

Nick Bradley
Chair Ide Parish Council

From: Peter Cloke
Chair Ide Community
Orchard Management
Group

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Ide Community Orchard - Progress Report

- 1 A very successful Wassail was held in the Orchard on Sunday 5th February. Mark Thomas led the event superbly with Lily Ballard contributing significantly to its planning and choreography. It really was a memorable first for us, with a perfect setting of a stunning sunset, a new moon and the timely ringing of the Church bells.
- 2 The new apple trees have been pruned over the last couple of weeks and most are beginning to bud. Four new trees have been planted at the top of the Orchard to replace those lost after rabbit and deer damage.
- 3 Daffodils and crocuses are beginning to come out along the transverse path and under some of the trees and we will plant more bulbs next autumn.
- 4 We had another volunteers' day on Sunday 5th March focusing on planting the new trees, creating a number of wild flower patches throughout the Orchard and, under Julian Perret's professional guidance, checking on the dormouse and owl boxes. There had been an encouraging lot of activity: Julian was able to show us a nesting woodmouse as well as a squirrel which had decided to invade the Owl's nesting box in the tree by the top gate(see pictures below)
- 5 We are going to focus our next Volunteers' morning on family activities.
- 6 The next important task is to clear the weeds around the new trees and feed and mulch them, and to cut the grass - probably in the week before Easter. We will also begin to clear invasive thorn growth, and arrange for the spring cutting of hedges.
- 7 On Saturday July 8, IPC members will be aware that there will be a fundraising concert at Westown Farm featuring Police Dog Hogan with others. Income from ticket sales will go to the Orchard with all receipts from food and the bar going to Weir Meadow. Plans are progressing well.

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