

NEW ORCHARD FOR HARTISMERE SCHOOL

On Saturday 13th February 2010, the Parent & Teacher Association (PTA) planted a new school orchard. In all 19 apple trees were planted of many traditional varieties including Lady Henniker, Lord Stradbroke & Suffolk Pink – a mix of culinary & dessert apples. Some of the apple trees are supplied by East of England Apples & Orchards Project, a registered charity set up to help save local orchard fruits and orchards www.applesandorchards.org.uk.

The idea came from Parents & Teachers Association (PTA) Chair Donna Ardley-Forder after seeing a new orchard at a friend's house. "It occurred to me that an orchard at Hartismere would be a useful teaching resource across the curriculum from cookery to grafting, trees help improve the landscape & provide a wildlife habitat and we'd be helping to ensure the survival of old Suffolk fruit varieties."

The planting, led by the PTA, was a great success involving 17 helpers including children from the school. Assistance from the local community has been very helpful in this Eco Schools project: Two local orchard experts have been involved in the project from identifying a suitable site to choosing the varieties. Paul Read, who provides guidance on traditional orchards, advised the team on rootstocks & tree protection and Dan Neuteboom has supplied the espalier apple trees to plant alongside the driveway. James Chapman of Land Sculpture kindly pre-dug all the holes with his mini-digger, Ed Ling delivered compost and Carl Beecroft very kindly provided 2 trailer loads of mulch for the trees afterwards.

Headteacher, Jim McAtear, is fully behind the project "Anything that widens the educational opportunities for the children is to be welcomed. We have a super PTA who really help the school." It is hoped that the orchard can provide a venue for community events including care & maintenance of orchard trees and the PTA look forward to the fruits of their labours!

Variety

Purpose

1-8 Espalier apples supplied by Dan Neuteboom

1 **Kidds Orange**

2 **Royal Gala**

3 **Spartan** (2 trees)

4 **Sunset**

5 **Kidds Orange Red**

6 **Pixie**

7 **Braeburn**

8 **Ribston Pippin**

9 –18 Bare root trees on MM106 supplied by East of England Apples & Orchards Project:

9 **Honey Pippin** Dessert

Medium greenish-yellow, flushed orange-red fruit with creamy yellow, sweet, juicy, crisp flesh - with honey flavour. Good cropper, moderately vigorous tree. Pick mid September, store from September-November

10 **Maxton** Dessert

Partially Self Fertile. Medium, round-conical, greenish, yellow fruit, flushed deep reddish purple, striped red. Flesh is sweet, juicy, soft and nutty - quite a rich flavour. Compact, vigorous and heavy cropping. Prefers a wet climate. Pick October, store from November to January

11 **Lady Henniker** Dual purpose

Medium large green fruit. Aromatic and when cooked becomes fluffy, still acidic but a good flavour. Moderate/good crop, trees are fairly hardy and easy to grow. Pick Mid September/October stores until November-January.

12 **Lord Stradbroke** Culinary

Very large, oblong, green flushed red, grey russet fruit. Sweet and light flavour when cooked. Heavy cropping and vigorous. Pick early October, store from October to February.

13. **Clopton Red** Dessert

Medium sized bright red flushed fruits. Sweet, juicy, aromatic flesh with a delicate flavour. Moderately vigorous. Pick late September, store until October/November

14 **Suffolk Pink** Dessert

Medium sized sweet fruit. Pick mid September, store September-October

15 **Old Blake** Culinary

Medium-large fruit, yellow flushed pink, slightly acidic. Pick mid October store from October until February/March

16. **Catherine** Culinary

Cooking apple, medium sized yellow fruit with a sweet flavour and light texture which keeps shape when cooked. Pick mid-October, store December/February.

17. **Red Miller's Seedling** Dessert

Small, round-conical fruits. Pale greenish-yellow, red flushed and striped bright red with a thin skin. White, tinged pink flesh, sweet-sharp and juicy, melting and crisp with a refreshing savoury flavour. Moderately vigorous, biennial and heavy cropping. Tolerates chalk soils. Prefers a dry climate with cool summers. Pick September.

18. **St Edmunds Russett** Dessert

Medium sized sweet fruit. Pick mid September store September—October

Hartismere School orchard – plan layout of apple varieties

