

## ANDOVER TREES UNITED

**2018 – 2021 Business Plan**

### ABSTRACT

Andover Trees United is a charitable COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP of 25 local schools, youth groups, volunteers and businesses working in partnership with specialist environmental organisations. Our aim over the decade 2012-2021 is to involve every young person in our community in planting 10,000 trees and in creating new woodland.

**Wendy Davis**

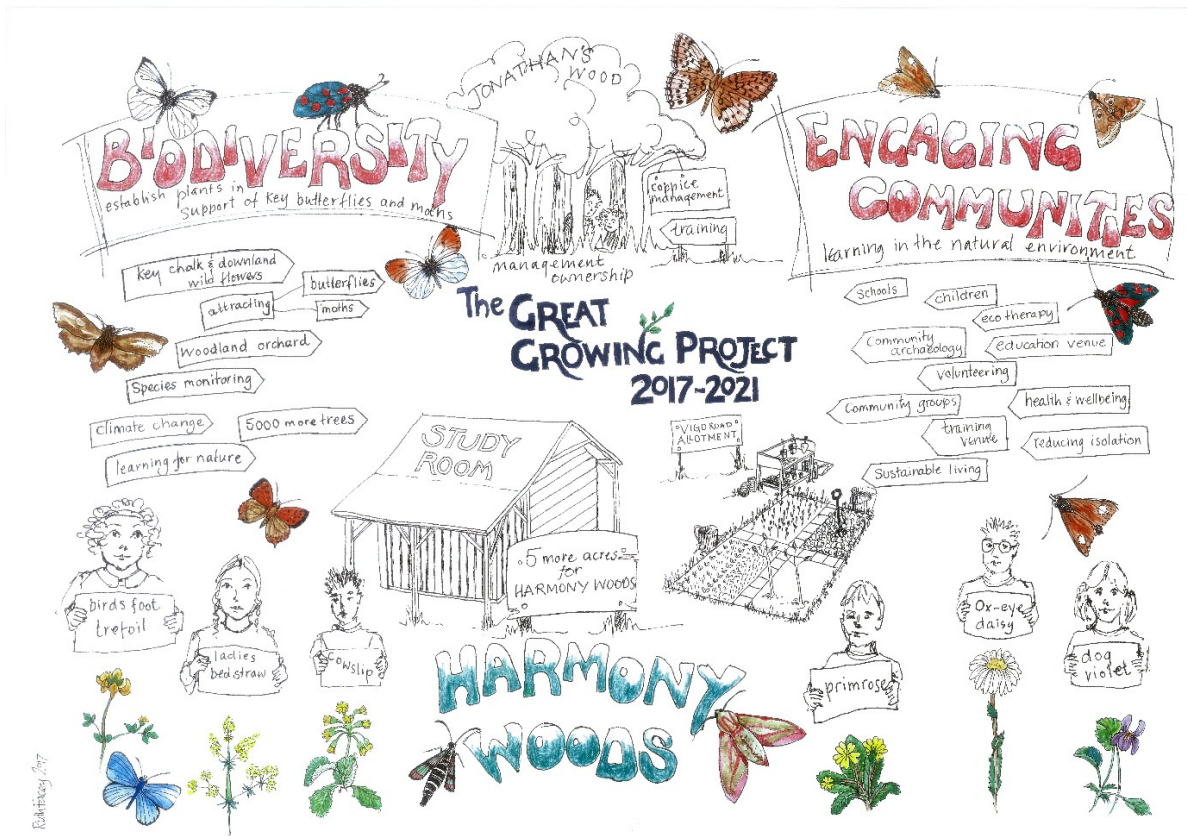
Chair of Trustees

## 1. Executive Summary –

Andover Trees United is a volunteer-led group and registered charity working in partnership with schools, local authorities, businesses, specialist environmental organisations, artists and other creative practitioners to promote conservation and improve access to natural wild spaces.

The aim over 2012-2021 is to involve every young person in the community in planting 10,000 trees and in creating new woodland. Thereafter planting will continue through the enhancement and creation of “green corridors”.

Our aim has been to develop a project to meet the growing need for environmental stewardship. Planetary conservation and protection of biodiversity needs more champions than ever before and the young people in our society are the decision-makers of tomorrow.



With the removal of the Sustainable Schools Programme and the dissolution of the Sustainable Development Commission in 2010, coupled with a growing disconnect between young people in urban communities and the natural environment, it is more important than ever before to put them at the heart of environmental projects. In our eyes, therefore, teaching young people and connecting them practically to nature are inextricably linked to sustainability and the protection of the environment and wildlife.

