

# Steward Community Woodland Under Threat

## MESSAGE TO SUPPORTERS - January 2017

### The Bad News & the Good

Unfortunately, our High Court challenge to the Planning Inspector's Decision was turned down by a judge in December. While this was clearly a disappointment, it leaves us with two very positive outcomes:

- we now know that there is no possibility of overturning the Planning Inspector's Decision, so we have more clarity on the best way forward (see below), especially after receiving lots of good advice from our barrister and solicitors;
- an important consequence of the legal challenge is that the date when the Enforcement Notices require us to have taken down our structures and moved off the land has shifted from 10th August to 2nd December 2017, giving us another 4 months to be able to find a solution to this situation.

The main downside with the refusal of the High Court challenge is that it has left us with a legal bill of £13,000 – any support with this would be much appreciated.

### The Task Ahead

Our task is now to negotiate with the National Park and reconfigure the project in such a way that it can fit with Policy DMD30 (the Park's policy on low impact development) with the intention of submitting a fresh planning application.

Our next step is to write to the Park with 'Pre-Application Inquiries', asking them to set out clearly what type of structures they consider are acceptable under the policy etc.

### Procession to the National Park HQ – 'Taking the Woods to the Park' – Mon 3rd April

On Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> April during the Easter school holidays, we are organising a Procession to the National Park HQ near Bovey Tracey to deliver our petition calling on the Park to continue to allow us to live here and run this successful and much loved project.

**Route** - The Procession will go along the Wray Valley Trail (*not* along the road) starting near Lustleigh – more details of the route and timings to follow. We will be organising transport from Moretonhampstead to the start of the Procession and back from the Park HQ.

**Atmosphere** - Although there is a serious message to the Procession, we invite a carnival atmosphere, creating a sense of celebration, community and solidarity. This is, after all, what we wish to see more of in this world. We invite you to bring banners, lots of colour, costume, and to be creative.

**Willow Sculptures** - We plan to have a day at the woods in the run up to the Procession where we will be inviting both children & adults to create willow sculptures of creatures living in the woods (birds, insects, animals, etc) to take on the route, tying in with our theme of '*Taking the Woods to the Park*'.

**DNPA staff & officers** - We wish the Procession in *no way to be confrontational* with the officers and staff at the Park. In fact, we wish to emphasise that we are all in the same boat – we are all human beings living on this fragile Planet Earth and that what's needed is to *work together* to find ways to heal our tremendously damaged ecosystems.

**The wider context** – Although the threat to SCW is the central reason for the Procession, this is, of course, within the wider context of the Park's policies and their implementation, and the state of the environment in general. Thus, we invite these wider themes to be a part of the Procession.

**Media** – We will, of course, be inviting the media to attend.

**Help Needed** – There's lots to be organised for this event. If you wish to be involved in helping to organise and/or publicise the Procession, please let us know (contact details below).

## Ways You Can Support

There are various ways to actively support the project as we head into the most crucial time for SCW since its beginnings in 2000.

- **PROCESSION** – Mon 3rd April

Please see above.

- **CHECK OUT OUR GREAT FILM**

Please watch and share our recent video <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4m1UakIAOg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4m1UakIAOg)> produced by Nick Rosen of Offgrid.net and watch this space for more short films about the project and our way of life in the woods.

- **SIGN OUR PETITION**

If you haven't done so already, please sign and share our petition to Dartmoor National Park <[www.stewardwood.org/petition](http://www.stewardwood.org/petition)>.

- **SPREAD THE WORD**

It is vital to get the word out to as many people as possible of our situation. Please share our Facebook posts, videos and emails with people who may be interested in the project.

- **SUPPORTERS FORUM**

If you have an account on our Supporters Forum, this can be used to discuss ideas and for help with the organisation of the Procession. Go to <[save.stewardwood.org](http://save.stewardwood.org)>, log in and click Supporters Forum.

If you don't have an account and would like one, please register at:  
<[stewardwood.org/supporters-register/](http://stewardwood.org/supporters-register/)>.

- **DONATIONS**

If you wish to donate to support our campaign to save the project, please go to [www.stewardwood.org/donations.ghtml](http://www.stewardwood.org/donations.ghtml).

We are SO grateful for your continued support throughout this challenging time for us here at the woods. We are determined to continue our fight to stay on this land that we love, for us, for the woods, for our volunteers and supporters and all others who also dream of living this way.

Much love and gratitude  
The folk at Steward Wood

[community@stewardwood.org](mailto:community@stewardwood.org)

[www.stewardwood.org](http://www.stewardwood.org)

[www.facebook.com/StewardCommunityWoodland](https://www.facebook.com/StewardCommunityWoodland)