

FOGG article for Herald – 13 June 22

First volunteer party gets straight to work down at Glen Goyle

It was all go for the working party when it met for the first time at Sidmouth's "secret garden" on Glen Goyle.

Over a dozen volunteers gathered to hear what Paul Fealey, EDDC Horticultural Technical Officer, had to say about the state of plants along the stretch of the Glen – before they they set to work clearing overgrown areas of tired ivy and brambles.

As Phil Lee, founding member of the Friends of Glen Goyle, says, "Paul gave us a good insight into pruning, what to remove, and what to keep, and what to cut back and by how much, describing the environment, and what we can grow in it. Very interesting.

"It worked, as I sensed that people really enjoyed the educational introduction, as it then made the work much more meaningful.

"We then started 'work' by clearing areas for planting, and generally removing brambles and the like.

"Paul then proved some suitable plants, which we planted out."

The Friends of Glen Goyle (or, FOGG) was set up over a year ago, after conversations between members of the SVA's history group and the Sid Valley Biodiversity Group about the heritage and nature along the Glen.

The Vision Group for Sidmouth then formally set up FOGG, with a website and regular newsletter – as well as public liability insurance.

The VGS got in touch with Paul Fealey of the EDDC, the council who owns Glen Goyle – and Paul was really pleased that a group had come together to look to sensitively restoring the park to its former Victorian glory.

Paul is more than happy to give training to the volunteers, with members of his own council team seeing to more inaccessible areas.

Together, a lot of progress should be done to restore the Glen.

"So, a very good start," said FOGG member Phil after the first session. "A big thank-you to Paul for setting us off in the right direction."

The Friends of Glen Goyle will be meeting every Thursday morning from 10am to 12.30 at the entrance on Manor Road.

For more details and to join the mailing list, get in touch at <https://glen-goyle.vgsidmouth.co.uk/contact-us>

(360 words)

