

The Jubilee Wood Project 2002 **The First Community Wood for Tickhill**

The residents of Tickhill cannot enjoy a walk in the woods without first travelling outside the parish. As part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, a town meeting suggested that grants be sought to establish a wood of broadleaved English trees, to be called 'Jubilee Wood'.



Accordingly, Tickhill Countryside Group purchased 4 acres of land and carried out fencing and planting with the aid of grants.

Scouts and Tickhill Countryside Group members erecting the fence boundary, October 2002



Caroline Flint, MP for Don Valley, planted the first tree on Saturday 23rd November 2002, during National Tree Planting Week. Local schoolchildren, cubs and scouts and other volunteers have continued the planting, this being achieved entirely with local volunteer labour and was completed by the end of March 2003.

TCG members, Scouts and Tickhill residents at the start of the first day's planting. By the end of the day, hundreds of new trees had been planted – a really good start.



The planting took place between November 2002 and late March 2003 with a total of 2002 trees planted. Lots of hard work over many weekends by young and old.

250 of the trees were originally grown from local seeds by pupils of St. Mary's School, using kits provided by Tickhill Countryside Group. The trees have been staked, with guards and mulch mats for protection. However, watering of the new trees was carried out during the dry spring. So far the survival rate is over 95%.



The new wood is at the end of Water Lane/Whinney Haugh Lane, across the footpath from Tickhill to Styrrup. It is adjacent to Stewardship Scheme pastureland, which also has public access. In time, this will provide a diverse environment, within easy walking distance of both Tickhill and Harworth.

A walk around the wood has been established, with a glade and bench seats. The wood is already being well used by locals and those with an interest in nature. A survey is being conducted of the wild flowers already in the wood and on the bank of the adjacent river Torne. The soil is varied, including sand, gravel and warp land. So far over 60 species have been identified. Others that are appropriate to the area will be re-introduced, with a record being kept.

An electricity cable crosses the site and trees for coppicing have been planted under it. To comply with regulations, these will be coppiced on a 7-year cycle, which will provide the Group with posts for fencing, stakes for tree planting and withies for rural crafts.

The Group will maintain the wood until it is fully established (20 years) and, for this reason, has become a charity. When the wood matures, the Group will seek to transfer the ownership to a national, or more permanent local body for its long term conservation and management.



Tickhill's only public wood begins to grow

RECORD OF TREES PLANTED IN JUBILEE WOOD

Oak – Quercus Robur	684
Cherry – Prunus Avicum	41
Ash – Fraxinus Excelsior	190
Birch – Betula Pendula	286
Holly – Ilex Aquifolium	41
Aspen – Populus Tremulans	40
Horse Chestnut – Aesculus Hippocastanum	36
Beech – Fagus Sylvatica	7
Walnut – Juglans Regia	9
Crack Willow – Salix Fragilis	51
Sallow – Salix Caprea	51
Sweet Chestnut – Castanea Sativa	110 (to be coppiced)
Hazel – Corylus Avellana	176 (114 to be coppiced)
London Plane – Planatus Hispanica	3
Rowan – Sorbus Aucuparia	73
Field Maple – Acer Campestre	84
Crab Apple – Malus Sylvestris	9
Blackthorn – Prunus Spinosa	30
Alder Buckthorn – Rhamnes Catharticus	30
Guelder Rose – Viburnum Opulus	40
Wild Service – Sorbus Torminalis	4
Spindle – Euonymus Europaeus	4
Yew – Taxus Baccata	3

TOTAL	2002

Original Proposal to Establish a Community Wood in the Parish of Tickhill **To be named 'Jubilee Wood'**

Background

In order to provide suitable amenities and increase the enjoyment of its countryside, it is a stated policy of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, in its 'Green Spaces' report, that its citizens should live no more than three miles from open access Community Woodland. The Parish of Tickhill is the most significant community that currently fails to meet this criterion as not only does it contain well below the average of percent wooded area, but none of this is accessible to the public. At a meeting on 18 January 2002, Tickhill Residents Association invited the secretaries of all the societies in the town to propose actions in celebration of the Queen's Golden Jubilee. One of the proposals, attracting unanimous agreement, was to address the above problem by the establishment, with wide involvement of the local community, of an open access Community Wood of native broadleaved trees, to be named 'Jubilee Wood'. The secretary of the Countryside Group was actioned to identify a suitable site and prepare a proposal. This plan results directly from this initiative.

