

PYNES COMMUNITY ORCHARD, IDE

A PROSPECTUS

[Here find cover photograph]

draft v10.2 1 July 2020

An Orchard for Ide

Ide has long been a village of orchards. Pynes Victorian Orchard lies across the road from Pynes Farm, on the right as you go south up the hill towards Dunchideock. It remains one of Ide's oldest traditional fruit orchards, neglected for a generation, yet still in its original form. Its 3.65 acres of sloping field, facing north, overlook the village. It contains a number of old apple trees, some fallen and resting on the ground. The Church Commissioners own Pynes Orchard and, stimulated by discussions about the Ide Neighbourhood Plan, have agreed to sell it to the Parish Council for use as a community orchard.

There are over fifty community orchards in Devon. They have become popular as places for friends and neighbours to come together for seasonal events such as apple pressing or hay making; and they provide unique spaces for recreation, productive activity, and relaxation. Local, common, public space is something we are short of in Ide. Community orchards are a fine resource for schools seeking outside classroom activities. They offer the chance to maintain and increase biodiversity, provide local fruit and to resist property development. Pynes Orchard has been formally designated for protection as Local Green Space in the Ide Neighbourhood Plan.

We have joined an organisation called Orchard Link which promotes the restoration and replanting of orchards in South Devon, by offering technical advice and support. In January 2017, Orchard Link's chairman, Charles Staniland, addressed a public meeting in Ide about the benefits of community orchards. Real enthusiasm was expressed at the meeting for the idea of buying Pynes Orchard.

In November 2017 the Parish Council set up Pynes Community Orchard Working Group to conduct negotiations with the Church Commissioners; plan a fund raising campaign; gather ideas for the use of the orchard which fit the needs of Ide's residents; and review how best to manage the orchard, its trees and boundaries.

In March 2018, the Council successfully negotiated a price with the Commissioners of £17,000 per acre, plus reclaimable VAT, which is in line with an independent valuation, as amenity land, by Rendells Surveyors commissioned by the Parish Council in April 2017. After further discussions the Church Commissioners agreed to grant us a licence to occupy the orchard from 28 September 2018, with certain conditions: its use must be as a private orchard until we own it; and the licensee is to be an individual. Andrew Bragg, of West Town

Farm, took on the licence on the Parish Council's behalf, splitting the annual licence fee of £544 equally with the Parish Council Working Group.

In [month] 2020, we signed a three year Option Agreement to purchase the land; and we feel confident about raising the money within that three year period.

Ide has a rare, once in a lifetime opportunity to acquire a piece of land which borders its residential area, and which holds a place in the village's heritage and history. It will be an area of open space, for the public's enjoyment, where traditional fruit trees can be restored, planted and cultivated as a community enterprise.



Heritage

In the last seventy years Devon has lost about 90% of its traditional orchards. Every Devon farm had its own orchard, with historical taxation figures showing that in 1789 there were 22 farms of varying size in the parish of Ide. Today there are six, and as the number of farms has declined, so has the number of orchards.

Ordnance Survey maps of the early 19th century show the extent of orchard planting and, compared with today's orchards, how much has disappeared.

An aerial snapshot of Ide in the spring of 1800 would have revealed a tiny island floating in a sea of pink and white blossom. There are remnants of this sea: a strip of land behind The College; a paddock behind the Huntsman Inn; solitary, gnarled fruit trees in back gardens around the village; and, largest of all, the 'Victorian Orchard' which, once we have raised the funds to buy it, will be known as Pynes Community Orchard.

Originally part of Canns Farm, this orchard predates the Victorian era by several hundred years and could have been first planted in medieval times. The fact that it still lies within its original boundaries adds to its historical importance.

The orchard would have been planted for cider. Cider apples were an important crop throughout Devon until the early 20th century, with farm labourers often being paid in liquid gold rather than hard cash.

The number of rare old apple trees makes Pynes an important Devon orchard. This alone justifies our restoring and preserving it as an outstanding piece of landscape heritage for Ide to cherish and enjoy for years to come.



A Community Orchard.

A community orchard can make a significant contribution to the life of a village, providing a diverse range of activities and benefits.

Since September 2018 volunteer working parties have been restoring the existing trees, and learning how to look after them.

