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The Community Orchard will be a real study in sustainability. Our project is long-term, growing and developing with community volunteers. We plan to provide a place to support people and promote wildlife in equal measure and once the heritage trees are established, they will yield fruit for decades.

Our orchard will play a role in addressing the climate emergency; caring for the orchard organically will encourage biodiversity and boost the natural habitat for bees, other pollinators, birds and animals (orchards are identified as one of the UK's 'Priority Habitats' by DEFRA and Natural England); increasing tree cover, together with the community woodland, will bring more shade and cooling effects as summer temperatures increase, as well as sequestering carbon; and offering local fresh and organic fruit that can be enjoyed by the whole community.

In an age of increasing social isolation and community breakdown, our hope is for our woodland and orchard to bring people together and instil a common respect for nature. Having spaces where we can strengthen our connection to nature are vital if we are to change attitudes towards the planet and its finite resources.

Activities are organised so volunteers can support the care and development of the orchard and woodland to stimulate a better understanding of sustainability. We will foster new interests, encourage traditional skills and help improve a spirit of well-being across all generations. It will be a green space and a focal point for other community activities such as picnics, dog walks, blossom days, apple days, and other events or simply as a green haven in which to relax. And it will be a resource for teaching the importance of our environment and its biodiversity of wildlife that will encourage the people to support nature in their own homes and neighbourhoods.

Our Thanks To:

Our volunteers - who have given their time to dig, plant and mulch the trees and those in the community who donated equipment and materials for re-use.

Sponsors – to all those who kindly sponsored all the trees in the orchard.

Andy Howard, The Heritage Fruit Company – We recommend Andy who is not only local but also a fount of knowledge on all things fruit and orchard. He surveyed the land, helped plan our orchard, advised us on planting and maintenance....and more. He also offers courses and talks on all aspects of creating and managing an orchard. His company is helping to save our fruit tree heritage by bringing back traditional varieties of rare and tasty apples and other fruit, many of which are now endangered. Tel 01295 810516 / 07950006813.

<http://www.heritageappletrees.com>

Blenheim Estate – for supporting our plan, offering the land for free for this project and allowing a permissive path to and from the Oxfordshire Way. They helped in other ways too including transporting compost, offering a water supply for the first critical year and supporting grant applications.

Agrivert - for offering free compost.

Woodstock Town Council – for supporting our grant applications.

www.sustainablewoodstock.co.uk