

Treesponsibility Newsletter



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Hello everyone

I do hope that you won't mind me starting Volume 2 Issue 28 of the treesponsibility newsletter with a personal introduction, but I have to say how overwhelmed I have been by the kindness and generosity I have received in the wake of my cancer diagnosis.

Particular thanks to everyone who contributed to a fund to help me during my treatment, This allowed me to rent a small car, so that I could remain based in Hebden Bridge whilst undergoing my daily radiotherapy at Leeds hospital. (Billy patiently drove me backwards and forwards). This meant that I could stay in touch with my friends and treesponsibility colleagues, and continue with "light work" such as meetings and fund-raising. Keeping my life together in this way was immensely important for my mental well-being.

The fund also paid for weekly shiatsu sessions which I felt had a very beneficial effect. I managed to dodge a huge number of potential side effects of the radiotherapy and chemotherapy – no nausea, headaches, loss of appetite, hair loss or sore mouth (although my skin is pretty sore in the area where the radiation has been targetted). I wouldn't really say I have been suffering from fatigue (although my ability to take naps has markedly improved!).

As I write, I have finished the two prescribed courses of chemotherapy, and I have just three sessions of radiotherapy left (out of a total of 28), so I am pretty near the end of my treatment, and it will probably be finished by the time you get the newsletter. The doctors have given me an excellent prognosis – because my tumour was identified at an early stage I have a 90% chance of complete recovery.

People have been telling me to take things easy, so I hope that you will not mind a slightly slimmer than usual newsletter. Hopefully normal service will be resumed in Volume 2 Issue 29.

I am hoping to be back tree-planting in February. See you then!

xx

Dongria





Yorkshire Water employees at Gorpley

Meanwhile...

While I have been lazing around in bed, the rest of the treesponsibility team have been out in all weathers, carrying heavy loads up steep hillsides, and generally keeping the whole thing going. The scores on the doors are:-

Gorpley:- 2605 trees planted at the gathering, and with volunteers from the Northern Power Grid and Yorkshire Water.

Popples Close:- 305 trees planted with the NFM operations group, and as a memorial to Kate Sweeney's dad

Horsehold Road:- 348 trees planted with Trades Club members and Riverside School

Middle Small Shaw:- 250 trees planted at Xen Hassan's memorial

Cragg Vale Country Business Park:- 1420 trees planted with 6 classes from 4 schools (Old Earth, Scout Road, Burnley Road and Ash Green) and local Woodcraft folk.

Crow Hill Shaw:- 165 trees planted with Sacred Heart School

North Ramsden Farm:- 304 trees planted with two classes from Shade School, and one class from Ferney Lee.

The Midgelden Brook Project

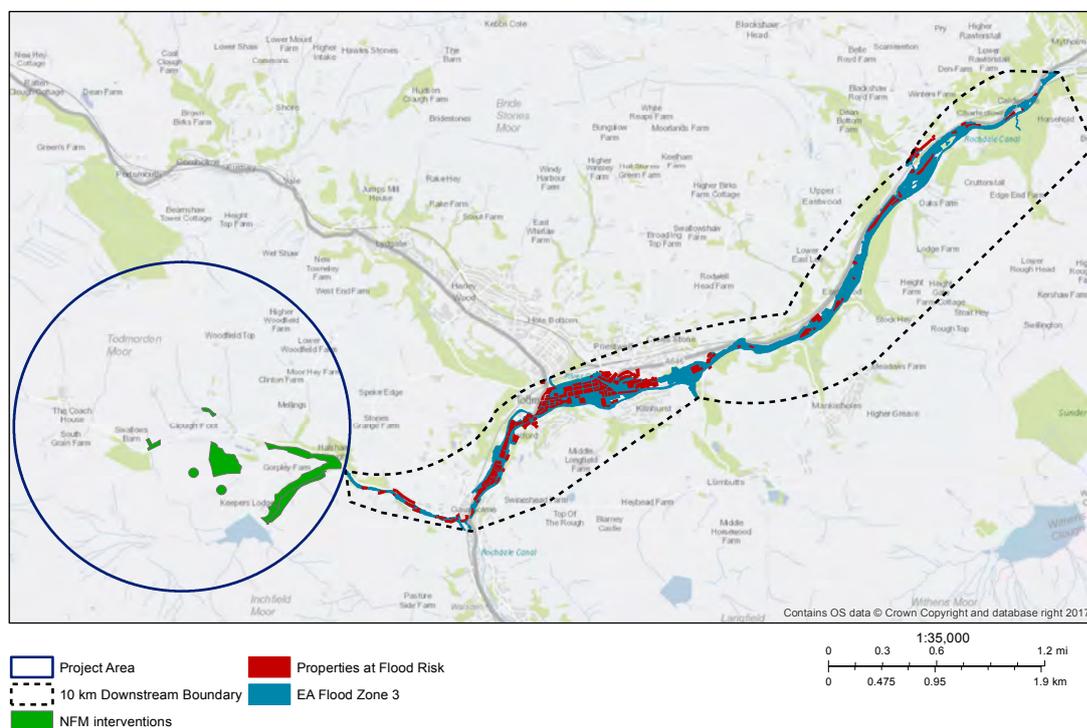
Following the 2015 flood, Andrew Coen, Senior Flood Risk Management Operations Officer in the Environment Agency, conducted a modelling study of the Calder Valley, that identified priority catchments for Natural Flood Management by integrating the results for each catchment across the range of return periods and slow the flow scenarios.

