

## **Sustainable Thornbury Chair's report 2015**

My thanks are due to everyone who has been involved in ST this year, especially the officers, Brett, Paula and Felicity, and everyone involved in planning, organising and carrying out our activities this year.

After the excitement of the Energy Smart Homes Trail, this year has been a year of recuperation. There was a feeling by several members that they needed to take a break, while others felt we needed a step-change in effectiveness.

### **Energy stalls**

A group was set up to look at the possibility of an energy 'shop'. It was not clear how this would be staffed. Some trial stalls were run during the summer, including in the Thornbury Volunteers pop-up shop.

### **M48 Wind Farm**

We supported the M48 Wind Farm proposal, writing to the press and attending South Gloucestershire Council planning meetings. We were greatly disappointed that planning permission was refused.

### **Grow Your Own Food and Community Orchard**

The Grow Your Own Food Group has quietly continued with what it does, promoting the skills needed for food growing. There have been monthly meetings and there is a significant active membership.

The Thornbury Orchard Group has been more formally established, with a contract with South Gloucestershire Council. A new sign has been put up. The group has been pruning, planting, and generally caring for the site.

Marian's reports on the Orchard and Grow Your Own Food are below.

### **Thornbury Environment Committee**

Felicity represents us on the Thornbury Town Council Environment Committee. This is an important role, keeping contact with what they are doing and telling them what we are doing.

### **Meetings, bulletins and the website**

Meetings and the website are important elements of what we do, supporting each other, co-ordinating and sharing information and ideas. This year we changed to more informal gatherings rather than formal monthly business meetings. The website and Facebook group this year kept our wider membership in touch.

*Alan Pinder*

*June 2015*

## **ST Orchard group report**

Since the 2014 AGM the group met in the Community Orchard 4 times during 2014 to do some apple thinning and strimming. The Orchard was mostly left for wildlife. The Fruit trees were not in good condition and we had a lot of discussion about the future management. In November Raymond and Barbara handed over the leadership of the Orchard group to Marian (as secretary).

By February 2015 the group was known as **Thornbury Orchard Group**, a sub group of Sustainable Thornbury. We are also part of the South Gloucestershire Council Community Spaces network and as such have done a risk assessment and have a contract to enable us to work safely as volunteers to manage Thornbury Community Orchard. The active group is still very small with 6 long term members not wishing to be involved and 5 new people taking a strong interest. Marian has completed a one day First Aid course. Five volunteers attended the Community Spaces volunteer evening and the Bee Project evening. We are working with South Glos. Street-care re the grass cutting.

In Feb 2015 we held a successful winter pruning workshop led by Mr. Fruit. He is willing to do more work on the very tall apple. Members have also replanted two black-currents, pruned one elder and planted a small wildflower patch. Work parties are now first Wed 9.30am and third Saturday 2pm.(We are due to prune the plums Saturday)

Thank you to Raymond, Barbara, Brett, Felicity, Jerry and Val for all their past involvement and to Margaret for producing the risk assessment.

*Marian Stephens*

## **ST GYOF group report**

This small group has continued with a monthly programme visiting members' gardens and homes, swapping seeds and plants. This included Apple Juicing at Pat's, a shared produce Harvest Supper hosted by Barbara, discussing a solar powered tomato watering system and making comfrey plant feed at Andrew A's. We also attended an inspirational Bristol Botanic Garden lecture by Tim Foster. We investigated planting up a herb planter for the benefit of the Town but this may have to be a future project. We are due to visit Old Down Kitchen garden and Filnore Allotments this summer. We would welcome new members.

*Marian Stephens*