



Treesponsibility Newsletter



Volume 2 Issue 27
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I am sorry to have to start Volume 2 Issue 27 of the treesresponsibility newsletter with the very sad news that Joey has died. Joey has been volunteering with Treesresponsibility for at least 15 years, and many of you will have met him at our planting weekends. He will be very much missed and we will plant a tree for him at our gathering later this month. If you want to come and stay at Hebden Hey for the gathering, please book soon, as spaces are going fast.

I am writing this shortly after having been part of an Environment Agency webinar which will hopefully enable us to access the funding from DEFRA which we were awarded over three and a half months ago. Over the Summer I made the big mistake of saying to Christina that things were going to get a little easier, but everything seems to be just as complicated as ever! Fortunately we are now having to deal with the problems of success, rather than the problems of trying to survive. In particular we have issues with cash-flow (see the finance report on Page 5), new layers of grant bureaucracy which have delayed sign-off, and a packed schedule of work which means that timelines are very tight to get things started.

In addition, we are having to fulfil new monitoring conditions, providing much more evidence about the impacts of our NFM work in the Midgelden Clough catchment. Last week I attended a workshop organised by the Yorkshire Integrated Catchment Solutions Programme (iCASP) which was discussing the practical problems of monitoring and modelling, and how we could build on existing research. Three particular issues, from our point of view are:- 1. the fact that we have already done tree-planting and other interventions all over the place, so we are not starting from the beginning. 2. the wide range of interventions that we are undertaking – the impact of leaky dams may be easier to measure, tree-planting and erosion control less so. 3. The need to get baseline data to satisfy the new grant, whilst not holding up implementation of the NFM programme too much. Fortunately we have some help. I met Zora Van Leeuwen from Leeds University at the iCASP event, and she very kindly agreed to come for a visit to work on our monitoring programme, and meet Stuart Bradshaw from the Slow the Flow group, who are the SOURCE partners taking a lead on monitoring. Zora's recommendation was that we concentrate on a single stretch of Gorphey Clough and concentrate on doing that job well, rather than bite off more than we could chew by attempting to monitor the whole catchment. We will need to install pressure transducers as well as rain gauges to measure antecedent conditions. Other interventions, such as living willow leaky dams at Rock Nook, could be monitored using time-lapse cameras.

While we are on the subject of science and NFM impacts, I have just received the press release from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology's systematic review of the current evidence about trees and flooding. This looked specifically at the influence of trees in a catchment on flood peak (the maximum river discharge recorded during a flood event). "Based on the 71 studies examined by the authors, there is broad support for the conclusion that increased tree cover in catchments results in decreasing flood peaks, while decreased tree cover results in increasing flood peaks" although trees "are not the universal panacea and should be used as part of a cohesive and carefully planned package of measures, looking at upstream attenuation and downstream conveyance." Which is pretty much what we have been saying all along.

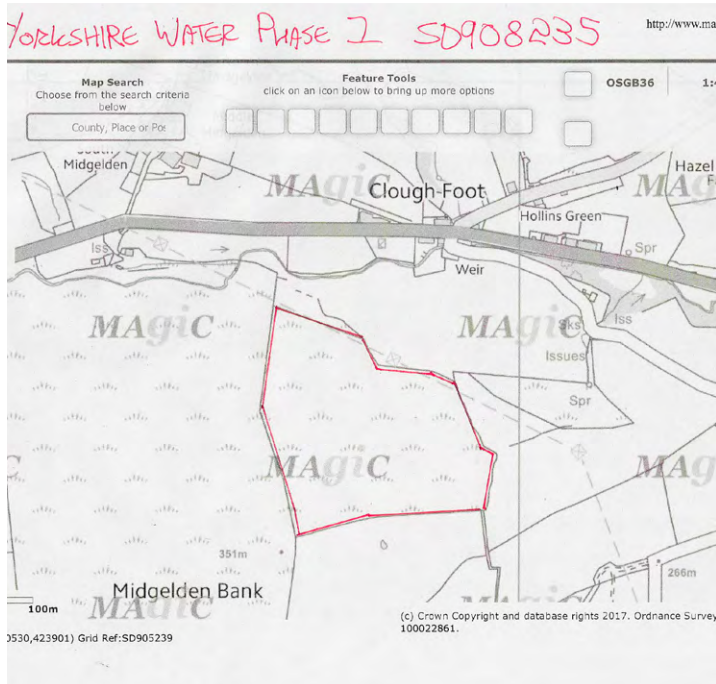
Finally, I have just enough room on the page to say that I am now officially a film star. The premiere of Andy Clarke's film "High Water, Common Ground" took place at Hebden Bridge Cinema earlier this month. You can see the trailer here www.highwaterfilm.co.uk common-ground

I will be signing autographs at the gathering!!

x Dongria



Treesponsibility's Craziest Season Yet.....



