



Friends of Teazle Wood

c/o Lucy Quinnell
Fire and Iron
Rowhurst Forge
Oxshott Road
Leatherhead
Surrey KT22 0EN
e-mail lucyquinnell@aol.com
phone: 01372386453

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Teazle Wood Entrance Enhancement Project (TWEENP)

Background

The Friends of Teazle Wood purchased the woodland known as “Teazle Wood” in July 2012, aiming “to secure, protect, manage and conserve the woodland known as Teazle Wood, Leatherhead, in perpetuity and in line with best ecological practice, enabling light (to the extent that may be ecologically advisable, as ascertained through expert consultation) community access for the purposes of well-being, education and conservation.”

The rubbish and dumped waste situation at the Teazle Wood entrance by Tesco has been a long-standing problem, documented and recorded photographically for more than a decade. In Autumn 2012 a major clearance and litter pick was carried out by an army of wonderful volunteers from Wates. The Wates volunteers also repaired the vandalised brick pathway, painted out graffiti and installed a bench kindly donated by the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project, whose staff also directed the volunteers. Since then there have been regular weekly litter picks by Friends of Teazle Wood volunteers, but, despite this, sadly the situation is not improving, and if anything seems to be getting worse daily as the better weather approaches.

The Rye Brook runs between the entrance road to Tesco from the roundabout with Kingston Road, and along the edge of Teazle Wood with the business park at Brook Way on the other side. At the moment, this stretch of the Rye is visibly overgrown and clogged by a build-up of dumped rubbish. The Rye Brook feeds into the River Mole. In 2003, the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) became part of UK law, and according to the Environment Agency much of the River Mole’s Ecological Status is classified as ‘poor’. Polluted and rubbish-filled brooks like the Rye will of course be a contributory factor to this low classification; it is only when these are cleaned up that there is any chance that the River Mole will be able to improve its classification.

Our vision

Our vision for this area of Teazle Wood is that it can become a delightful place for staff from local businesses to take their lunch breaks or unwind before/during/after work, and for the local residential community to come for picnics. and for everyone to enjoy the woodland setting next to the Rye Brook. It would set a new “tone” – and not only for the wood; it would also create a much better impression for Tesco and the Business Park by showing that this area is cared for and considered important; not unkempt, polluted and neglected as it is at present. We believe that businesses do care and have a responsibility for the area in which they are sited. This area is quite neglected generally; a recently-published report stated that 20% of children in North Leatherhead are classified as living below the poverty line, and it is clear that there is a pressing need to help improve the lives of those who live locally.

Imagine groups sitting at sturdy wood benches having their lunch break on a lovely summer day. Birds are tweeting, darting up and down the brook feeding on insects; trees create dappled shade where pretty clumps of wild flowers are growing, the air is full of the buzzing and humming of bees, Purple Emperor butterflies flit from flower to flower sucking nectar. Some people are relaxing by walking along the bank of the brook; a group of children are examining the contents of a jar of ‘Rye’ water for the aquatic life. What a wonderful win-win situation this would be - great for wildlife, the community and visitors alike – a small area of magic for everyone.

Continued...

How can we make this a reality?

We feel that the only way to make this project happen and be sustainable on a long term basis is to involve a number of participants which include the following:

- Volunteers from Friends of Teazle Wood
- Tesco – locally (Nikki Cucka and colleagues) and nationally
- Local residents and community groups (Youth Centre)
- Local adjacent businesses from the business park at Brook Way
- MVDC Officers and Councillors
- Environmental Health
- Ecology advisors
- Water Authorities
- Lower Mole Countryside Management Project (Helen Cocker & Rod Shaw)
- Surrey Wildlife Trust (Jim Jones)
- Surrey Police
- Therfield School (backs onto Rye)
- West Hill School & Leatherhead Community Garden which back onto Rye (Phil Wessell)
- Funding bodies

To get this project off the ground we would like you to come to the first of what we envisage as a series of meetings with the various parties. The date we propose is Thursday 11th April at 10am. Place: Teazle Wood entrance beyond the petrol station at Tesco, so that we can survey the situation and the problems, and afterwards at the Fire & Iron Gallery where we will serve refreshments and have further discussions about possible solutions.

We hope that you will join us to make this exciting project happen. Please can you let us know by phone 01372 386453 or e-mail lucyquinnell@aol.com if you are willing to take part and whether you are free on this date.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Caroline Cardew-Smith and **Lucy Quinnell** on behalf of the Friends of Teazle Wood

Photo Gallery



Bench donated by the MVCP
sadly sprayed with graffiti, March 2013



The Rye Brook, March 2013



Rubbish, March 2013



Wates volunteer day clearing rubbish & installing bench, Sept 2012

