



July 2018

Welcome to our regular bulletin with the latest news from our 3-year Heritage Lottery funded project in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.



Suffolk is actively recruiting orchard surveyors!

Please join us to learn more about your local area and its people, now and in the past.

Orchards East is building on the solid foundations of the Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group (STOG) project during 2012-2015. This Heritage Lottery funded project was very successful and by the end of the survey project we had:

- Signed up 170 volunteers, who visited over 1,000 possible orchard sites.
- Created a database of 475 confirmed orchard sites.

Launches have been held in each of the other five counties over the past six months and survey work is already underway. OE will not be holding an event in Suffolk, thanks to the previous STOG work, so we are now inviting volunteers to sign up to survey the remaining unrecorded parishes. We cannot do this without you - Orchards East needs your enthusiasm and skills!

What's involved?

Volunteers will be given guidance and support to complete local parish surveys. These will help to discover how many orchards still exist, which trees remain and how important they are for wildlife. You don't need any particular skills to become an orchard surveyor, just an interest in your own local area and a willingness to spend a few days outdoors!

What's in it for you?

- The chance to learn more about your local area and its past.
- An opportunity to be part of a friendly, supported team.

- The satisfaction of contributing to a large-scale project which will inform conservation and planning decision making.

What do you need?

- An interest and enthusiasm for orchards.
- Be able to walk your local area.
- The ability to read a map.
- The ability to complete the survey form (we're always on hand to answer questions!)

Please do join us - you will be very welcome!

We're also looking for surveyors in other counties, particularly *Cambridgeshire* and *Essex*. Please contact us to find out more.

Other Volunteering Opportunities

Oral History Project

Learn how to do recorded interviews and contribute to our knowledge of peoples' memories, opinions and experiences of orchards in our region! Or please contact us if you have stories to tell about orchards now or in the past and you'd like to be interviewed.

Historical Research

Discovering the historical landscape of orchards can reveal fascinating social and cultural changes over time. If you'd like to find out more about volunteering please contact us.



Left A moated orchard beside Channons Hall, Tibenham, Norfolk, shown on a map of 1640 (courtesy Norfolk Record Office). *Right* Paul Read leading a surveyors workshop in the orchard at Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Foxburrow Farm near Woodbridge.

[Download the volunteer survey role description](#)

Oral History Case Study



Justin Brooke joining some of his fruit pickers in the 1940s. *Photo courtesy of Katharine Riches*

When Justin Brooke set up a fruit farm near Wickhambrook in 1928, he made a huge social impact, bringing much needed secure employment for many farm workers in the area during the impoverished economy of the 1930s.

Not only a leading supplier of soft fruit and apples, he diversified into a milk delivery service via a spectacular fleet of yellow Trojan vans which travelled as far afield as Cambridge.

We were privileged to gain an insight into this era of history when one of

with strawberries, although this was not very successful due to shading. Mrs Riches well remembers climbing the broad-based, stabilised ladders illustrated in the photographs. Only when sufficient fruit had been sold locally and the people of the area fed, did Mr Brooke send the surplus fruit to London and Birmingham via the railway, starting its journey at nearby Clare station.

Mr Brooke was forward looking, caring for both his community and his workforce. He operated the business as a cooperative and paid his permanent workers a dividend.

his army of temporary fruit pickers recently consented to give a recorded interview to describe her experiences and memories.

Whilst studying for an Economics degree as an undergraduate at Cambridge University degree, Mrs Katharine Riches took summer employment on the fruit farm, joining a group of other undergraduates similarly employed, all of them women, living at nearby houses. Many evenings were spent with the Brooke family, listening to music. The large commercial orchards were grazed by chickens and, early on, occasionally under-planted

Justin Brooke, originally from Devon, was looking for north-facing slopes which would escape the late frosts for his orchards. He found suitable land in west Suffolk, at Clopton Hall, and bought the farmland at the going rate of £5 / acre.

Mrs Riches has reason to remember the family and the farm fondly.

There, one summer's day, she met her future husband, Kenneth, then Chaplain of the Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge and later to become the Bishop of Lincoln. He told people that he met his wife 'under a plum tree'!



The all-female University of Cambridge undergraduate summer fruit pickers at work on Justin Brooke's farm. *Photo courtesy of Katharine Riches*

*Please join our gathering of volunteers on:
2nd August 2018
7.00 pm until around 10.00 pm
Venue: St Marks College, Audley End, Saffron Walden,
CB11 4JD*

All current or potential volunteers from any county for the parish surveys or the historical research are invited.

There'll be a special talk inside the chapel by Prof Tom Williamson, Dept of Landscape History, University of East Anglia. This amazing building was built in 1258 as the infirmary for the Benedictine monks of Walden Abbey which was on the

present site of Audley End House.

FREE TEA AND COFFEE!

[Find out more about St Marks Chapel >](#)

Watch out for Monica Askay's seasonal recipes and other news in our [Blog >](#)

Find out where Apple Days and Events are happening across the region [here >](#)



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