

Sustainable Thornbury AGM 20 June 2018

Report from Orchard Group May 2018

Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group enjoyed a very busy and productive year in Thornbury Community Orchard and Morton Bridge Wildflower Meadow.

Following our Review of Publicity in 2016/2017 including producing posters and leaflets and adding work party dates to all Thornbury magazines and web site our numbers of Volunteers and contacts have increased. The attraction of the annual meadow flowers in the new Wildflower Meadow last summer plus the Scythe training Course in August 2017 also drew in more volunteers. From May 2017 – April 2018 fourteen people joined our contact list and during our successful Blossom Open Day April 2018 eight more signed up. We now have a total of 39 people on the regular contact list (not all volunteers) + 5 additional men who are mainly involved in fence and wall maintenance.

We continue to hold short twice monthly work parties when the weather allows. In total 28 Volunteers did a recorded 636 hours between them during the 12 months. Work included clearing nearly all the blackberry brambles right back and winter pruning the apple trees, using Mr. Fruit's long ladder. We also planted a new donated thornless blackberry. Frances asked the home builders in Badgers Road for builders bags which we fill with brambles and invasive weeds for Frances and her husband to kindly take for recycling. One contact simply knitted apples for the open day and 3 others were involved in Admin.

We held 3 business meetings in September 2017, January and March 2018

10 people took part in our professional Scythe Training in the Meadow and Orchard August 2017.

We renewed our Volunteer agreement with South Glos. Community Spaces in April this year. Frances and John attended the Community Spaces Volunteer evening at Page Park – displaying our board, photo books and leaflets. Marian and Christine did First Aid Training in Sept 17. John has also taken part in Orchard Surveying training.

7th October the Orchard group joined with Grow Your Own Food group at Turnberries for the Food Event. The stall displayed a range of preserves and equipment needed to prepare them.

In October we also attended Thornbury in Bloom local Prize giving event. The Wildflower Meadow had been assessed as "Outstanding" in RHS "It's Your Neighbourhood" and we were pleased to receive awards for our part in helping Thornbury win the West in Bloom Best Town.

Helen B entered a planter of Spring Flowers (representing those growing in the Orchard) in Thornbury Horticultural Spring Show on behalf of the Orchard Group.

Thank you to all our volunteers for their time and effort in making the Open day a success and for making the Orchard and Wildflower Meadow a pleasant place for local residents to enjoy, a haven for pollinators and other wildlife and a local source of food production for the community.

Marian Stephens May 2018