The Midgelden Brook sub-catchment is part of the Walsden catchment which was one of the four catchments which showed the greatest promise in this study (i.e. it was one of the catchments that showed the largest reduction in peak flow in the main rivers from delaying the hydrographs of the sub-catchments by 15min intervals up to 1hr). Whilst it is highly unlikely that benefits accrue equally across the whole catchment, the sites we are targeting in the Midgelden Brook project seem like a sensible place to invest time and effort, because they are outside the catchment of Gorphey reservoir, and because there are supportive landowners willing to engage with the project.

Now that all the EA funding is in place and fully signed off we can get going with the work. This will involve:-

- slowing the flow of water into Midgelden brook by:- installing woody debris dams in Gorphey Clough, the largest tributary, (including further work on our previous planting site at Inchfield Pasture); installing living willow and timber leaky dams in areas of Rock Nook where there is substantial surface water flow in heavy rainfall events; and by installing a floodwater attenuation system on Yorkshire Water land (which does not drain into the reservoir). We may also install leaky dams at North Midgelden brook (subject to further advice).
- Installation of flow monitoring equipment in Gorphey Clough, and time lapse cameras at Rock Nook.
- Planting a kilometre of hedge at Gorphey and Rock Nook.
- Erosion control with fascines to help to prevent sedimentation of watercourses. We plan to treat areas in Gorphey Clough, and Midgelden Bank. We will also help to prevent erosion in Gorphey Clough by treating beech trees.

Our tree-planting work at Gorphey, North Midgelden Farm and Rock Nook acts as match-funding for all this.



Map of the project area, showing flood risk areas downstream which we will be helping to protect.

Chainsaw Training



Thank you to Calderdale Council who gave us a grant of £1570 last Spring to pay for chainsaw training and safety equipment, to help us in work of building leaky dams etc.

Jim Peterkin and Jem Tattersall duly went off to Tyro training in Skipton and fortunately they both passed the course, so they now have certificates for cross-cutting and felling small trees.

The pictures on this page show the installation of leaky dams at Longfield Wood; and felling leylandiae at Popples Close, using the resulting brush to stuff gulleys to slow down stormwater run-off.

Finance and Funding

If you read the last newsletter, you will be aware that in October treesresponsibility was in a pretty dicey cash-flow situation. This was due to:-

- A large DEFRA grant for work with schools, which will not pay us for the work we are doing this season until June 2018
- An overspend last year which depleted our working capital. We speculated on a fence at Rock Nook, (which, to be fair, did help us get the grant for the Midgelden brook project) and we had an (approximately 13%) cost overrun on the stormwater attenuation pond at Stonebooth cottage.

I am delighted to be able to inform you that our little ship seems to have weathered that particular storm, and things are looking much healthier on the finance front.

To begin with, I would like to say a very big thank you to Neil who gave us a significant short term loan to tide us through. Treesresponsibility members have also stumped up smaller loans, and Fran has offered to lend us additional money if it is required to keep us going in Spring (hopefully it won't be!). This has taken a huge weight of worry off our shoulders, and means that we can concentrate on delivering the project.

We have also received some generous donations this year. Angie Proctor fund-raised £2000 in memory of her partner Sam, who died tragically in an accident last year. (Unfortunately the memorial planting we arranged for him was snowed off, but we will arrange another date in the Spring). We have also received £1115 from the North West Green fund (thanks Vanessa for this).

There has also been good news on the grants front:-

- The Environment Agency have agreed to pay us yearly in advance for the Midgelden Brook project. This will make life a great deal easier.
- The Community Foundation for Calderdale has kindly given us a grant of £4000 towards a new van. We are aiming to get a 9 seater crew-cab van, with a separate compartment at the back for carrying tools and equipment. Anyone who has sat in the front of our existing van in the rain will really appreciate the prospect of a vehicle where you can ride along without getting wet!
- We would also like to thank Todmorden Town Council for a grant of £3,000 to help with the match-funding for the Midgelden Brook Project. This money will go towards the costs of the tree-planting element.
- There is more welcome news from The Calderdale Flood fund, who have just told us that they can confirm that they are interested in funding stormwater attenuation as part of the Midgelden Brook project. (Hopefully this money would also be paid in advance). There are a few details to sort out, but we feel pretty confident that this will go ahead, which would bring in another £17,000. The flood fund has also indicated interest in funding the SOURCE which would enable the partnership to do all the work of drawing up site portfolios, with fully costed detailed plans, and full site surveys.

