

LAUNCH OF NEW 37 MILE "WYCHWOOD WAY"

On Sunday 3 September, a new circular walk will be launched in West Oxfordshire by the Wychwood Project, all within the boundaries of the ancient Royal Forest of Wychwood. The route has been designed to highlight the history and the beauty of this very special part of Oxfordshire and to link some of the many remnants of the Forest landscape. A guide is being produced which describes the route and interprets the history and wildlife significance of the area. The route includes Blenheim, Ramsden, Leafield, Chadlington and Stonesfield, as well as Ascott locally.

The project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Millennium Festival Fund, Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment and West Oxfordshire District Council.

The route follows existing rights of way, but a group of hard working volunteers has been working to improve the standard of the route, replacing stiles and other climbable structures where possible with kissing gates to make the route easier to access, updating signage etc.

The Way and the guide book will be launched in September with a sponsored walk and Forest Fayre on Combe recreation ground. There will be two walks – a ten mile route and a family walk of around 4 miles, both starting and finishing at Combe. Wychwood Forest used to host an annual Forest Fayre. This year marks not only the Millennium but the anniversary of the Forest Perambulation (Survey) carried out in 1300.

Our event will feature country and other crafts and demonstrations, local products, competitions and stalls, Morris Dancers, a brass band, pig roast and other refreshments. All proceeds from the sponsored walk and Fayre will go towards ensuring the long term management of the route.

We do hope that you will all attend. If you don't take part in the walk, then come along to the Fayre which will start at 12 noon. It should be a great day out for all involved.

**For a sponsor form, or if you would like to help out on the day,
please contact the Wychwood Project office on tel.: 01865 810217
or email: wychwood@oxoncc.freemove.co.uk**

DIGGERS WOOD (The Community Wood)

Through the Wychwood Magazine may I express very grateful thanks to all those involved in the creation of our new wood. It is thanks to the dedication and perseverance of many committed people, who refused to give up over the setbacks on the way, that our community has been enriched by this gift of our own wood.

Two or three times a week we take our morning walk there with our dogs. To our delight, on May 19th we spotted from across the fields that something had been added to the wood. We walked up the rise and discovered the beautiful seat erected in memory of Jack Chapman. It was an emotional moment. Sitting down and looking out over our lovely countryside I had a sense of tranquillity and thankfulness. Our very grateful thanks to the Chapman family for this lovely seat, which is both a fitting memorial and a thoughtful gift to the community.

Heather Shute.