

Cubbington Pear competes to be European Tree of the Year 2016

Committee members from the Cubbington Action Group against HS2 had the opportunity recently to examine the fine trophy presented by the Woodland Trust in recognition of the village's veteran pear tree having been elected England's Tree of the Year 2015. Chris Hickman of the Woodland Trust had presented the trophy to Peter Delow, Chairman of Cubbington Action Group against HS2 who nominated the tree, and Theresa Saul, Chairman of Cubbington Parish Council. The beautiful hand-crafted trophy, made from oak and elm timber from trees that had to be felled because of disease, will be kept in Cubbington.

Cubbington, a village in the centre of England in Warwickshire, is proud of its recently crowned Wild Pear Tree which will now be a candidate for the European Tree of The Year Competition 2016 organised by the Environmental Partnership Association. The winner will be selected by public on-line ballot in February. It is hoped that many votes will be cast to support the Cubbington Pear.

Peter Delow comments:

“We nominated the tree for our home contest in order to give ordinary people the chance to show their opposition to the mindless destruction of our environment by thoughtless development, and were delighted by the response. Now we have it all to do again, and this time it is likely that we will need to get more than ten times the votes. I am sure, however, that many of our neighbours from other European countries share my concerns about protecting our environmental heritage, and will vote for the Cubbington tree. Winning the contest is a target that should be within our reach, but we need to secure as many home votes as we can to boost our chances. So please take the time to vote for our tree.” **Vote at :** www.treeoftheyear.org .

The Cubbington Pear tree, sited a quarter of a mile from the village on the edge of South Cubbington Wood, overlooks the peaceful Leam Valley on a well-used footpath leading to the neighbouring villages of Weston, Offchurch and Hunningham. The Pear tree which is magnificent in full blossom is over 200 years old and has become a potent symbol for all the trees and ancient woodlands threatened by the HS2 high speed rail route. Cubbington Action Group and local parish councils have battled for over five years to preserve the tree and irreplaceable ancient woodland for future generations. Despite its new-found status, the Cubbington Pear tree will be felled, along with more than 2ha of adjacent ancient woodland; the project is scheduled to start in 2017. All requests so far to save the tree by modifying the design of HS2 have been turned down.