

Andover Trees United AGM 01/10/18

8pm The White Hart, Bridge St, Andover



Annual Report October 2017 – October 2018

Weekly Workdays

- Have taken place every week across the year, work being done either in Harmony Woods or on the allotment
- The regular day has changed from a Wednesday to a Monday and continues to run from 10.00-1.00
- We are proud to be able to continue offering supported volunteer sessions to William Wood who joined from Exeter House, Salisbury nearly 2 years ago. William has gone on to secure permanent part-time work in part due to the support we have been able to give him
- We are starting our 2nd year of supporting at-risk students from Harrow Way. This morning, 2 students and Will were trained in tree identification and took responsibility for labelling the trees at the allotment (not quite finished if anyone can help).
- We hope to develop this element of work

Weekend Community Workdays

- Weekend community days have included: ProGrow bagging (it is nearly time for this year's donation from Veolia to be delivered and we are actively seeking hands to help with bagging and delivery on October 28th), beating up, conservation tasks in Jonathan's Wood and polytunnel construction on the allotment
- As more volunteers now find weekends easier, we will put in place a monthly calendar of weekend volunteer days starting in February
- Recent talks with Trinley Estate (the land on which The Diamond Wood is being planted was formerly part of the Estate) have resulted in an offer to continue coppicing training and practice in their woodlands

Harmony Woods

- Has grown by another 750 trees thanks to planting fortnight 2017. There are 4 more years left to go including this year's event which runs 17th – 30th November
- The first 7-acre section was completed in the 2017/ 18 season; 4 & a half more acres are to be added this year, bringing Harmony Woods to just under 12 acres – plans are available on request
- Butterflies increasing – thanks to Graeme Davis for organising recording & preparing the report
- Wildflowers more established – thanks to Charles Flower for ongoing advice & support – plans to plant cowslips inside the hazel circle – the meadow had its annual cut in late September
- Dog walking – new signs have just been received aligning us to a Hampshire-wide scheme
- Interpretation – it has been noted that this is much needed. Initial approach has been made to North Wessex Downs sustainability fund to cover costs; this needs a small action group to take things forward

- Disabled access – on behalf of local residents, we have coordinated the support of HCC and TVBC resulting in the installation this year of a radar key gate; consultations have taken 3 years but the wood is finally accessible to all.
- The hazel shelter built by NCS students in 2013 and repaired twice by volunteer groups has been dismantled following several vandalism incidents. The usable sections are being stored by Elizabeth & Mark Maclay at Sladen Green Farm, Binley. Going forwards, if local community support from Enham and Augusta Park residents is forthcoming, it is hoped that a 'Friends of the Wood' group will undertake the fundraising required to reinstate the shelter.
- The unusually hot summer gave rise to a serious fire-risk in the wood, exacerbated by groups of young people building fires and barbecues – the community fire officer visited the site at our request, signs were put up and monitored, PCSOs agreed to patrol and the HCC countryside team cut the rides to their full width earlier than usual to provide maximum fire breaks

The Allotment

- Is almost complete: 2 more doors and 1 worktable will see polytunnel finished, an additional area of slabs needs laying and a raised bed needs constructing
- We have taken on a 2nd allotment which will grow predominantly food with some wildflowers for dyes and healing. We are looking for a team of 3-5 to take it on as a shared food-growing space, support being given by the Monday volunteer team as times allows
- Due to the delay in formal permissions being granted by Andover Town Council allotment committee to erect the polytunnel in 2017, wildflower growing has been delayed but will now start in earnest in 2019

Jonathan's Wood

- A 2nd successful coppice training day held in March
- We now have 20 coppicing-trained volunteers including 2 trained chainsaw operators
- We have also welcomed volunteers from the inclusion group to help at a general workday
- 1 section of the wood is coppiced, a path established and a seating area set out; it is ready for family activity sessions as and when we would like to run one
- The September workshop was held there; all agreed it was a delightful space
- The lease still presents problems but are a stage closer to resolving, solicitor's fees of £400 being needed, which the Trustees have now granted.

Planting Fortnight 2017

- Another successful event seeing 750 whips being planted as stand-alone trees and as hedgerow
- Volunteers appreciated the new Cabin and woodburner
- With growing numbers of help, it was decided that an induction day is needed in advance of the fortnight. We plan to hold this at the start of November
- 25 schools from Andover and villages will continue to plant in the wood, representing all children who attend schools in Andover
- This year's season will commemorate the 1918-2018 centenary – proposal of blue or white tree tags to complement the red tags that were put on trees in the 2014 planting – comments and thoughts welcomed

The Great Growing Project – Schools: “6 Trees & 6 Flowers”

- A 3-man team (John Baxter, Holly Taylor & myself) worked with the 6 partner schools Sept 2017 – July 2018 to establish their areas of interest (the 6 schools are named on the website)
- Formal thanks are given to Holly who has returned to full-time teaching and must leave the team
- We are being joined by Doreen Gregori to whom we offer grateful thanks
- A team of local artists has been identified to contribute to the project and work with schools
- A budget of approximately £250K has been put together for 3 years 2018 – 2021, which includes the appointment of a full-time education officer
- Funding bids have been submitted and will continue to be submitted for the next 3 months
- Achieved 2017: trees from seed, archaeology ‘Between the Barrows 2’, joint schools & artists meeting
- An outline of the project proposals compiled in collaboration with the 6 schools is available on request

