**Penney’s Wood**

**2014 – Chairman’s statement**

**Update**

Over the last 18 months, there has been a lot of progress on the community woodland being developed on the land bequeathed by the late Duncan Penney.

The completed stages so far are as follows:

* Securing support from and agreeing planting plan with Woodland Trust.
* Ground clearance. Removal of debris, and preparation of the land for planting.
* Fencing and gating of the entire site.
* Laying out of path and bridging.
* Agreement signed on planting and maintenance contract (3 years).
* Planting of approximately 18oo trees of entirely indigenous species, with appropriate protection.
* First stage maintenance, weed control.

The climate this year appears to been very favourable to tree planting, with some species already clearly visible above their protective sleeves.

The forecast at this stage is that some of the guards may be removed as early as (Jim Christie?)

A very positive start has clearly been made, but there is much still to be done to enable the development to fulfil its potential and to reflect the intentions expressed by the local community - to become a natural woodland comprising native species planted in a manner sympathetic to the local environment and providing a peaceful space for local wild-life to be enjoyed by all.

In addition, the charity committee is sensitive to comments received about the shape and nature of planting, the need to modify some of the planted areas, and the need also to re-apply some focus to the drainage and waterways.

Now that the majority of the plantings are achieving some growth, it is our intention to re-plant a number of trees more in line with the original intentions.

In order to take the development to the next stage, to ensure that maintenance is properly managed and to build on the positive start, the committee believes that it would be advantageous at this stage to broaden the committee and increase the extent of public participation in this project.

It is hoped that volunteers will come forward to fill the soon to be vacated post of Treasurer – we must thank Mandy Round for carrying out this responsibility so effectively up to this point – and up to 4 more spaces on the committee, or more if demand is over-whelming.