Although our mission is to involve all young people, (all schools are involved and ‘no child is left behind’) the community wood being planted by the children needs care and management and the project is constantly evolving. We therefore offer regular volunteering in nature for all irrespective of age or ability, training in green crafts, including coppicing, and constantly strive to grow the volunteer base both in numbers and capacity.

# Andover Trees United – Business Plan 2018 to 2021

## Contents

### 1. Executive Summary:

### 2. Introduction and Mission:

2.1: Charity Name:

2.2: Address/Contact Details:

2.3: Website:

2.4: Legal Status:

2.5: Trustees

2.5.1 Named trustees:

2.5.2 Trustee recruitment

2.6: Objectives:

2.7: Vision/Mission

2.8: Values (2-6 being based on the UN's Sustainable Goals):

2.9: Activities:

2.9.1 Education:

2.9.2 Community:

2.9.3 Nature:

### 3. Background:

3.1: Origins and development

3.2: Achievements

3.3: Beneficiaries

3.4: Projects – The Great Growing Project 2017 - 2021

3.4.1 Harmony Woods

3.4.2 Six Trees & Six Flowers

3.4.3 Community

3.4.4 The Cabin

3.5: People Resources

3.5.1 Volunteers

3.5.2 Trustees

3.5.3 Friends of ATU

3.6: Key Performance Indicators:

3.7: Annual Turnover

### 4. Summary Review:

4.1: Successes and Strengths (incl. positive recognition)

4.2: Barriers to Achieving Core Aims and Solutions

4.3: Additional Identified Risks and Management

**5. Future Trends**

**6. Strategic Direction - Operational Plan:**

6.1: Overarching Goals:

6.1.1 Education

6.1.2 Bridging Communities

6.1.3 Nature

6.1.4 Building Capacity

6.1.5 PR & Publicity

**7. Strategic Aims**

7.1: 2018/2019 Objectives:

7.2: 2019/2020 Objectives:

7.3: 2020/2021 Objectives:

7.4 2021/2022 Objectives:

**8. Implications:**

**9. Financial Situation:**

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9.1: Income/Expenditure Forecast:

9.2: Fundraising Strategy:

9.3: How will the Charity promote its activities?

**10. Track Record:**

**11. Immediate Action:**

**12. Monitoring:**

## 2. Introduction and Mission:

Andover Trees became a registered charity on June 9<sup>th</sup> 2016.

### 2.1: Charity Name:

Andover Trees United (ATU)

### 2.2: Address/Contact Details:

Westcott  
Old Salisbury Road  
Abbotts Ann  
Andover SP11 7NH

### 2.3: Website:

Andover Trees United: <https://www.andovertrees.org.uk>

### 2.4: Legal Status:

Andover Trees United is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

### 2.5: Trustees

The Constitution of the Charity states that “there must be no less than four and no more than twelve trustees”.

#### 2.5.1 Named trustees:

Wendy Davis (Chair)  
Elizabeth B Scrace (Treasurer and Company Secretary)  
Daniel Lobb (Landscape Architecture and Planning)  
Phill Jennison (Governance and new Trustee Recruitment)  
Tim Rolt (Community Relations)

#### 2.5.2 Trustee recruitment

The Charity embarked on a recruitment campaign in mid 2018, with the objective of recruiting additional trustees, to assume responsibilities for:

- Communication and public relations, to maximise community/stakeholder engagement
- Legal matters and statutory obligations (e.g. leases and land registration)
- Fund-raising and income generation

### 2.6: Objectives:

- 1. The conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment for the public benefit by the establishment and maintenance of woodland in Andover.**
- 2. The advancement of education of the public in conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in Andover and the Test Valley area including by promoting the woodland as a means for the community to learn about wider environmental issues such as: sustainability, climate change, ecology and the mitigating need for trees.**

## 2.7: Vision/Mission

10,000 children, 10,000 trees, 10 years

**We are a Community Education Partnership dedicated to woodland creation, outdoor learning and natural connections. Working together we create woodland for the benefit of all – to relax, to enjoy, to learn.**

**We aim to involve all young people in our community in tree planting.**

**Through Harmony Woods, our new and evolving community woodland, we will teach care for the environment and provide opportunities for volunteering, learning, training, enjoyment and enhanced well-being.**

## 2.8: Values (2-6 being based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals):

1. The opinions of all volunteers **irrespective of age, ability, gender, ethnicity or religion are treated with respect** and taken into consideration when policies are formed and decisions made
2. To **ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment**
3. To **protect the planet from degradation** so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations
4. To **ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives** and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in **harmony with nature**
5. To **foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies** which are free from fear and violence
6. To **mobilize the means required to implement this (UN) Agenda** through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people

## 2.9: Activities:

### 2.9.1 Education:

We work with 25 schools across Andover and surrounding villages, to develop environmental education and teaching about the natural world.

