



Working across Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire to manage and conserve our traditional orchards.

October 2016

Welcome

Welcome to the latest update.

Here we are again at the turning point of the year, still enjoying sunny days but getting ready for winter. This is probably the busiest time of the year for our orchards and many of them are happily groaning under the weight of the harvest, thanks to the pruning and clearing that volunteers did last year.

We have also been looking back at what we have achieved so far and passed our mid-term inspection by the Heritage Lottery with glowing colours. Over 250 volunteers have now been involved in practical work, 30 orchards are being surveyed and restored, we've provided training in pruning, scything, apple identification, juicing and grafting and we've eaten mountains of cake!

There are lots of activities lined up for the next few months, so if you haven't yet been involved do join us.

Karen Humphries

TCTOP Project Officer

Orchard Champions

Could this be you ?

One of the most successful parts of the project has been the recruitment of 17 Orchard Champions. These wonderful



TCTOP display at the Big Apple event

volunteers get five days of free orchard training in return for committing 30 hours per year to the project. They help at events, write for local newsletters, produce posters, research orchard history and much more. So far they have given over 130 hours and reached out to 2,500 people. We'll soon be recruiting again, so if you too have a passion for orchards do get in touch!

Our project areas:

Alfrick

Rochford & Tenbury

Pershore

Evesham

Gorsley & Kilcot

Longney

Hildersley

Whitbourne

Breinton

New homes for old favourites

One of the things we're keen to do is to make sure that our local fruit varieties are not lost. We've been working with local enthusiasts to track down some of the very rarest and have used buds and graft wood to grow new trees. Thanks to our Hubs, volunteers and the expert skills of Walcot Nursery, Pershore, we now have 300 young fruit trees which we'll be planting out this season. Some are so rare that we couldn't find any local survivors, so we're using material sent from Brogdale, home of the National Fruit Collection.

That means that varieties such as the Dewdulip Seedling, Haughty's Red, Hartpury Green Perry Pear and the Gloucestershire Underleaf will all soon be re-appearing in the areas where they were once so familiar.



Apple barrel

The Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project

Getting it on film

One of the things we need to do in TCTOP is to find ways of inspiring people to look after our old orchards. With that in mind we've asked Pete Nash from Monty Funk Productions, a local media company, to help us produce a short film. Pete is a professional film maker but he's also going to be using footage shot by project volunteers, so if you're handy with the camera, start filming!

We can use film shot on ordinary cameras and smartphones but, if you can manage it, filming on an iPad, tablet, Go Pro or similar gives the best results. We are trying to capture a year in the life of the project and our local orchards, and so far have footage of our family Buzzz event and fruit I D



Filming under cover !

sessions, as well as a dreadfully wet village fete and our scything workshops. What we hope to do is to show that orchards are amazing places and that looking after them can be fun.

If you think you can help then please do get in touch. You don't have to be an expert—Pete has a magic touch, even with our most amateur efforts!

And after the Harvest comes a time of rest for the orchard, celebrated in poetry 500 years ago...

Autumn Orchard

Ah, solitude –

no fragrance

from the blossoms,

no birds

about

in moss,

an ageing orchard

and

the autumn wind.

Shotetsu

Zen monk and Japanese poet, died 1459

Translated by Steven D Carter

Something to shout about !



A visit from BBC Hereford & Worcester

As we get to the final stage of the project we want to make sure that we are doing things well. Over 90 of you took the time to fill in a quick on-line survey and we contacted mentors, volunteers, orchard owners and

Board members, to get their views on what we could do to improve. Most of the feedback was excellent but it did make us realise that we need to do more to publicise what we are doing, to celebrate what we've achieved and to encourage more people to get involved.

The Three Counties is a very large area, far bigger than one part-time officer can hope to cover in terms of 'getting the word out', which is where you can help. Our survey showed that word of mouth is the most effective way of spreading the news about what the project is doing, so please do chat with friends and neighbours about it. And even better, if you think you can help with writing for parish magazines, posting photos on facebook or lending a hand with our website we would love to hear from you. This could be a great opportunity for anyone needing some PR or marketing experience!

Stay in touch with the project - join our growing Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project network by contacting Karen on 01684 560616 or find us at www.tctop.org.uk

Like us!

