



Standen Fruit Farm Community Orchard Association

Chairman's report 2021



I am pleased to be able to tell you that the past year has been busy, productive, and successful for the Association.

The Trustees have worked hard to keep on top of maintenance issues throughout the Orchard. Immense strides have been made in the cherry orchard – known as fields one and two (right) – with this area of around seven acres was cleared and brambles that had engulfed many of the trees cut down. We have been extremely pleased that the cherry orchard became fully accessible for the first time in several years.



In the rest of the Orchard, our now regular winter pruning took place. We believe that it is important to keep the trees under control to stop them from getting too big and to encourage effective, sustainable growth. There is a handful of plot owners who do not want their trees to be cut by the Association and of course we respect their wishes.

The pruning effort is expensive. We are fortunate that we have over the past couple of years been awarded grants to cover the costs of for some of this work. And the Association has been rewarded with positive feedback from plot owners and from neighbours who use the Orchard paths, many commenting that the Orchard looks better than it has done for a number of years. It is the intention of the Trustees to continue this work for the benefit of everyone who is involved in, or who uses, the Orchard.

We introduced a monthly Saturday volunteer morning at the Orchard to undertake other work around the 50 or so acres. These have proved successful and enjoyable. Brambles have been tackled, overgrown areas thinned, and fallen trees cleared. It's not just about the work, though. The first Saturday of the month sessions are about meeting people who are passionate about the Orchard – something that has been particularly beneficial after the lockdowns and curtailments on normal life that everyone has endured. Personally, I have found it great to meet some of the wide range of people who care about the Orchard and who are prepared to devote a couple of hours a month to keeping it going!



One particularly notable Saturday work day involved putting traps up for our contribution to a national noble chafer beetle survey. On a gloriously sunny day in June a group of volunteers placed traps on around 20 trees in fields 3 and 4 to see whether the rare noble chafer beetle lives in the Orchard.



Little Standen, Standen Street, Iden Green, Kent TN17 4LB, United Kingdom



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With such a wide range of ages of trees, it was quite possible that the Orchard has the ideal habitat for this rare and reclusive insect. They depend on decaying wood within live trees and as a result in the decline in traditional orchards like Standen Street, they are vulnerable, facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.



The traps were moved around the Orchard, with a group of volunteers checking them for signs that the beetle had taken the bait. Sadly, after a couple of months there were no signs of the beetle. However, it is possible that they do live in the Orchard and we will look to repeat the survey in the future.

This work underlines the fact that the Orchard is a very special place that's worth preserving as it is a haven for wildlife and flora. Maintaining it in the way that we are will help to ensure its

survival on behalf of all plot owners and the wider community.

Last autumn we were approached by a London-based juice start-up that was sourcing apples from small, traditional orchards around the country to create a "grown-up" apple juice. At rather short notice, and late in the season, we arranged the picking of considerable quantities of apples that were collected and turned into juice. We also provided crab apples to the firm and they produced a mixed apple and crab juice (right).

We also sent some of last year's harvest to Ringden Farm who pressed the fruit and made around 120 bottles of apple juice. We sold this to local people and raised a small amount. This is something we intend to repeat in 2021.

This is also why it is so important that we raise the profile of the Orchard locally and further afield, to encourage more people to become involved through the purchase of plots when they come up for sale, and to support through membership of the Association the work that's undertaken throughout the year.

To spread the word further, we relaunched our website to provide more information on the history of the Orchard, provide information about the Association's work and to encourage greater participation. The occasional videos we publish help draw people's attention to the Orchard and of course they also keep plot owners – some who live a long way from Standen Street – informed about what the Orchard looks like on a regular basis.

We have also developed our local outreach work with attendance for the second year at the Hawkhurst Makers Fair where we had early crop apples available and Standen Apple Juice for sale. We raised around £140 – about one tenth of the cost of one cut of the grass in the Orchard. As one supermarket commercial used to say: "every little helps".

As an Association, we have also been able to purchase a couple of plots from people who no longer want or need their plots. In addition, we are maintaining a growing list of people who want to buy plots for themselves and we will put sellers and buyers in direct contact when we learn of plots for sale.





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This report can only summarise the work that goes on throughout the year to keep Standen Street Fruit Farm from falling into disrepair. The growing interest of people who want to acquire a plot indicates, I believe, that the Association is getting something right. With the support of Association Members, we can continue to ensure that the Orchard has a great future.

In conclusion, I must thank my fellow Trustees and our enthusiastic supporters who have contributed so much over the past year. It is by working together that we can ensure and secure that the Orchard remains such a wonderful place to visit and spend time.

Simon Spanswick

Chairman

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September 2021

STANDEN FRUIT FARM COMMUNITY ORCHARD ASSOCIATION - ACCOUNTS 1st SEPTEMBER 2020 - 31st AUGUST 2021

Income	2021	2020
Grants	6,900.00	8,395.41
Membership	1,313.00	715.41
Donations	1,700.69	472.80
Apple & log sales	894.70	-
Grazing	-	
Interest	0.83	70.81
Extraordinary income	237.95	1,287.63
TOTAL INCOME	11,049.17	10,942.06

Expenditure	2021	2020
Governance costs	2,146.40	2,298.11
Publicity & promotions	154.35	145.25
Travel to meetings		
Fuel for orchard work		75.26
Equipment & repairs	41.45	6,635.48
Orchard Manager		
Other labour	2,160.00	
Grass cutting	557.50	1,000.00
Tree pruning and maintenance	5,300.50	8,849.56
Insurances	201.60	217.80
Planning fees		
Soil Association fees		
Liming		
Purchase of assets	400.00	
Training		
BCTV fees		
Bees		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	10,961.80	19,221.46

Balance

Brought forward from deposit a/c	7,858.53
Brought forward from current a/c	420.87
Income for year 2020/2021	11,049.17
Expenditure for year 2020/2021	10,961.80
Current balance	8,366.77
Balance carried forward to deposit a/c	10,519.83
Balance carried forward to current a/c	- 757.59
Total carried forward	9,762.24

Treasurer:

N. M. Goulton

Date:

4 September 2021