

. BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 88 – December 2023

Seasons Greetings



Fryent Country Park

We have been very active during the 2023 autumn, doing a lot of work on a number of ponds - Coneyvale, Southwell, Warrens, Meade and Longdown. The team have cleared bramble, willow and other growth around the immediate area close to the ponds. This allows more light and encourages a greater diversity of wild grasses and flowers which is much appreciated by bees and other pollinators. We are trying to make corridors for solitary bumble bees which are under threat. Most queens have now hibernated, but you may see a tuff tailed bumble bee especially if they are near a winter honeysuckle.

The work we have done on the pond projects will be beneficial to amphibians and to other wildlife, while the windrows of cut material should benefit amphibians for the seasons of the year when they are away from water. The Warrens pond is now holding water, with the excess flowing to a lower ditch, which reduces the amount of water spilling onto footpaths.

Our Sunday projects have continued through rain or shine and we would like to give special thanks to Pat and Francine who often make bread and cakes to brighten our tea break.

Number crunching :

Rubbish collected by our volunteers

2020 - 353bags, 2021 - 354 bags, 2022 - 284 bags, 2023 - 321 bags , plus many heavy items ie cycle wheels, hoovers, TVs, toilets, a safe, carpets, 38 tyres, ironing board, sink. Many many thanks to all who help with litter picking and removing large objects

Kim

Fryent Country Park and Beane Hill butterfly summary 2023

Eighteen species of butterflies were recorded on the monitored transects at Fryent Country Park during 2023.

There are two transects, or monitoring routes in the Park. The 'main' transect takes a route mainly through the meadows and alongside hedgerows. Here the Meadow Brown was the most numerous butterfly species and the count was the highest for several years. The Marbled White, also a grassland

butterfly, had its highest count to date, having established a population at the Park only within recent years. Another grassland species, the Small Copper, makes use of the Common Sorrel plant.

The Beane Hill transect is along wide paths through woodland. There the Speckled Wood had its highest count for some years. The Brimstone uses the Alder Buckthorn as a larval food plant.

The other butterfly species recorded on the transects during the year were Small Skipper, Large Skipper; Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange Tip, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Comma, Gatekeeper and Ringlet.

The results have been entered into the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme database and shared also with the London Natural History Society, Greenspace Information for Greater London, and Hertfordshire and Middlesex Butterfly Conservation.

Away from the transects, a Silver-washed Fritillary was recorded on the edge of Barn Hill – the first record of this species for Fryent Country Park. On the same day, a Brown Argus was photographed in an area of rough grassland on Barn Hill. That was a first record for Barn Hill, though several Brown Argus butterflies were recorded together on the verges and mounds of Fryent Way in 2020. Adult Brown Hairstreaks were observed on hedgerows and some eggs laid in 2023 were located.

The butterfly transect team

The 'Matriarch' of Barn Hill Conservation Group

Nobody captures the essence of Barn Hill Conservation Group more than Kim. Anyone visiting the garden over the last 25 years will have met Kim, simply because she is almost ever-present. Only when she is on holiday, has a medical appointment or feeling unwell has she 'taken a day off'. This is in addition to her regular attendance on the Sunday projects in Fryent Country Park. Kim personifies the art of doing and not talking. In the very early days she and Rose masterminded and managed the building of what is known as the 'cottage', our headquarters in the Garden.

As well as her work in the Garden itself, she organises visits from schools, manages young people's activities on their Duke of Edinburgh award training. She monitors their work and writes individual reports. And if you want to know which volunteers have worked in the Garden on specific days over the years Kim has maintained the records. Kim is dedicated to organic gardening and keeps our wormery thriving by bringing scraps of lettuce, carrots or cabbage whenever she comes.

She is not put off by physical work. Together with Rose she built the rockery which meant lugging heavy stones and rocks into position. She has lead or participated in creating many features in the Garden such as the 'devon bank', a mound displaying wild flowers, the insect 'residential house' and the children's play area. If she is not involved in project work she will carry out weeding, or just cleaning and tidying up.

Kim has also almost been ever present working on the Sunday projects in Fryent Country Park, where you may even see her picking up litter or helping to drag discarded mattresses or rubble from the interior of the Park to the kerbside.

Bernard

We are open at Roe Green Walled Garden Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 am to 2pm. Sundays we are out in Fryent Country Park from 10 am to 12.30 pm carrying out conservation project work. Our new programme of projects will start again in September Please see the web site below for details, or telephone the Walled Garden. Feel free to join us in our conservation projects at Fryent Country Park or Roe Green Walled Garden. We are still collecting old pottery garden pots. We also collect scrap metal such as copper, brass, aluminium, which help in fund raising.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

General Meeting

Saturday 3 February 2024 10.30 am

Contact number: Garden 0208 206 0492 (answerphone if we are unable to answer)

Email: barnhillconservationgroup@gmail.com

Our Website: www.barnhillconservationgroup.org