Our Site at Gorpley

The image above does not really do justice to the size of this year's tree-planting site on Yorkshire Water land at Gorpley (above the Coal Authority Water treatment plant at Clough Foot), and it is just one of the sites we will be planting this season. (The others are Cragg Vale Country Business Park, Popples End, Lower Blackshaw Farm, Crow Hill Shaw Farm, Rock Nook, Roebucks, West Gable, Tinker Bank, Middle Small Shaw Farm, Old Ridings and Household Road). Taken all together this means that we will be planting in the region of 25,000 trees – more than double our tally for last year, and more than we have ever planted in one season before.

Naturally, if we are going to achieve this we will need help, particularly as we are not getting any younger. Jeff, Jim and Mischa have all joined the site-worker team (as well as Dunc when his foot is better) and we are looking to encourage groups to come out with us for planting days. We are expecting our friends at SUMA to come out again, as well as Sweet and Maxwell (who helped us at Lodge Farm last year), but it would be nice if we could have a decent team planting with us on all our planting days at Gorpley (see dates on the back page). There is a leaflet encouraging local businesses to take part in “team-building days” in this newsletter and we would be most grateful if you could take it to work, or leave it somewhere appropriate to encourage people to come out.

We have also arranged more weekends than we did last year – in addition to the Autumn Gathering, and our 20th birthday weekend in March we have already taken bookings from the Woodcraft Folk, GAPS, a Buddhist Group, and Dunc's birthday party. However there are still 4 dates where we have a hostel reservation and no group booking, so if you know of a group of people who might like to come out for a planting weekend please ask them to get in touch as soon as possible. The available dates are listed on the last page.

Finally, as per normal, we will be relying on some child labour (in moderation, of course). Christina is working hard to get schools involved – there is enough “child-friendly” land for about 27 classes. We have already taken bookings from Old Earth, Burnley Road, Shade, Old Town, Hill Top School in Bradford and Ash Green, with interest from several other schools. If you are a teacher, or have links with a local school, please consider making a booking.

Team-Building with Treeresponsibility

If your firm holds team-building exercises or away-days, you may want to consider joining treeresponsibility to plant trees in the Upper Calder Valley, as a way of helping to increase the area's resilience to future flooding. We aim to plant roughly 25,000 trees in the coming planting season (October - April) and we hope that local businesses will want to get involved.

- Planting events tailored to your business – social “away-days” or team-building “challenges”
- One day or half day events, for between 6 and 30 participants
- A range of tasks and planting sites to suit all physical abilities
- Refreshments provided
- Full risk Assessments
- Mini-bus pick-ups by arrangement
- No cost to you
- A great way to help the local community. Trees intercept rainwater, and help run-off to infiltrate down into the soil, thus reducing flood-risk.
- Good PR – a certificate of number of trees planted, for your reception area.
- An Enjoyable day for your employees.

“A group of us from work had a great day out, well organised by treeresponsibility who provided all the knowledge and equipment and delicious home-made soup for lunch. We had great fun learning about preparing the ground and planting and it was rewarding thinking we were doing our bit to reduce soil erosion and flooding. It was a great way to bond with other people from work – sharing a new task together which breaks the ice. Highly recommended.” Chris Blagg, Thompson Reuters.

“SUMA Wholefoods have been supporting treeresponsibility since 2005, and our staff always enjoy coming out to the plantings. It is a brilliant day out, and very worthwhile.” Sarah Moakler, SUMA

**TO BOOK CONTACT CHRISTINA HOOLEY: -
treeresponsibility@yahoo.co.uk or ring 07709 690368**

Help!!

For many years now, our good friends at Bradford Wastechasers have been supplying us with all their recycled newspapers to use for mulching. We have found it to be a really effective way of getting our trees off to a good start.

However with so many extra trees to plant this year there will be a massive shortfall, so we have had to put our thinking caps on to work out how we can get the paper we need.

We are hoping that a few treesresponsibility supporters might be willing to host a wheelie bin on their street, or at their school or workplace, and ask their friends, neighbours and colleagues to help us collect newspaper (not magazines).

Can you help?



Learn Hedge Laying at Great Burlees Farm – by Keith

Treesresponsibility have planted several kilometres of new hedgerows by now. Great Burlees Farm near Dodd Naze is one such site, planted over several years, often with groups of local school kids and is one of my favourites. I love the networks of hedges, providing shelter for wild life and live stock, in this case rare breed sheep and horses.

