

BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 77 – April 2020

Fryent Country Park

Although 2020 has so far been a difficult year for projects at the Park much has been achieved by our enthusiastic volunteers (numbering regularly around 15 each week before the 'lockdown'). The new year started with projects around Gaddesbrooke, where we cleared over 24 bags of rubbish over a few weeks, and Preston Eastfield, where we cleared bramble. This allows light to reach the ground and encourage biodiversity for wild flowers. Gaddesbrooke has been a particular problem with the surroundings of the stream overgrown and lots of bottles thrown around. We spotted a suspected culprit responsible for the bottles and spoke to him about it. Since then the area has been bottle free.

The photograph below shows Gaddesbrooke after we had opened it up, restoring the public footpath along it.



View of Gaddesbrooke after clearing rubbish and opening it up

The Humphry Repton landscape at the top of Barn Hill has come on really well, with large areas cleared to open up views. Nature continues the birds are singing and nest making, the 20000 daffodils have made a beautiful difference to Fryent Way, the wild garlic is much in evidence at the park, the bluebells are just flowering and the first brimstone butterflies have been seen.

We have planted alder buckthorn to encourage the brimstone butterfly. We have also worked along the Robert Southwell Path to the moat. Two black caps have been heard singing and a moorhen has nested in the Barn Hill pond

Our thanks to all volunteers for keeping our green spaces beautiful for everyone. Kim

Roe Green Walled Garden

Unfortunately we have had to close the garden to the public due to the lockdown.

Early January saw our two greenhouses come into full use as the propagating of plants began. We have harvested our parsnip crop and these have been very tasty. Our miniature stone village has had some additional members added, smartened up in bright colours by our volunteer painter. Our fish pond has had a makeover with new water bed plants added. Our carpenter has continued to produce bird and bat boxes, and our vegetable beds have been dug over and composted. The first early potatoes have been planted and our mini meadows seeded and roses pruned. The first vegetable plants are now in.

We hope we will see the benefit of this work once the lockdown is lifted. Bernard

Maintenance of the Fish Pond in the Walled Garden

We have carried out maintenance of the fish pond. We waited for a rainy day to put the fish in a bath tub and empty water from the pond. There was a fair amount of sludge at the bottom of the pond which we removed. We then refilled the water in pond primarily from rainwater in the water butts

We bought a new aerator to replace the broken one. The new one is solar powered and floating so that it moves around and prevents stagnation.

Build up of algae continued and we have continued to had to clean it out with a special net, with gauze to reduce size of holes. This is an ongoing process but it needs to be done as the algae absorb nutrients, which affects the fish.

We have also treated the algae with a biological agent that create oxygen bubbles and clumps the algae together, which is easier to collect. We have also added marimo moss balls. These are a form of good algae which don't spread out as much.

We have received a donation of five new fish – shubunkin fish. These are a cross between koi and goldfish. They are bigger and more colourful than the usual goldfish.

We have also created 2 floating gardens and installed several new pond plants such as Water Hawthorne for the fish to feed on. This now means the pond is much more colourful and we no longer need to feed the fish as much so sludge build-up from fish food can be decreased. Currently we are trying to establish the pond so that it can maintain the algae and sludge with little interference from us. Jade

Unfortunately the Walled Garden is closed to the public, and also we have had to stop organised projects in Fryent Country Park.. As soon as we are able to work in the Park we will issue a new programme of projects. Please see the web site below for details.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

We have pencilled in 20th June for our Open Day, although it is unlikely that the situation in respect of the 'lockdown' will permit this to take place.

Contact number: Garden 0208 206 0492 (we will endeavour to pick up messages as and when we can)
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