



ORE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST
*Seeking to acquire land in the Upper Ore Valley to save and enhance
 urban woodland and green space for community use and to protect
 animal habitat*



NEWSLETTER – May 2015

If you did not receive this newsletter by email but have an email address, please let us have it so we can save money and time on future mailings.



The AGM for 2015 is on Saturday 13 June starting at 10.30am at the Salvation Army Hall, 414 Old London Road, Ore.

The AGM will be a very important meeting as this will be the year that a very substantial part of Speckled Wood will be re-designated as urban green space. This will enable Ore Community Land Trust to start the process of acquiring land in the valley and we will need to strengthen the Committee in order to take on a new role to manage and enhance a 'community woodland' for the residents of Ore. The AGM is a public meeting and local residents, supporters and others are welcome to attend to hear about our work and our plans for 2015.

New Volunteers Needed!

***Recruit New Members and Volunteers to Help with Woodland Work,
 Consider Becoming a Committee Member***

If any Ore CLT members would like to join the Committee or would like to know more about what is involved, please contact Ian Sier on 428990. We will be creating a number of new roles to strengthen the committee such as membership secretary and to help with organising events and fundraising.

We also need to rebuild our volunteer team to assist with footpath and general undergrowth clearance and other woodland work. Do you know anyone who may be interested?

We are always keen to recruit new members. Will you encourage your family/friends/colleagues/neighbours to become members of Ore CLT?

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL & APPLICATION FORM (May 2015)

SURNAME: FIRST NAME(S):

ORGANISATION (if applicable):

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE: TEL. NO:E MAIL:

SIGNED: DATE:

AGE (if under 16 yrs): Please ask a parent/guardian to fill in the details and sign below

Name: Address:

..... Emergency Tel. No:

Contact details: Ore Community Land Trust, Ore Centre, 455 Old London Road, Hastings TN35 5BH **email** ore.clt@hotmail.com **Website:** www.orecommunitylandtrust.org.uk
 Facebook /groups/orecommunitylandtrust

Ore Valley Greenway - Progress Report



The project to design the 'access for all' Greenway routes in Ore Valley and Speckled Wood has been delayed due to the revelation that the survey and engineering design work will be far more demanding (and costly) than had been considered in the quotation from Sustrans last autumn.

A decision was taken to ask a local landscape architect to undertake a detailed study of the work required and we are very grateful for his research work that has given us a much more accurate cost estimate. He has also come up with a number of improvements to the route alignment and we now have a far better understanding of what will be involved in the design and construction of these new routes for walking, cycling and disabled users.

We are currently seeking to obtain the additional funding to complete the route design project and hope to get this started in the next couple of months.



In addition, we have been working with a student undertaking a photography course at the Sussex Coast College to produce photo presentations of the sections of the Ore Valley Greenway routes to help to explain the scope and alignment of this exciting project to connect Ore Station and the Lower Ore Valley with Broomgrove and the Ridge and with Ore Village via Speckled Wood.

Summer Wildlife

This year, Spring brought us a wonderful bounty of flowers and blossom and, thanks to the mild weather we had, they remained undamaged and we are heading for bumper crops of fruits, nuts and berries. The blackthorns are sure to provide us with plenty of sloes and the hazels are heavily laden. The Horse Chestnuts are particularly beautiful right now with their pretty cone flowers. Many conkers will be forthcoming from them later this year. The smaller plants have done well too. Look out for Yellow Archangel, Wild Garlic, Lords and Ladies and Wood Forget-me-nots. The bees are very industrious right now and, with so many flowers, they are spoilt for choice! Many butterflies are emerging, along with damselflies and dragonflies. If you are very lucky, you may see a demoiselle (a type of damselfly, but with vivid coloured wings).

