"

Jim Breeds, our Chair, said "I was delighted to see so many people turn out to volunteer for this Great British Spring Clean in Speckled Wood today. This was a remarkable demonstration of the community coming together to tackle a terrible litter problem in our Wood. It was particularly pleasing to see so many young people taking part, including a large and enthusiastic contingent from the Ore 4th Hastings Scouts and Cubs. Everybody's hard work today has now made the wood a more pleasant place to visit and I look forward to many more opportunities for the Trust and the local community to work together on turning Speckled Wood into a more fantastic environment than it already is."

Volunteer Information Day

On 6th June we held our Volunteer Information day to coincide with National Volunteers Week. Several people came along to talk to us and to see the volunteers working to clear land, footpaths and the Ore Stream in the wooded valley. The sun shone and some of our visitors have since become involved with the Trust. Thanks to all who came.

Land Purchase

We are making progress (albeit a bit more slowly than we would like!) with purchasing three plots of land in Speckled Wood. This has been made possible by a grant from Big Local North East Hastings . Once the purchases are complete, our volunteers will work on the land to create managed meadow and woodland spaces for the benefit of the woodland visitors, both human and animal. This includes the eventual eradication of the knotweed growing in the wood.

Uncertain Future for the Old Power Station Site in Lower Ore Valley

Regrettably, the Heart of Hastings Community Land Trust have been required to move off this site while Seaspace market the land.

This is in spite of all the work that they have done to involve local residents and seek funding for a mixed development of affordable homes, work spaces and a community cafe.

They were originally promised that the land would be transferred to them after their licence to use it ended.

Ore CLT formed an alliance with HoH CLT as our aims are very similar and HoH CLT would have constructed the crucial section of the Ore Valley Greenway that runs through the site and had plans to conserve and enhance the green spaces around the site.

HoH CLT will be making a bid for the site and we hope they are successful, in spite of this set back.

Volunteer activity

There has been a flurry of activity over the past few months, thanks to the hard efforts of the volunteer team.

The land in Church Street, next to our green storage hut, has now been cleared and levelled. There are still a few stubborn weeds growing but once these have been dug out we will be ready for the next phase, which will involve some planting and seeding. Watch this space to find out more.

The steps leading up to the Village Green / Old London Road have also had some attention, replacing those which were either worn, rotten or missing.

Work has continued clearing the paths within the woods to ensure they remain accessible. The bridge over the stream at the Victoria Road end of the woods has also been replaced. While we were repairing the bridge, the stream underneath and banks either side were also cleared and cut back.

Some work has also been undertaken towards the Frederick Road end of the stream, removing the rubbish and accumulated wood. The entrances to the woods have also received some attention .

There is always work to be done and projects to be undertaken in the woods and if you are interested in joining us, please get in touch .

The photos show some of the work our volunteers have been doing recently.

Would you like to join our Speckled Wood Volunteer team?

We have plenty of work to do to continue to clear and enhance the area of land we have been given by Hastings Borough Council, as a start for our community woodland project. We will also be clearing footpaths throughout Speckled Wood, repairing the four sets of steps from the valley floor and dealing with other woodland management tasks. If you are interested or want to know more please contact us by post or email below.

Ore Community Land Trust, the Ore Centre, 455 Old London Road, Hastings TN35 5BH

Phone: 0738 3000 673

Web: www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk **Email:** ore.clt@hotmail.com