Together, over the course of the decade 2012 – 2021, we are planting 12 acres of new urban woodland including meadows and ponds open and accessible to all. Through outdoor, nature-based activities led by local artists and volunteers including environmental experts we support teachers to develop programmes of work that deliver the national curriculum, whilst developing a greater awareness and understanding of trees and wildflowers.

### 2.9.2 Community:

We run weekly sessions for adults of all ages and abilities offering opportunities for practical and therapeutic volunteering in an outdoor setting in the wood, on the community allotment and in schools. By involving the whole community in creating a resource and a legacy for Andover in the form of new urban woodland, open and accessible to all, we aim to aid the development of a sense of community and inclusivity in our expanding town.

### 2.9.3 Nature:

We provide enhanced and improved habitats for locally occurring and at-risk plant and animal species to include key species of chalk downland wildflowers. 2017 marked the mid-point of the 10-year 'Harmony Woods' woodland creation programme. The wood comprises diverse habitats that include: coppice, hedgerow, pond, meadow, rides, short-cut grass, long grass, and a butterfly transect. On completion of the wood, planting will continue through the enhancement and creation of 'green corridors' linking Harmony Woods to other, nearby woods.



## 3. Background

### 3.1: Origins and development

Based on discussions in 2010/2011 with schools' leaders and national organisations including Woodland Trust and Forestry Commission, support for a long-term project that engaged a generation of local children in planting new urban woodland met with instant approbation. A team of 25 like-minded people all living in or near to Andover formed a steering group, the children of the town named the project, drew up plans and, supported by teachers, parents and friends of the project, began planting the wood in 2012. The annual 'planting fortnight' at the end of November involves just under 1000 children from 25 schools who spend half a day in the wood planting their trees and engaging in related activities. ATU raises the funds each year to cover the transport needs of each school to ensure that no child in the designated 'planting' year group is left behind.

Year on year support for the project has grown.

Each year different elements of the plan have been realised: tools and equipment, a storage container, the establishment of a wildflower meadow, an open shelter designed and built by 16-year old NCS volunteers, water connected, a pond built, all-season vehicular access and thanks to a donation from Taylor Wimpey in 2017, a heated volunteer base in the form of a portable cabin to which was fitted a wood-burner.

In 2016, 5 years-on was celebrated and in 2017 the second 5 years was launched: The Great Growing Project (*see 3.5 below*).

### 3.2: Achievements

#### 3.2.1: Increased acreage and additional sites

In addition to extending onto the final 5 acres for tree planting, a community allotment has been set up as a tree and wildflower nursery with space for volunteers to grow fruit and vegetables, a lease is being taken out with Woodland Trust to manage 0.7 acres of neglected hazel coppice in Enham Alamein (to be used for volunteer training) and ATU volunteers have permission to help manage sections of woodland on nearby Trinley Estate

#### 3.2.2: Sustained Partnerships

Schools, Soton Uni archaeology, Vision, local authorities, North Wessex Downs AONB, Jane Goodall Institute Roots & Shoots Programme

#### 3.2.3: Projects

Shelter Build, Between the Barrows, Capability Brown & the Birthday Tree

#### 3.2.4: A growing Volunteer base

#### 3.2.5: Recognition:

Ethical Awards, CPRE, HGT, JGI incl. Peace Day, Tree Conference

### 3.3: Beneficiaries

- Schools (see 2.8.1 above)
- The community and community groups/organisations
- Volunteers
- Local youth organisations
- Local authorities – helping to realise their strategic aims

### 3.4: Current and Ongoing Projects – The Great Growing Project (TGGP)

#### 3.4.1: TGGP – Growing the Wood

By 2017, just over 5000 trees had been planted in Harmony Woods covering 7 acres. In 2018, a further 5 acres will be added to the existing area to allow planting to continue.

#### 3.4.2: TGGP – Growing Learning in Nature ‘6 Trees & 6 Flowers’

Six schools with children aged 4 to 16 have joined ATU as core project development partners.

