

# Ore Community Land Trust

*Saving and enhancing green spaces in the upper Ore Valley*

## NEWSLETTER Spring 2023

[www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk](http://www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk) [info@oreclt.org](mailto:info@oreclt.org)

We are also on Facebook and Twitter



### Spring Open Day

On Saturday 20th May we'll be holding our annual Spring Open Day from 10:30-15:00 at Ore Village Green next to the Salvation Army in Old London Road. There will be tours of the Wood, plant sales, children's scavenger hunt, tea, coffee and cake! Come and find out about Speckled Wood and our plans for the future.



### Speckled Wood Action Day

Our June 'First Saturday of the month' volunteer session will be a special action day.

We will be clearing the area of woodland at the bottom of School Road and Sandown Road. There is a lot of fly-tipped rubbish in this area, and we will have a skip to fill. If you are free on Saturday 3rd June, between 10am and 1pm it would be great if you could join meet us there. We have some gloves and litter pickers, but bring your own if you have them.



### Parent and Child Forest School

Our Tuesday morning Forest School sessions continue to be busy with families enjoying lots of activities and cooking in the woodland. With thanks to National Lottery Community Funding and our previous funding from Big Local we are able to provide these sessions to our local community.

If you would like more information and to be added to our waiting list, email [Jo engagement@oreclt.org](mailto:Jo.engagement@oreclt.org)



### Tool Store in Church Street Broken into and Power Tools Stolen



Sadly this break in took place in March and apart from the theft of a petrol hedge cutter and the gas hob, considerable damage was done to the steel door and locks. Although a temporary repair has been made it will require the whole door panel section to be replaced.

However, the Ore CLT trustees have decided to acquire a much stronger small shipping container for power tool and equipment storage.

We'd like to offer our sincere thanks to Banfield and Pomphrey and Carmel Ballantyne for their donations to help cover the cost of repairs and replacing stolen items.

### We need more volunteers

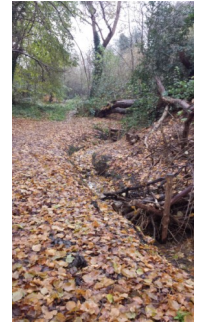
Ore Community Land Trust is entirely run by a small group of volunteers. If you care about Speckled Wood and agree with us that its survival as publicly accessible green space is vital to the well-being of our community, please think seriously about giving up some time and joining our committee. We are a friendly group and could really use your skills and experience especially in finance, legal, woodland management and many other areas.

## Clearance of Blocked Stream Culvert under Frederick Road

At long last and after continuous pressure from County Councillor, Julia Hilton, East Sussex County Council have finally agreed to commission the work to clear this blocked Culvert in mid to late May. The effect of the blockage caused by branches, debris and silt washed down by the stream over a number of years has resulted in the foot-path and area being regularly flooded.



In addition Ore Community Land Trust arranged for the Conservation Volunteers (TCV) to construct a number of 'leaky dams' upstream from the culvert to try to stop future blockages at the culvert entrance.



## News from the Chair - Peter Chowney

As a volunteer at Great Dixter garden, I've been keen to involve them in what we're doing in Speckled Wood. I already knew Fergus Garrett, the Dixter CEO and Head Gardener (and international horticultural celebrity) before I started volunteering there. So I knew that he had an interest in getting involved in projects that would benefit the more deprived parts of Hastings.



Earlier this year, we arranged for Fergus and other gardeners from Great Dixter to visit Speckled Wood. They were all impressed with that they saw, recognising it as something of a woodland oasis in an urban part of Hastings. From this, we've been able to establish several tentative collaborations, including a woodland management plan to be carried out by the specialist who did the management plan for the Dixter estate woodlands, and a supply of plants, for the community garden.



One of the Dixter gardeners, who is a keen forager, also noted that the woodland is rich in 'food for free', with many edible plants, particularly in the areas where knotweed has been cleared. He even commented on how the clay subsoil that has been dumped there, from building operations in Greville Road, is of a very good quality, and could be used for pottery. So he has offered to do some foraging courses in the woodland, and perhaps even pottery making, if we could build a kiln!

We also took Fergus to visit the Ore Valley greenspace, the protected open space in the lower Ore Valley, along the railway line and around the adventure playground. This is owned by SeaSpace, a residual local regeneration company, and needs to be transferred to a local community trust for the purposes of managing the land for public access in the future. Fergus noted that the variety of trees on the land was considerably more diverse than in Speckled Wood. There is also potential funding attached to this land, including possible projects being developed as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund, to be focussed on community health and well-being around the Broomgrove Estate. Ore Community Land Trust would be keen to take on that land, and Fergus was keen to get Great Dixter involved too, should that come to pass.

However, the transfer of the land from SeaSpace has been in the pipeline for several years now ... hopefully some of the funding opportunities now available, and the potential involvement of Great Dixter, will make this finally happen.

## Membership Renewal

Membership of our Trust runs from January to December, but you can still renew your membership for this year. If you're not already a member, please join us via our website. The more members we have, the louder our voice and more likely we will be to achieve our aims to ensure Speckled Wood remains accessible as open green space for all to enjoy.