In due course we aim to make our own juices and generate some income through the sale of the fruit. We will work with local producers and learn the traditional craft of juice and cider making. We will make these events open to all, with talks and demonstrations; and to make sure the crop is good, we will tap into our folklore and bless the trees with a seasonal wassail.

Learning how fruit is grown and produced will provide educational opportunities for the children of Ide School. They will learn about the importance of preserving natural diversity so that the apples and other fruits become pollinated.

The orchard will also create open space for the residents of Ide. It can become a sanctuary for restoring some balance with our natural surroundings. We will develop areas in the orchard for picnics, relaxation and other activities such as art and yoga.

Remedial restoration work and new planting

The Orchard had been neglected for many years. Until recently there were 40 productive apple trees. There are now thirteen. The remaining trees are interesting old varieties, so our first task in December 2018 was to carry out remedial pruning and care. In January 2020 we planted 68 new apple and four new pear trees, while also creating areas for other recreational activities.

The ground was badly rutted after three winters as a paddock for horses. The grass needed rolling and resting for a full year, with a square metre cleared around each remaining tree to enable it to recover. There is also work to do on the gate, hedges and boundaries, some of which are broken down or overgrown.

Habitats, havens, wildlife protection, and education

A traditional orchard is different from a tightly planted, modern orchard: less intensively managed, and more in common with woodland, pasture and parkland. It typically consists of fruit trees and grasses, with scrub round the edges and hedgerow. This mix of habitats adds up overall to something more valuable than the sum of its individual parts.

Old trees will be left as dead or decaying wood, where they don't affect the orchard's health, as a habitat for beetles, hoverfly and moths.

The grass will be managed by grazing combined with cutting for hay. Apples will be allowed to lie for birds. Winter migrants such as fieldfares, redwings and hawfinches feed on apple pips and, with the grass allowed to flourish, the number of voles, and the owls that feed on them, will increase. Protected species surveys will be undertaken.



Financing the Project

The cost of the land is £62,050 (plus £11,560 VAT, reclaimable because we are a Parish Council). The early set up costs to cover fees for surveyors, solicitors and agents, and materials like this prospectus, came to an additional £7680, money we raised with donations from local community groups, individuals and local authority councillor grants; and which we have already spent! We needed this initial priming to get to the point we have now reached, where we can go out to raise the capital amount to buy the land.

A separate £907 was donated by working group members to cover the new trees planted in January 2020.

The Parish Council opened a separate account, administered by the Parish Council, to run the finances for Pynes Orchard.

The principles of our funding strategy will include:

- **A broad based approach:** a variety of strands will be adopted, including local crowd-funding and fund-raising events, together

with applications to national and local grant giving bodies to maximise the opportunities available. An initial search indicates there are many trusts whose criteria we meet. Parish Councils can also borrow money from the Public Works Loan Board, at low rates of interest, over a period of up to 50 years, with the approval of their county Association of Local Councils and the Secretary of State.

- **A considerate approach:** this recognises that in a vibrant village like Ide there will always be competing demands for funding. A considerate approach prioritises funding opportunities, and works closely with other groups also seeking funding.

We have signed an Option Agreement with the Church Commissioners which gives us up to three years, until(date), to raise the money and buy the orchard. We can exercise our option at any point during this period. We intend to spend the first of the three years raising funds from grant making bodies and trusts, and from interested individual donors. At the start of the second year, we will take stock, and if there remains a shortfall, consider the merits of and support for applying for a loan to fund the balance.

There is a high level of interest and support for the Orchard in the village; and we anticipate a ground swell of energy and commitment for fund-raising efforts. The Working Group is confident that the target can be achieved.

? here find a photo with people in it?

Management of the project

Ide Parish Council set up Pynes Community Orchard Working Group (PCOWG) and we have met every 4-6 weeks since December 2017. The group has brought together members of the parish council with those in the community who have expertise in horticulture and fruit tree management, farming, fund raising, and running community projects. The group's members are:

Peter Cloke	Chair PCOWG
Nick Bradley	Chair Ide Parish Council
Andy Bragg	Agriculture and orchards
Trevor Gardner	Fund raising
David Howe	Solicitor
Mel Liversage	Ide Parish Clerk
Jessica Paine	Ide Parish Council
Julian Perrett	Environment and ecology
Richard Sharman	History and Heritage
Mark Thomas	Ide Parish Council
Carolyn Tysoe	Community and allotments
Phil Willcock.	Treasurer

A Friends Group has been established and is open to anyone in the community who wants to volunteer on the orchard working parties. The Parish Council has oversight of the project and receives regular reports from the working group at its meetings and communicates news, opportunities and updates via its website.

