



Lympstone Parish Council

31 January 2022

Dear Councillors,

### **A thriving new woodland for wildlife and people in Devon**

Further to the visit that several of you attended in August last year and subsequent correspondence, I want to update you on our plans to create a new woodland at Coombe.

We have already been successful in raising £1.5m towards the acquisition and management of the site.

Today, 31 January we are launching a public appeal to raise the remaining funds. If we are successful with the appeal, we will be able to secure the site and finalise the acquisition which will enable us to develop a vibrant haven for nature and new recreational green space for people.

As you know from visiting this site it is very special, and a remarkable opportunity to contribute to Devon's Nature Recovery Network, creating a vibrant mosaic of woodland, wood pasture and open grassland spaces, using tree planting and natural regeneration.

### **Introducing the site to the public**

Launching the appeal on 31 January is the point at which we introduce the project to the public. The appeal will include an email to our supporters, a mailshot, door drops, advertising, a press release, and social media, as we work to raise the remaining £1m.

At this stage we are referring to the site as 'land near Lympstone'. We will be offering local people the chance to name the wood.

We would very much appreciate your support in helping to raise awareness of the appeal. The appeal is online here: [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/devonappeal](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/devonappeal)

**Your help:** If you can help us to promote the appeal, please put me in touch with your comms or PR person and I can provide more information.

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## **Involving the local community**

Raising the funds to buy this site is just the beginning of our long-term project here, and one that we are looking forward to working closely with you to achieve. Once we are sure the site is secure, we will begin a process of public consultation with the local community, including asking how you would like to be involved. This will include an online survey, site visits and consultation event in a local village hall.

We will undertake all statutory and recommended consultations as required. We hope to start recruiting volunteers very soon. They will play a key part in creating the new wooded landscape, helping us initially to carry out baseline wildlife surveys. These opportunities will be advertised on our website and again your help to promote them would be appreciated.

We hope to be able to start planting trees in the autumn 2022, with planting to begin in earnest in 2023 and envisage that local people will get involved in helping to transform this site into a thriving new haven for Devon's spectacular wildlife.

It is likely that the site will be opened in phases, from spring of 2023 as we complete this work. We will gradually introduce a series of paths and open areas where people will be free to wander. In the meantime, we will involve volunteers and host events such as tree planting and guided walks to introduce our work and the site to local people.

With its proximity to Exeter and Exmouth, stunning views and picturesque valley-side location near the Exe Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest, we are confident this land can become an important woodland in the south-west, creating a new green space for visitors and the local community.

## **A new woodland to celebrate our birthplace**

When the Woodland Trust was founded in Devon in 1972, the world was a very different place.

Fifty years later, woods and trees are needed more than ever before, and our work protecting, creating and restoring woodland is more important than ever as we battle the devastating twin threats of climate change and nature loss.

We look forward to celebrating the Woodland Trust's 50th birthday with you at this special new woodland, resolute in our goals to fight the climate and nature crisis with trees.

We hope to be able to update you in March on our progress with this site and how you can take part in the detailed work. Your views are important to shaping our plans and we look forward to you joining us on this exciting new journey.

With best wishes,

*Ross Kennerley*

Ross Kennerley  
Regional Director – South West England