

FRIENDS OF STOCKWOOD OPEN SPACES

Annual General Meeting, 14/11/2011

Chairman's Report

It's that time again & I promise that I will keep the Chairmans Report as brief as I can.

After a couple of years frustration whilst we established ourselves as a force to be reckoned with by the authorities,we are at last seeing the fruits of our perseverance.

Over the past year or so we have cleared part of the old orchard,revealing approximately 100 apple trees, plus varieties of plum & pear. As a result of this we are having advice from a professional pruning expert,funded by the Neighbourhood Partnership. This is being held at the orchard on Nov 26th if anyone is interested. Places are limited so please let Pete know if you would like to participate.

We have been successful in getting Holsom & Burnbush Steps repaired. This took quite a lot of effort but the result has been highly gratifying.

More seats have been placed around the Open Space,as well as a state of the art picnic table in the orchard.We of course will need to keep on top of the bramble situation to maintain access. The Council have also commenced a knotweed eradication programme which we hope will be successful.

Clean & Green attended a clearance weekend at the Sturminster Close area & removed a massive amount of litter & unmentionable debris.

At the moment we have an application in the pipeline for seats to be installed on the slope from Whittock Rd area to make life easier for people walking to the shops from Lower Stockwood.

We have diversified from the original modest aims of the group to encompass the Sustainable Food Festival which was held recently,& whilst modest in it's success it formed the basis of something which could evolve into being something special.

It has been mooted that we take on board the councils Healthy Walking Programme,to encourage others to get out and enjoy their often unknown areas whilst keeping fit.

It is possible that we may need to form sub committees,each one responsible for following through their own pet projects,& this would be an excellent way of involving all members,not just the committee, - after all not everybody is physically able to join in the clearance programme & there are a lot more cerebral activities which could be investigated,for example Wild Life Photography,cataloguing creatures & insects,& indeed producing a booklet of recipes using produce foraged from the local area. The possibilities are endless.

Just as an afterthought I would ask you to be vigilant,as the Green Space Strategy has not gone away -we are still vulnerable to the sale of our green spaces. A report is expected any day. We MUST be ready for it.

On that note of caution I will end. Thankyou.

MARGARET SHORT