

TACWET REPORT

It has been a remarkable twelve months for the Thornborough and Coombs Community Woodlands Enterprise Trust, marking the end of a five year journey to take over the community woodlands from Buckinghamshire County Council.

As the busy car park demonstrates every morning of the week, the woodlands have never been more popular with dog-walkers and nature lovers, and many of those visitors have become Friends, actively playing a part in running of the 168 acres, which include not only the trees, but a medieval quarry and 19th century lime kilns which are a Bucks Heritage Site and also a Regionally Important Geological site.

Without the parish of Thornborough taking on the challenge of a 99-year lease, and then gaining charitable status for the management trust, the woodlands may have been sold off and lost to the community.

Now a new journey, to manage the woodlands and medieval quarry for the next 99 years - for the community, by the community - is well underway, and the charity under its Board of Trustees has been successful in raising enough funds to achieve our initial aims through help from friends, donations, and grants from local authorities and particularly Tesco with its £12,000 Bags of Help windfall.

That does not mean we can sit back and relax – far from it, we still need further funding to take us into the future, and without the help of so many volunteers, we would not be able to move forward. None of this might have happened without the dedication of professional fundraiser Tanya Pepin, who joined the board of trustees when it was formed in 2015 and was instrumental in guiding us towards those funds. She has since moved from the area, but our thanks go with her for the tireless work she did on our behalf.

I would also like to thank my fellow trustees - Andy Spurr, Mary Taylor, Rupert Bursell, Sarah Powell and Tanya's replacement Dave Parker – whose role as a board is to preserve and manage the woodlands for the benefit of the public, to preserve its biodiversity, geological and archaeological features, and to encourage its educational use.

Enormous thanks are also due to Andy for his herculean work in keeping the rides and undergrowth mowed, a challenge he revels in, and to the members of his regular work parties who do much of the heavy work involved in thinning and clearing.

We continue to encourage the local community to become involved, and there are many ways you can do this by volunteering, donating or fundraising. Remember, we still have 97 years to go...

Mark Cole