But hedges need some maintenance. Left to their own devices they grow “leggy” and the stronger trees out compete the weaker ones, creating gaps, no good if you want to keep animals in or out. Hedge laying involves cutting back the trees, but leaving some stems partially attached, then weaving these “pleachers” between stakes hammered into the ground to make a strong living basket fence. For the first few years this allows light in, encouraging wild flowers. The longer term effect is a thick bushy regrowth, ideal habitat for lots of wildlife, such as nests for birds. Traditionally farmers would lay a portion of the hedges each year, meaning there was continuous mixed habitats available, brilliant for bio-diversity.

I’m running four 1 day courses in hedge laying on 11th and 12th November, then again on 10th and 11th February. One day will be enough to give you the confidence to lay hedges yourself. To book or for more details go to www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/keith-wilson-14989374246 .

I’m really looking forward to going back to Great Burlees Farm to lay the hedges that I helped plant all those years ago. Hope you see you there.

Finance Report

Last year, Treeresponsibility had a considerable change in the way it was funded, receiving £85,000 from the Environment Agency, largely for work connected with natural flood management (NFM). Whilst this included fencing for tree planting, it also involved slowing-the-flow measures in streams, the creation of attenuation ponds and erosion control works. We were managing new kinds of projects, including a lot of work at one site which involved quite large scale NFM measures as well as woodland and coppice creation. Thus it was that 2016/17 was the first year in a while in which we ran a deficit, particularly resulting from cost over-runs at the large NFM site and a need to develop sites for the 2017/18 year without funding being secured first.

This year is looking like being much the same (although hopefully without the cost overruns now that we have some experience of this kind of project management). We are again funded via the Environment Agency, a total of £50,000 this year (with the same again next year). Although we have to spend first and then claim back, we can use reserves in the short term to make that possible and the EA are quick to pay once the admin is sorted at their end. We had around £10,000 for that purpose but at the time of going to press we have only just received the purchase order from the EA allowing us to claim back all the money we have spent since April (over £8000). As a result, our treasurer Billy has just transferred the last £5000 from our deposit account into our current account. He has never had to do that before, there's been at least £5000 in there for as long as we can remember!

A bigger headache is that we have DEFRA funding to plant woodland with school children but this grant won't pay out until next summer – leaving us needing to find £15,000 over the winter that we can't immediately replace. A few Treeresponsibility people have come forward with loans (thanks to Barbara, Billy and Christina) and we are very grateful to SUMA for giving us a couple of thousand more than last year, but at the time of writing we are about £7000 short of funding a minimum school planting programme. We are investigating whether we can get a loan from the flood programme, repayable when the DEFRA money arrives. Watch this space.

All the above makes the fact that the van is leaking particularly problematic (as well as a continuing clunkiness of the sliding door). Although all the mechanics are sound, we could really do with replacing the vehicle so that front seat passengers do not get a shower when travelling with us in the rain. Duncan Livermore is very kindly going to organise crowdfunding for our vehicle replacement fund. It is not on-line yet, but if you would like to contribute please drop us and email, and we will let you know as soon as it is up and running.





An Excellent Start to the 2017/18 Planting Season....

Old Earth School have been planting with us regularly since 2008, so it was fitting that they should launch our 2017/18 planting season. Two classes came out with us, and they planted at Cragg Vale Country Business Park. It is always a pleasure to work with this school.