A shared aim is for all children leaving primary school to be able to recognise and name 6 British native trees and 6 local wildflowers, to be reinforced in secondary schools. Supported not only by environmental experts and gardeners but also by



local musicians, storytellers, visual artists, crafters, writers and performers, teachers from the six schools will work with us to devise and trial projects that we hope will realise this aim whilst connecting children to nature practically, creatively and inspirationally.

#### 3.4.3: TGGP – Growing Community

By offering a variety of activities - from looking after the wood to learning green crafts using plants that grow (or will be growing) in the wood, from helping youngsters to supporting adults - we hope that more of our local community will be interested in taking part and learning about nature and how we can look after it.

#### 3.4.4: The Cabin

It has been part of the vision for the wood from the outset to build an off-grid, sustainable, field-study base and volunteer room, one that is sensitive to its surroundings and sits well in the landscape.

### 3.5: People Resources

#### 3.5.1 Volunteers

100 volunteers of all ages (i.e. children with parents, teenagers, adults in their 20s to adults in their 80s) donate their time, skills and energy, of whom 30 donate time on a regular basis. 15 volunteers have formed a management team to run events and help with routine tasks

#### 3.5.2 Trustees

*See 2.4 above*

#### 3.5.3 Friends of ATU

Local businesses and organisations:

- serve as partners, offering advice and strategic support
- make donations of funds, goods or services
- provide volunteers

### 3.6: Key Performance Indicators:

- **100 volunteers** donate **7000 hours** between them over the course of a year
- **25 schools** and **1250 school pupils** plus 4 youth organisations and 100 young members of these organisations engage with the work of ATU during the year
- **10 schools** participate in ATU activities in addition to annual tree planting; **6 schools** work regularly with ATU as part of the **6 Trees and 6 Flowers** Project to develop teaching programmes linked to the wood.
- **A team of 8 local artists** work with ATU to develop and support our work with schools and the wider community
- **45 businesses and organisations offer support locally including:** Parish, Town, Borough and County Councils, Andover Vision, Unity, Trinley Estate, North Wessex Downs AONB, Transition Town Andover, The Hawk Conservancy, Sparsholt, Veolia, Simplyhealth, John Lewis Partnership, Taylor Wimpey, Hampshire Gardens Trust, Hampshire CPRE, Hampshire Country Learning and Hampshire TCV

- **Organisations offering support and whom we support nationally and internationally include:** Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission, Grow Wild (Kew Gardens), Jane Goodall Institute Roots & Shoots programme, UN Environment Programme Plant-for-the-Planet

### 3.7: Annual Turnover

#### Annual turnover

Year to 31 March 2018 £30009

Year to 31 March 2017 £22841

#### Surplus income over expenditure

Year to 31 March 2018 £11255

Year to 31 March 2017 £3857

## 4. Summary Review

### 4.1: Successes and Strengths (incl. positive recognition)

*(See also Section 10: Track Record)*

- We have a steadily growing group of volunteer project and workday leaders
- We have a strong working relationship with the Countryside Departments at Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council
- We have been accepted as a partner of Test Valley Borough Council’s Andover Vision
- Through considerate and flexible practice, we have retained a commitment from 25 local schools to continue the 10-year planting programme in Harmony Woods

### 4.2: Barriers to Achieving Core Aims and Solutions

#### Core aims affected:

- Volunteering
- Development of Volunteering in Nature Service to Improve & Enhance Wellbeing
- Education: Continued Children’s Tree Planting Through to 2021 – Outdoor Learning, CPD & Curriculum Development – Schools’ Use of Harmony Woods as a Teaching Resource
- Enhancing Nature – Development and Ongoing Care & Management of Wood

Barrier ID	Barriers	Solutions
B001	<b>Lack of provision to care for volunteers in wood</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting fortnight</li> <li>• Regular volunteering sessions across the year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build site-sympathetic, sustainable, ‘no foundations’ structure to accommodate volunteers in all weathers; to include compost toilets</li> <li>• Share plans &amp; project vision with HCC</li> <li>• Work with HCC to rewrite licence agreement</li> </ul>
B002	<b>Lack of facilities to cater for school (and other) groups wishing to use the site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build site-sympathetic, sustainable, ‘no foundations’ structure to accommodate groups in all weathers; to include compost toilets</li> <li>• Share plans &amp; project vision with HCC</li> <li>• Work with HCC to rewrite licence agreement</li> </ul>

<b>B003</b>	<b>Unable to continue core tree planting work as the allocated 7 acres will be fully planted by 2017</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share plans &amp; project vision with HCC</li> <li>• Work with HCC to rewrite licence agreement to include 5 acres between Harmony Woods &amp; Anton Lane, land which should have been included in the original allocation, but wasn't</li> </ul>
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#### 4.3: Additional Identified Risks and Management