The World Bank, Axa Insurance and Fossil Fuel Divestment

Divestment means getting rid of investments that are unethical. One of the top targets for grass-roots activists over recent years has been fossil fuels, obviously since they are so damaging to the planet. Now they are becoming bad financially too and financial divestment increasingly makes sense even within the limited world-view of capital.

Fossil fuels companies also sponsor all kinds of things in an attempt to create social capital, generating a fake legitimacy that enables them to keep expanding even though their operations contribute to climate chaos.

Art Not Oil (<http://www.artnotoil.org.uk/>) is one group working specifically on this “social divestment”, pointing out that oil companies are often sponsoring things which their activities directly threaten!

So, where groups such as Art Not Oil have led, who is following?

The World Bank ceased lending for coal fired power stations in 2010, and has just announced that it will cease financing oil and gas in 2019. It has claimed that by 2020 it will have 28% of its lending (around \$75 billion!) going to climate action – so this is not just divestment, it looks like a positive step towards funding projects that will help, not harm. To put this into perspective, the Bank currently has something like \$40 billion invested in oil and gas projects, so this is a huge change.



works destroying ancient forest

A quote from www.oilprice.com, an industry website: “The oil industry is quickly turning into a pariah as more institutional investors are divesting their fossil fuel portfolios. The latest blow to oil’s popularity among investors came from French insurer Axa, the third-largest globally. Axa said in yesterday that it will be divesting \$700 million worth of interests in Canadian oil sands production and pipelines”.

Photo – Canadian tar sand

The public background to this decision is that Axa recognised oil sands as a carbon intensive and a serious cause of environmental pollution. They are, however, not divesting in other oil and gas projects, including exploration, so there is still more to do. On the positive side, they are planning a 400% increase in their target for renewables investment by 2020.

It is pleasing to see financial giants moving in the right direction. However, it is still up to groups like Art Not Oil to take the fossil fuel industry to task for its role in the climate crisis. By highlighting the ethical dimensions of climate change good things will continue to happen. The market cannot ever solve the problem on its own.

News briefs..

Barclays's action



While the World Bank might finally be waking up to the idea that investing in fossil fuels is not the best idea, the same cannot be said of Barclays, who own 97% of Third Energy – the company planning to start fracking operations in Kirby Misperton, North Yorkshire. Treesponsibility is supporting the campaign to get people to move their accounts to a fossil fuel free bank – see www.moveyourmoney.org.uk. Some of us joined the recent protest at the Barclays branch in Hebden Bridge, see above.

More evidence on trees and flooding

We have recently seen a preliminary report by Tom Mawdsley, Nick A Chappell and Elliot Swallow of the Lancaster Environment Centre at Lancaster University:- “Hydrological change on Tebay Common following fencing and tree planting: A preliminary dataset”

The team found that the geometric mean subsoil permeability was “a factor of 2.30 larger beneath Alder saplings planted 18-months previously. If further data collection, permitting a more robust statistical analysis, produces a similar result, then it provides some evidence that even young trees may affect the permeability of the soil close to their roots.”

“This would mean that tree planting on the gley soils of Tebay Common, and in similar settings, are likely to exhibit the first signs of improved drainage during flood events within a few months of the planting episode. Improved drainage takes water from the topsoil so that very fast flowing overland flows are less likely to be produced.”

Interesting!

Ban the Burn update

A little bird tells us that the Govt/Defra/NE announcement on EC Complaint is imminent and that the EC have accepted UKGov response. We await to see the detail, but it might include an end to rotational burning on blanket bog (which would be good) BUT it might also include a reference ref to consenting one-off so called “restoration burns” (which would be bad). Watch this space.

For Your Noticeboard: Treesresponsibility Diary Dates Spring 2018

9th to 11th March our Treesresponsibility's 20th Birthday Weekend Accommodation will be at Height Gate. Please come and help us celebrate another milestone. We will probably be planting at Middle Small Shaw or Old Ridings. Cost is £25.00 for food and accommodation for the whole weekend.

Please book early – treesresponsibility@yahoo.co.uk or ring Christina on 07709 690368

Other Planting Weekends:-

(Everyone welcome to come and join us on site – just contact us to let us know if you want to come and we will send details of where we will be planting)

3rd - 4th February Woodcraft Folk

10th - 11th February Ende Gelande

23rd - 25th February Rowena Field

31st March - 1st April Duncan's Birthday weekend

7th 8th April GAPS

14th- 15th April Elvira's Birthday

Potential Group Planting Days in January at Gorpley:-

We still have the following dates available for weekday group bookings:-

Thursdays 11th and 18th, Wednesdays 24th and 31st