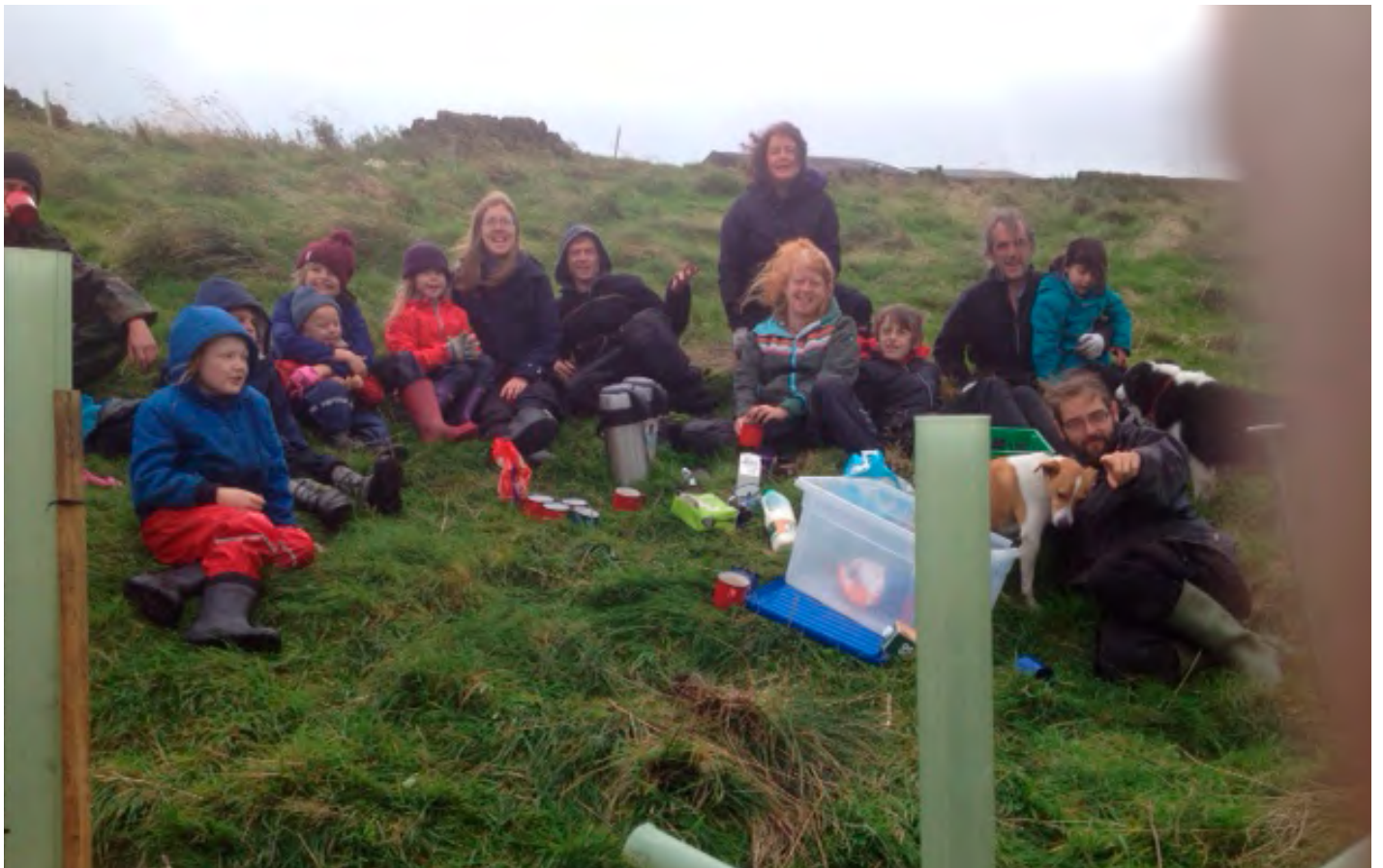
It was also good that the NFM Operations Group were able to come out planting with us last week. Since the Boxing Day Floods in 2015 there has been meeting after meeting, planning, consulting, strategising and identifying funding, so people from the group clearly enjoyed coming out to do something more hands on. Granville Davies from Yorkshire Water chairs the group:- “It was great to be able to get away from meetings, go outdoors and do something really practical to help with increasing the number of trees in Calderdale. A number of NFM Operational Group members attended and over the course of a couple of hours we planted a line of hawthorn hedge (with bird cherry scattered through), a number of willow trees and some rowan standards that will support a future hazel coppice. I think that we were all surprised how quickly a small group can make a real different to the landscape. And after the morning’s downpours we were equally surprised to remain (mostly) dry for the afternoon! It is definitely something that we will look to repeat with the Operational Group in the future.”

Finally, thanks to Hebden Bridge Woodcraft Folk, who came out on Sunday. We had been to the group earlier in the week to talk to the children about why we were planting trees, and they were all really engaged and “up for it”.





The NFM Operations Group



The Woodies have lunch

Amelia Womack's visit. Christina Hooley.



Last week Amelia Womack, deputy leader of the Green Party came to Hebden Bridge and Todmorden to learn more about the issues affecting flood risk in the Valley. In her three years as deputy leader she has toured the country visiting hundreds of local campaigns in work to raise awareness of local issues while campaigning for change at a national level. She is interested in community led initiatives as drivers behind innovative interventions such as Natural Flood Management (NFM) and what legislative procedures need to be addressed to facilitate these interventions. The work of Treeresponsibility, pioneer of NFM in the Upper Calder Valley was an obvious choice for her.