Our summer migrant birds have arrived too. Listen out for the distinctive cuckoo and nightingale. The swallows have arrived as well and, in more open areas, you can watch their quick graceful flight. Most birds have already started building their nests and laying eggs. Some pairs of starlings are already looking to start their second broods! Look out for egg shells on the ground and try to identify which birds laid them. The parents have a difficult time looking after their young, as predators such as grey squirrels and jays are rather partial to an egg or even a young hatchling! However, with such an abundance of invertebrates, thanks to the mild, humid weather, they stand a good chance of raising their chicks.

Tribute to Jeremy Birch



It was with great sadness to hear that Jeremy Birch, the leader of Hastings Borough Council, passed away suddenly. He loved his home town with a passion and worked so hard for the people of Hastings and St. Leonards. We will not forget you Jeremy, and thank you for doing so much for us all.

The Chair of Ore Community Land Trust, Ian Sier said; *'We have all been shocked to hear that Jeremy Birch has died suddenly and so unexpectedly. He had been a firm supporter of our campaign to save Speckled Wood and worked tirelessly for Hastings as leader of the Council and ward County Councillor. He was a hugely influential figurehead for Hastings.'*

Above is a photo of the Speckled Wood Footpath Opening Event in April 2010 that Jeremy attended.

SPECKLED WOOD “(THE OLLER)”

Committee member Derek Rainer has written an interesting and amusing account of growing up in the Halton area and visiting what we now call Speckled Wood.

Growing up as a child in Halton before the flats in the early 1950s the bomb sites were our playgrounds. There were several of them and folk would throw their old prams out on them. A supply of go cart wheels was always available. To have 'street cred' in Halton meant you had to have a go cart.

One day we decided to go further afield and “the oller” was recommended. We were told that the kids in that area were fearsome and resented any intrusion by outsiders. The same could be said in Bembrook Road, Hardwicke Road, Tin Town and certainly the Old Town. So it was with some trepidation we ventured there. We found a discarded wheelchair with 4 small ball bearing wheels, ideal for our use. We wheeled it back to Halton and made a superb go cart.

We designed it so that you laid on it on your front and steered with your hands. This position lowered the centre of gravity so you could corner quicker. If you needed to propel it, you would kneel on one knee and push with the other foot. This meant you didn't need another kid to push you along.

We'd go everywhere on go carts, down the town where our Nan lived and out into the country. We'd go out to Ireland's farm and pick up windfalls to eat but our favourite place was Three Oaks Station. We'd sit under the platform and watch the steam trains thunder through. How dangerous is that?

As we grew up we needed better transport and considered the bicycle. Our friend bought one from “Lappy's” for £4 but that was out of our reach. We had no pocket money and our mum was a widow. A kid at school had one he'd sell for 5 shillings, 25p in today's money. We badgered our mum to buy it. It was a Victorian ladies' cycle, the sit up and beg variety. Because it had a flat tyre he let mum have it for 2 and sixpence (12 ½ p). We stuffed the flat tyre with rags but it was not roadworthy so back down the “Oller” we traipsed.



Speckled Wood from Google Earth

On this occasion however we were disappointed but we had heard of another place. Pebsham tip! Me and Dave (my twin) walked from Halton to the tip and picked up a frame and two wheels, some tyres and other pieces and started walking home. We got as far as the railway bridge and a dustcart stopped. The driver could see we had been to the tip and while he watched us he sent us back to the tip with our goodies. He was still there when we replaced our find and told us it was illegal what we had done but let us off to walk home. We got as far as the bridge when he passed us again. Well, we knew he was going home so we turned about and went back for our supplies. We loaded up and then walked all the way back home to Halton, carrying the bike and parts. We bent all my mum's spoons getting tyres on and off, not possessing any spanners.

Although we knew about the “Oller” my recollection is limited. My wife's Aunt kept a pair of goats down there. She could see them from her house in Percy Road. Other folk reared pigs and turkeys and I understand that coming up to Christmas, people would sleep down there to protect their animals. A lot of produce was grown in allotment gardens and the land was free in those days from sycamore trees. Now OCLT is working alongside other agencies to restore the land for use by the community and to protect animal habitat.