

GOAT WALK LAND TRUST

Matthews Hall Fore Street Topsham EXETER EX3 0HF
Registered Charity No 1162973

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2015

Dear Friends,

The land is now ours. After months of legalities the land transfer was completed on Friday 30th October and the land is now owned by the Goat Walk Land Trust. Thank you once again for all your support; the Goat Walk Land has been saved for the community for ever.

As well as the land transfer, a lot has been happening in the last few weeks and I have therefore put together a short Newsletter which I hope will become a regular feature. The details will also be sent to Estuary and the Exmouth Journal but we cannot guarantee publication. Please pass this on to anyone you know who is interested in the land and has not received a copy. We do not have email addresses for everyone and do not have the funds to send the letter by post.

The Trust now has its full complement of seven Trustees, Chris Buckingham, Frances Nieduszynska, John Bradley, Jeremy Rawlings, Kirsty Semple, Mark Dant and Peter Gray; the last three of whom will be subject to an election by the members of the Trust at the first annual meeting. The trustees have been considering proposals for the membership scheme and we will be letting you have details in the near future.

A Management Committee has now been appointed to deal with the day to day running of the land and investigate the long-term options. Mark Dant chairs the Committee and is joined by Pippa Warin, John Bryant, Chris Finney and Chris James. The committee has already met and arranged a meeting with the Land Management Advisory Officer of the Devon Wildlife Trust which took place last week. We have also met with Exeter City Council officers about the maintenance of the wall [which is listed by Historic England] and of the existing woodland.

Meeting with the
Devon Wildlife Trust.



[email – hurdle-house @eclipse.co.uk]

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The meeting with the Devon Wildlife Trust was very helpful and we will shortly be receiving a report setting out the Trust's advice on possible uses of the land. The Management Committee has also made contact with the Woodland Trust, which advises on woodlands and tree planting and has grants available for planting new trees. The Management Committee will also be meeting to discuss proposals for the land with neighbouring landowners, the RSPB and other interested parties.

On the practical side, our volunteers quickly removed the ragwort from the fields which was causing a problem and the re-pointing of the wall has begun in earnest. There have been two training sessions for volunteers and sections of the inside of the wall have now been re-mortared ready for re-pointing. We were also fortunate to have the help of a group on a Round Table project who helped clear the foliage from the wall. If you haven't yet volunteered but would like to do so, then please contact Eliot Wright who is Project Manager for the wall re-pointing [01392 876674] . We will also need a volunteer to keep our Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/Goat-Walk-Land-Trust-967118560016573/timeline/> and proposed website up to date

At the start of this project we received over 150 responses for the long term management of the land, summarised in the table below.

Preferred land use	Nr. of responses	% of total
Orchard	48	28%
Woodland	30	17%
Natural habitat (22) + rough grass (4)	26	15%
Wildflower meadows	20	11%
Nature reserve	15	9%
Agricultural	13	7%
Allotments	9	5%
Housing	8	5%
Community or landscaped garden	5	3%
Total 'relevant' responses	174	100%

When all the advice and responses have been analysed, the Management Committee will set out the options for the long-term management of the land, for further public consultation. However, if you did not fill in a questionnaire at the public meeting or would like to make some comments now, please write or email me at the address below. We are also having a "Meet the Team" morning at 10.00 am on 21 November at the Goat Walk Land, to which everyone is invited; details to follow. You will, of course, also have a further opportunity to comment on the proposals at the time of the consultation.

If you do not wish the Goat Walk Land Trust to use your email details to send you updates then please let me know and your email details will be removed from our database.

Chris Buckingham - Chairman of the Trustees

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