Future ownership and running of the Orchard

Ide Parish Council will own the freehold of the Orchard, and run it through its formally established Pynes Community Orchard Working Group, which is accountable to the parish council for the decisions and financial arrangements it makes. The group will need to draw up a constitution describing its purpose to restore, develop and maintain the Orchard for the benefit of local people, visitors and wildlife, and will become the long term management group for Pynes Orchard.

How you can give

The simplest way is to donate direct to the Ide Parish Council Community Orchard fund by bank transfer to a dedicated account specifically set up for the Orchard:

Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-80-37, account number 38420963,
account name "Ide Parish Council Com Orchard".

If writing a cheque, please make it to:
"Ide Parish Council Com Orchard".

If you prefer to give regularly, you can set up a standing order or
direct debit using the enclosed form.

Or you can sponsor one or more new trees: £150 for one tree, £250
for two trees, each additional tree £125, by using the enclosed form.

Pynes Community Orchard is for the whole village and so it is hoped
that many Ide residents and those living in the surrounding area will
want to support the project.

For further information about giving or joining the Friends Group
please contact:

Peter Cloke
Chair PCOWG
peter_cloke@btinternet.com Tel 07771 594726

Enclosure: donation form

[back cover]

Prospectus Version 10

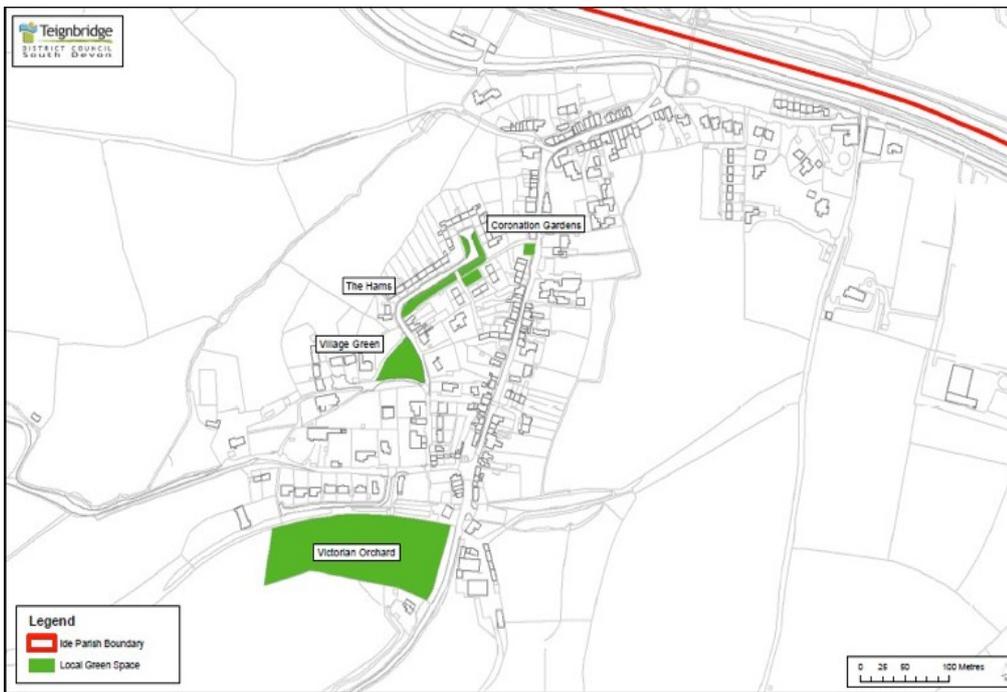
24 May 2020

Pynes Community Orchard

Ide, EX2 9SA

Grid Ref: SX 898901

[find this map on page 5]



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[Find Brenda's good map on page 4]