Monthly Workshops & Training Days

- Made possible thanks to Postcode Lottery funding
- To date, February to September, we have run 8 workshops
- 84 places have been taken up, each month attracting at least one new volunteer.
- The October & November workshops are designed to lead into planting fortnight and the end-of-year celebration on Dec 8th
- A list of all workshops can be found in our 2018 leaflet, on the website and our Facebook page.
- We plan to offer a family workshop in January making wooden Tree Number pendants and bird feeders. The bird feeders will be delivered by those volunteers who learned with Louise at our first workshop in February. This will complete the 12 months of workshops we committed to providing using the Lottery funding
- We have purchased equipment and materials to support the development of the crafts learned across the year. Each participant will be asked to choose at least one craft that they wish to pursue. A weekend craft session will take place monthly next year at which we can practice and which will be opened up to paying customers, although it is hoped that volunteers will arrange their own practice sessions in between
- A safeguarding training session was attended by Liz Scrace, Naomi Bakes, Charlott Sorenson and Wendy Davis. The day was extremely useful and the next step is to appoint a co-ordinating officer
- Discussions are underway with HCC to provide 1st Aid Training in the Outdoors for up to 12 volunteers. This will take place on a weekday and, we hope, before this year’s fortnight planting
- DBS checks are being managed by Liz. All volunteers who are not DBS checked and who are happy to be checked are asked to speak to Liz.

Website

- 2nd generation went live August 1st; we are paying for a platform to ensure a professional-looking and functional site; our thanks must go to Peter Corpe for setting up the original site and for taking charge of it for 6 years
- We are extremely grateful to Harry Smallbones, 6th form IT student, for setting up the new site and to Alex Dicker, now at University, for all his hard work in the early designs.
- Harry is currently adding final pages and will run a training session for us so that we can run it

- 2 volunteers are required as administrators to keep the website up-to-date

The Cabin

- Arrived October 2017, woodburner fitted November – thanks are offered to Taylor Wimpey for their support in donating and craning in the portable cabin and for providing manpower and equipment to drill through the roof for the woodburner flue
- Plans were submitted to TVBC in August 2018 to transform the shipping container and portable cabin into a sustainable off-grid classroom, community and craft space
- Plans are available on request and on our website (Projects – The Cabin)
- Funding bids to be submitted as soon as costs established; the first deadline for this is Nov 8th
- Thanks are given to the volunteers who put time into researching materials costs. However, the funding application requires 3 tenders from builders. The current plan therefore is to appoint a structural engineer and a quantities surveyor to extract materials from the plan. This can then be taken to Builders' Merchants in order to ask for sponsorship and donations; local builders will be asked to quote on the understanding that profits are not sought from the provision of materials
- Signatures are needed to accompany the funding application to show community support
- We hope to have secured funding by March 2019 with a view to building starting late April
- Mobile composting toilets have been included in the planning application but the intention is to fund these separately to allow their installation to be carried out as quickly as possible. Some funds are already available but a further £2500 is needed. 'Spend-a-Penny' has been suggested as the name for this funding project, with proceeds from the planting fortnight Quiz Night making a contribution to existing funds
- In advance of building work starting, access to The Cabin and the tools store needs to be made easier for lead volunteers to allow work to continue between organised sessions and to make it possible for workshop participants to practice their crafts – this to be arranged by the Trustees as a priority

Plant-for-the-Planet

- Our thanks go to Andover Golf Club who hosted the 2018 Academy in March at which 45 new Plant-for-the-Planet Ambassadors were trained
- Junior member Megan Nikolic single-handedly led an Academy for Bahlsen UK at Chalfont St Giles also in March
- An Academy for Staples UK is in planning – this to take place in the Midlands early in 2019

Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots

- All 6 partner schools are now registered with Roots & Shoots
- Schools from across the UK were invited to attend the UK awards at the Barbican in March – 5 of the 12 who were selected to attend were Andover Trees United schools. Children from each school set up displays of their work and met and chatted to Dr Goodall.
- The team of 4 from Harrow Way were awarded the national award for 'Group Most in Touch with Nature', their prize being a day at Kew Gardens hosted by Phil Turvill head of Kew's Grow Wild project and included a personal guided tour of The Fungarium
- The UK Roots & Shoots team invited us to host this year's Peace Day parade on behalf of Jane Goodall. 21st September, the UN International Day of Peace, was a tremendous success; 200

people took part including 110 children and young people from 10 of our partner schools; our thanks are extended to Andover C of E for making the giant dove of peace; an Alder was planted to commemorate the day; a video of the day made by volunteer John Baxter is available on the website; doves made at Fun Fridays on display at Andover library in September

Governance & Management

TRUSTEES

- Thanks to Barbara Townsend and to James Nash, both of whom retired as Trustees this year. Barbara has been a part of the governing body of ATU since its inception in 2011 and special thanks go to her for her commitment to the project over this time.
- Welcome to Tim Rolt and Phill Jennison who have stepped forward to join the Board of Trustees

MANAGEMENT TEAM

- In order to spread the organisational workload, a management team made up of volunteers is in the process of being formed – meeting agreed for October 10th to take this forward

PRIORITY AREAS

Trustees have identified the following as priority areas

- PR & Publicity
- Local business support
- Patronage

ANDOVER VISION

- ATU is a partner; the Vision team have thanked us for supporting their young people and environment aims
- Carnival & 4 Fun Fridays were supported by ATU adult and junior volunteers
- Special thanks go to Junior member Nicola Marshall who helped at all 4 Fun Fridays and managed resources for us and to Andreea Hagi, a new junior member, who attended 3 of the Friday events. Both girls have also attended training workshops.

With thanks to everyone who has made all this possible.



1st October 2018