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>R0001</b>	<b>A level of dependency on the insight, commitment and personal/professional network of the Charity founder of the Charity.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit additional volunteers and formation of Management Team</li> <li>• Create database of contacts</li> <li>• Write annual management plan accessible to all</li> </ul>
<b>R0003</b>	<b>Currently, a lack of capacity to effectively and coherently engage with a diverse range of partners and stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegate this action to a named Trustee to manage supported by volunteer from Management Team</li> </ul>
<b>R0004</b>	<b>The need to develop and secure a sustained and diverse range of funding streams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a benefactor and/ or local business sponsorship</li> </ul>
<b>R0005</b>	<b>The challenges of overseeing and stewarding a woodland site against the demands and expectations of a wide range of unofficial users, such as dog-walkers and young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved signage and interpretation boards</li> <li>• Strengthen Friends of ATU group with a focus on near neighbours</li> <li>• Seek local authority help to implement Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005: local authorities, etc. have the power to make Dog Control Orders in relation to public land.</li> </ul>

## 5. Future Trends

Future national and global trends that support and impact on our strategic aims include the growing awareness of the importance of trees for:

- planetary health
- combatting the climate crisis
- teaching and raising awareness of the need for improved environmental stewardship and the sustainable use of resources.

## 6. Strategic Direction - Operational Plan:

### 6.1: Overarching Goals:

#### 6.1.1. Education

- Devise and deliver structured, inclusive programmes to educate and inform all ages and sections of the community about the beauty and importance of the natural world

- Make Harmony Woods a location for outdoor learning supported by an off-grid, sustainably-managed field study centre, thereby enabling the contributing schools to use the wood for teaching.

#### 6.1.2. Bridging Communities

- Achieve regular engagement with individual volunteers
- Establish mutually beneficial, structured partnerships with a broad range of groups and organisations in the local community
- Provide a social space and green crafts centre in the form of a modest build sympathetic to the woodland landscape

#### 6.1.3. Nature

- Improve biodiversity
- Introduce and encourage named species of wildflowers, butterflies and moths in Harmony Woods
- Extend wildlife corridors linking to other, nearby woodland

#### 6.1.4. Building Capacity

- Recruit, train and retain a functional volunteer base
- Ensure an appropriate distribution of work activities across the volunteer base, including trustees
- Appoint/replenish Trustees with the skills and experience relevant to ATU

#### 6.1.5. PR & Publicity

- Engage regularly and effectively with the local community, businesses and organisations
- Promote the work of the charity at national and international levels

## 7. Strategic Aims

### 7.1: 2018/2019 Objectives:

- Connect with local community groups & charities, leading to a larger pool of volunteers & supporters, working with Andover Vision
- Maintain a regular programme of weekday volunteering and weekend volunteering
- Develop and nurture the active contribution of ATU Ambassadors/Volunteer organisers
- Improve engagement and connection to nature through performance and the arts (e.g. via monthly green craft workshops, lantern procession and tree dressing)

### 7.2: 2019/2020 Objectives:

- Through a core group of 6 partner schools, initiate a Programme of Education relating to the planting, ecology, biodiversity and history of the site, providing support to teachers in delivering the school curriculum, clearly linked to the Arts and offering insights into the impacts of a changing climate
- Establish a programme of events and activities for all ages and abilities, which teach sustainability and increase awareness of nature through conservation and the arts
- Provide new opportunities for businesses to develop “green” and environmentally sustainable credentials, through offering opportunities for volunteering and sponsorship

### 7.3: 2020/2021 Objectives:

- Develop the Programme of Education relating to the planting, ecology, biodiversity and history of the site, providing support to teachers in delivering the school curriculum, clearly linked to the Arts and offering insights into the impacts of a changing climate to a core group of 6 partner schools
- Review events delivered with a view to establishing an annual programme sensitive to the needs of woodland and surrounding site, involving volunteers, schools, and the local community
- Develop a sustained approach to engaging with local businesses and organisations
- In partnership with Andover Vision and North Wessex Downs AONB, audit the provision of access routes to Harmony Woods from the town (Andover) and surrounding villages, and from Harmony Woods into the North Wessex Downs AONB