The Site (OS Map Reference SK 599917)

A suitable 4-acre site has been identified, being at the end of Whinney Hough Lane, one mile south east of Tickhill centre. It is bounded by the headwater of the River Torne to the north and east and by a fence to the west. The southern boundary leads west approximately from the junction of the River Torne with Banks Carr Drain and requires to be physically established as, at present, the site forms part of a larger field, currently down to pasture and sheep grazing

A public path (part of Tickhill Footpaths Group walk No. 27) crosses the site, connecting Whinney Hough Lane with a path across the golf course, and ultimately connecting Tickhill to Harworth. There is therefore no problem in ensuring public access to the site. A most attractive circular walk of 3.5 miles will be available involving Tickhill Mill Dam, Water Lane, Whinney Hough Lane, 'Jubilee Wood', the golf course, Styrrup Lane, Harworth, Common Lane, Castle Fields, Tickhill Castle.

The site has the advantage of being contiguous with a larger field to the north west which has recently been put to Stewardship Scheme management by Mr. & Mrs. D Brookfield of Stoney Brigg Farm, as traditional meadow, surrounded by hedges and trees, with continuous public access. The envisaged creation of the Community Wood will complement the Stewardship Scheme to provide a varied recreational area, which the schools, Cubs, Footpaths Group and others have indicated that they would take pleasure in using.

Purchase of the land has been agreed in principle.

The Plan

The Countryside Group will manage the project. 1850 native trees (60-90cm high) will be planted over 3.75 acres, 0.25 acres remaining unplanted to allow for a 4m wide access along the eastern boundary to allow the Environment Agency to dredge the Torne and a 3m wide clear zone along the line of the existing footpath. A 20m wide section under a power cable will be planted as coppice.

The trees will include the following species: oak, ash, beech, horse chestnut, sweet chestnut, birch, willow, sallow, wild cherry, aspen, alder buckthorn and guelder rose and will include a few examples of scarce local species. Some of the trees will be provided by the Countryside Group, which currently has access to several hundred standards and saplings. Many of these have been raised from seed, provided by the Group to children of St. Mary's School and raised by them within the curriculum. In addition, Lord Scarborough has provided the Group with access to saplings from Stainton Wood and this allows the limited propagation of the scarce species mentioned above.

Grants are being applied for from WREN and DMBC's SPADE scheme for the purchase of the land and from the Forestry Commission Woodland and SY Forest Partnership for the remainder of the trees, guards, mats, stakes, fencing, gates, a notice board and an improved style, and to pay for some labour to allow all the planting to be done in the winter of 2002/3. However it is hoped that volunteers, including the Cubs, Scouts and Guides, will also be used as has been done in the past. The grant applications were submitted in May, which should allow approval and transfer of the land before the start of the planting season in October.

Maintenance

The main maintenance requirement during the ten-year lifetime of the project will be to water the planted trees during their first summer. Water is available throughout the year from the river Torne and an abstraction licence for the few gallons per tree per week is available at a low cost. The Rotary Club of Doncaster has agreed to meet the cost of a petrol driven pump and hoses to allow watering of the saplings in the first two years. Tickhill Footpaths Group will assist in maintaining a clear footpath.

The Group has frequently carried out 'litter picks' around the town. They will do the same around the Community Wood. They will replace any dead or diseased trees from their stock in the tree nursery provided by Stoney Brigg Farm and coppice the whips planted under the cable.

The Future

After ten years, when the wood should be properly established, it is planned that the Community Wood will be transferred either to Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, to be managed along with similar facilities in other parishes or to Tickhill United Charities, which amongst other responsibilities owns the Mill Field in the town.

Volunteers

Are you willing to give a few hours of your time to plant saplings next winter? It is fairly light work and all you will need is a spade. If so, please contact Tony Sheridan (Friary Close, Rotherham Road – Tel 742556), who will let you know when plantings have been arranged.

*To view more photographs of the project, visit www.tickhillhistorysociety.org.uk and explore the **Gallery***