

Ore Community Land Trust

Saving and enhancing green spaces in the upper Ore Valley

NEWSLETTER Spring 2024

www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk info@oreclt.org

We are also on Facebook and Twitter



Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will be on **Saturday, 20th April at 14:00** at the Salvation Army portacabin in Old London Road, Ore. All members and potential members are invited to attend and find out what we've been doing over the past year and what we plan to do in the future.

Our special guest speaker will be Fergus Garrett, CEO of the Great Dixter Charitable Trust.

Relevant documents can be downloaded from our website www.orecommunitylandtrust.org/annual-general-meeting



Join our Volunteers in Speckled Wood

Would you like to join our volunteer team or come along to help when you have time? We run regular volunteer sessions every **Thursday morning from 10.00 am** and also on the **morning of the 1st Saturday in the month**.

Sessions start from our volunteer base, which is below the Green next to the Salvation Army Hall in Old London Road. Now that spring is here, we have a lot of varied work to tackle and volunteers can help with a range of tasks including – litter picking, clearing paths & the stream, dealing with fallen trees & branches, repairing steps, planting trees and work in our Community Garden.

We will be running volunteer training sessions, in April, on woodland work and use of tools and equipment, provided by experts from the Conservation Volunteers (TCV).

If you would like to join us, come along to one of the volunteer sessions or email info@OreCLT.org.



Forest School

Our weekly Parent and Child Forest School sessions have been able to continue into the summer for free, thanks to the Big Local North East Funding. This was the last round of grants for local projects and activities in North

the area. Our sessions enable local families to enjoy our Community Garden and Speckled Wood every week in all weathers. Recently they have been planting seeds to grow food for the garden as well as learning some basic Forest School skills, with our trained Forest School Leader, Jo Walker.



The sessions are currently full, email Jo to be added to the

waiting list engagement@oreclt.org

A colorful poster for 'Speckled Wood Spring Open Day'. At the top, there are green and blue bunting flags. The main text reads 'SPECKLED WOOD SPRING OPEN DAY' in large, bold letters. To the left, it says 'EVERYONE WELCOME!' and to the right, 'ENJOY OUR COMMUNITY GARDEN!'. Below this, a yellow banner says 'COME ALONG TO OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT' and 'SATURDAY 18TH MAY 11AM TO 3PM'. A green banner below that says 'ENTER THE WOODS FROM OLD LONDON ROAD, NEXT TO THE SALVATION ARMY'. The bottom section lists activities: 'GUIDED TOURS OF THE WOOD', 'PLANT SALE', 'REFRESHMENTS TO SHARE', 'SHARE YOUR IDEAS AND FIND OUT HOW TO GET INVOLVED', and 'CHILDREN'S SCAVENGER HUNT'. At the very bottom, it provides the website 'WWW.ORECOMMUNITYLANDTRUST.ORG.UK' and social media handles 'FACEBOOK @ORECOMMUNITYLANDTRUST & TWITTER @ORECLT'. There is also a small logo for 'Ore Community Land Trust' at the bottom right.

Visit the Community Garden

When you are next at Ore Village Green, and have time to stop and stare, think about taking a short walk down to the Community Garden. If you haven't done this before you may be surprised to see signs of effort to create a mixed garden of trees, shrubs and beds for herbs, fruit, and vegetables.

Whether you are a regular visitor, or come upon it for the first time, you may imagine the challenge of keeping on top of the brambles, nettles, and creeping buttercups to enable other plants to establish and thrive!!

Volunteers are planning a purge on this soon to coincide with a bulk delivery of compost. Our intention is to increase our planting and productivity. We enjoy seeing and talking to people passing through, with or without their furry friends!



News from the Chair - Peter Chowney



As well as our continuing work in Speckled Wood, with all the work contributed by volunteers helping us to keep this area of important local green space accessible, we have been looking at ways to acquire more land we could look after and maintain for local people to enjoy.

Much of the land in Speckled Wood is not owned by Ore Community Land Trust. We have bought a couple of small parcels of land, and Hastings Council has transferred ownership of a couple of others to the Trust. We are now looking to take on Ore Village Green, and the land immediately behind it, which is currently owned by the council. This land adjoins land we already own, where the Volunteer Centre is sited in the woodland. Owning this land would make it easier for us bring a water supply to the volunteer centre and community garden. But it would also mean that we would need to maintain it as a public amenity space, so we'll need more local volunteers to help with that.



However, we don't necessarily have to keep it as entirely mown grass. It could, for example, be a mixture of mown grass and wildflower meadow. We will be seeking the views of local people on how it should be maintained in the future. We'll be talking to experts at Great Dixter gardens about the best way to do this, to maintain its value as public open space, and to maximise biodiversity on the land. To start this conversation, we're very pleased to welcome Fergus Garrett, Head Gardener at Great Dixter, to our AGM on 20th April to kick off the discussion and contribute his ideas for what could be possible. I hope we'll see you there!

We are also talking to SeaSpace about acquiring the Lower Ore Valley greenspace. This land was set aside as protected green space as part of the Millennium Communities scheme that didn't quite happen. It was always intended to transfer it to a local trust, so we've offered to take it on. The Seaspace board has agreed that we should, so we're now just waiting for the interminable legal processes to complete. We'll be working with Great Dixter and the Conservation Volunteers organisation to develop plans for access and to promote biodiversity, when we get it.

Membership Renewal

Membership runs from January to December, but you can still renew your membership for 2024. If you're not already a member, please join 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.