### 7.4 2021/2022 Objectives:

- Complete and finalise a programme of education relating to the planting, ecology, biodiversity and history of the site, providing support to teachers in delivering the school curriculum, clearly linked to the Arts and offering insights into the impacts of a changing climate. This will continue the partnership with the core group of 6 schools, in order to develop a blue print for roll out to other schools
- Establish and provide clear support for schools in order for them to make best use of activities undertaken as part of their work with ATU, in order to deliver some key elements of the National Curriculum
- In partnership with Andover Vision and North Wessex Downs AONB, ensure 'signposting' (e.g. physical signs, maps, transport links) is available and accessible to all
- Have a sustained approach in place for engaging with local business and organisations
- Planting to have been completed in Harmony Woods
- Publish the results achieved by the Charity's work and celebrate its achievements

## 8. Implications

Impacting on the day-to-day running of the charity and objectives for 2019 are planning approval from Test Valley Borough Council for building The Cabin, our woodland classroom and volunteer base, and a new lease with Hampshire County Council extending management from Harmony Woods (12 acres) to the full Diamong Wood (44 acres).

Both are in hand and progressing satisfactorily. Outcomes will be made known by the end of April 2019

## 9. Financial Situation

### 9.1: Income/Expenditure Forecast:

- See Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31 March 2018  
[http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends74/0001167574\\_AC\\_20180331\\_E\\_C.pdf](http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends74/0001167574_AC_20180331_E_C.pdf)

### 9.2: Fundraising Strategy

Based on a mix of:

- Applications for funding from charitable trusts
- Local authority grants
- Big Lottery

- Local retail outlets offering sponsorship (e.g. customer 'coin' schemes)
- Own fundraising through: donations, merchandise, events (e.g. Auction of Promises, Quiz Night), workshops, proposed membership scheme
- Crowdfunding
- Business sponsorship

### 9.3: How will the Charity promote its activities?

Through:

- The Website <https://www.andovertrees.org.uk>
- Social media
- Volunteers
- Word of mouth
- Literature: flyers, posters
- Letters and reports to local press and other publications
- Local radio
- Partner organisations
- Talks and presentations

## 10. Track Record

- **7 years on**, 25 schools are still working together to plant Harmony Woods. This extract from Portway Junior School's headteacher Tim Deery illustrates the contributions made by Andover Trees United:

We are proud to be a partner of Andover Trees United and the impact they have already had on the community is astonishing. However at the moment we are really hampered by the lack of a classroom and toilets. If those were available then we would be able to use the resource even more. This is a chance to impact on our current and future pupils but also on future generations as these young people grow and have families of their own. It would also have an impact on the whole community now and is a resource that is sure to get used a lot.

One of the most pleasing elements of Andover Trees United is that they place young people at the heart of all they do. They are not only users of Harmony Woods but they are also involved in creating the resources. The recognition locally, nationally and internationally is a testament to what Andover Trees United have achieved. We now have a chance to do even more.

Andover Trees United is one of the best community initiatives that has taken place locally in a very long time and it is vital we all get behind them to expand their work and spread the impact even further. The team at Andover trees United are working really hard on our behalf and we at Portway Junior School are very grateful for all that they do.

- **Engagement and profiling**, by and of the Charity, with national and international organisations including the Woodland Trust, U.N. Environment Programme Plant-for-the-Planet and the Jane Goodall Institute's Roots & Shoots Programme
- **Acknowledgements** include: Guardian/Observer Ethical Award Winner 2015 Young Green Champions category; 6 ATU schools receiving a JGI Roots & Shoots gold medals at the national awards 2018; ATU secondary school students winning Roots & Shoots individual and group national awards 2014 and 2018; invitation to join national Tree Conference 2018 alongside national organisations

## 11. Immediate Action

The focus for action in 2019 is:

- **Finalising planning permission and fundraising for The Cabin** (our proposed woodland classroom, volunteer base and green craft workshop)
- **Appointing an education officer** to run educational activities in the wood, initially for the children who are planting it from 25 local schools
- **Developing teaching programmes** that connect children to nature through the arts, developing both an emotional response to the natural world and an understanding of their responsibilities to it for all living things locally and globally
- **Securing funding for tree planting** for the next 3 years to complete the planting of Harmony Woods
- **Investigating tree planting sites for 2022 and beyond** that will create green corridors connecting Harmony Woods to other local woodland
- **Ongoing volunteer recruitment** to support all elements of our work, practical and administrative

## 12. Monitoring

Fortnightly management team meetings, quarterly full board meetings and the annual AGM contribute to the monitoring of the charity's work.

Progress and success are monitored against the action plans and projected outcomes covering areas outlined in Sections 6 and 7.