Amelia had a whistle stop tour of some of the most significant sites where tree planting and other NFM interventions have been carried out. The first site, pictured above, was Lodge Farm, where she planted a tree. Situated on the north-facing hillside above the sewage works and canal, it is a prime site for tree planting. Since landowner Kate Howarth contacted Treeresponsibility to offer the land in January 2016, 3,404 trees have been planted. The difference in hydraulic roughness between the planted fields and the billiard table smoothness of neighbouring fields was clear to see. We talked about the cultural barriers to turning grazing land over to tree planting and how the current system of farm subsidy under CAP are a disincentive to farmers. From here we could also look across the valley towards Walshaw Moor and talk about the issues of burning on moorland.

The tour continued with a visit to the new Incredible Farm site at Healey Hill Lumbutts (which is also a Treeresponsibility site planted in 2003), and finally we visited sites in the Midgelden Brook catchment, spending some time at South Grain, where fascine work has been carried out to repair land slips caused by the 2012 floods and where tree planting on bare shale slopes has greatly improved soil and vegetation coverage. We were also able to see Midgelden Wood which was planted in 2001, Gorpely dale Farm planted in 2006, and Trial holes planted last year. We finished with a brief look across to the new Yorkshire Water site at Gorpely.

Campaigns...

Hurrah! Scotland has banned fracking – one of two good pieces of climate news this week. (The other is that global carbon emissions stabilised in 2016, partly due to a huge expansion in renewables, particularly solar.)

The hurricanes, floods and forest fires of the past few months clearly demonstrate the folly of developing new sources of fossil fuels, but unfortunately, the Westminster government does not see it that way, and are continuing to override local democracy by foisting fracking on unwilling communities.

Over the summer, treesponsibility people (especially Jim) were involved in Reclaim the Power's month of resistance at Cuadrilla's Preston New Road fracking site near Blackpool. (The picture below is of my birthday party, in front of the gates). Although vertical drilling at the site has now started, the protests have had a significant effect. Preparing the site was supposed to take two months, instead it's taken seven. The primary reason for this is the resistance, which not only impacts operations as they happen, but also creates knock on effects further down the complex logistical line. We also have reason to be cheerful in that the original application was for four wells. That's dropped down to two, probably as a result of the impact of protests on Cuadrilla's finances. All this, and a novice company doing something that's not been attempted before in the UK, means that it's hard to second guess how things will roll out from here.

According to an article in the yesterday's Guardian, horizontal drilling could start by the end of the month, after which the company will try to bring on hydraulic fracturing kit (essentially a lot of pumps) to pump sand, chemicals and water underground at high pressure to fracture shale and release gas. This process will be resisted every step of the way. We encourage everyone to go and support the camp at Preston New Road in any way that you can.



Treesponsibility Autumn Diary Dates

(Please let Christina know if you are coming or want to book for a weekend 07709 690368, or treesponsibility@yahoo.co.uk)

October

20th to 22rd. Treesponsibility Gathering, Hebden Hey. All welcome. We will be planting at Gorpley. The costs for the gathering are £25.00 for bunk-bed accommodation and food. Book soon, as places are going fast. Everyone welcome to join the plantings on Saturday and Sunday .

Friday 27th. Planting at Gorpley, with various dignitaries from the council and Yorkshire Water. We could do with getting a good team out

November

Wednesday 1st – Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

Saturday 4th – Memorial Planting for Xen Hassan Friends and Family. The planting will take place at Middle Small Shaw, off Haworth Old Road from 10.00 a.m. Transport can be arranged from Hebden Bridge station.



Monday 6th November - Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

Saturday 11th November - Planting day at Gorpley.

Mon 13th November - Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

Wed 15th November - Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

Saturday 18th November – TRADES CLUB tree-planting, all welcome. We will be planting at a site up Horsehold Road, within easy walking distance of Hebden Bridge town centre, leaving from Holme Street at 10 a.m. PLEASE BRING A SPADE IF YOU HAVE ONE AS WE WILL BE PLANTING BARE-ROOTED TREES.

Wed 22nd November - Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

Saturday 25th November - Planting day at Gorpley.

Mon 27th November - Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

Wed 29th November - Planting day at Gorpley. Suitable for “team-building day”.

WE STILL HAVE 4 POTENTIAL TREE PLANTING WEEKENDS AVAILABLE FOR GROUP BOOKINGS.
Please contact us a.s.a.p. if you are interested.

**24th - 26th November Hebden Hey; 1st to 3rd December Hebden Hey;
9th - 11th Feb Tom Bell; 20th – 22nd April Hebden Hey.**