

BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 92 – April 2024

Our annual Open Day is now scheduled for 17th May 11am – 4 pm

Fryent Country Park

In March forty members of Barn Hill Conservation Group came together at Bush Farm orchard to plant three apple trees – Ellison Orange, Ashmeads Kernal and James Grieve and to dedicate the trees in memory of Simon Mercer, a volunteer at Fryent Country Park for over thirty years.

Many young people do voluntary work in biodiversity, gardening and conservation at Fryent Country Park as well as Roe Green Walled Garden. In the last two years 31 young people have done their bronze, silver or gold awards, supervised by our volunteers. Well done for all their hard work.

Kim

'Every child needs nature.'

'Not just the ones with parents who appreciate nature, not only those of a certain economic class or culture or set of abilities, every child' -Richard Louv

As spring approached this week so did our visitors from year 1 at Roe Green Primary school

With their teachers and parent/carers groups they spent an hour touring the garden with our volunteers looking for evidence of springtime, and learning a little more about our 'feathered friends'. Questions such as who is visiting? what are they eating? where are they building their nests? and why are they hard to see? were both asked and answered.

Worksheet boxes were ticked as yellow daffodils, purple crocuses and pink primroses, to name but a few, were identified. Children made comparisons from their last visit during autumn term, but despite our reference to spring being a time of warmer weather there was no getting away from the chilly temperatures we all felt. The children remained remarkably engaged despite the cold.

Highlights were definitely the noisy squeaking green parakeets swinging on the bird feeders, the fish pond pondskaters and the glimpse of one of our beautiful newt residents nestled in Carol's safe hands; certainly an unexpected treat.

A visit to the Walled Garden compliments what is learned in the classroom making visual / real-time sense of the vocabulary of spring like tree buds, blossom, seedlings, nests etc.

Our thanks go out to the staff of Roe Green school for choosing us to assist in the importance of highlighting nature in early year's education.

Anne and Jackie

Roe Green Walled Garden: A unique outdoor classroom for hands-on learning.

The Village School in Brent specialises in education for children with special needs and over the past four years, outdoor learning through hands-on activities at the Walled Garden has brought learning to life for 48 students from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 5. Engaging in seasonal work, therapeutic horticulture, recycling, basic woodwork, financial education, using a wheelbarrow, and much more, students gain invaluable skills that support their holistic growth, love and connection with nature, and overall education.

A key highlight of this academic year has been The Purple Project, set up to make scented lavender pouches. Since September, students have been actively involved in every stage, from harvesting, cutting and processing lavender to make the pouches, which they proudly sell at the school shop and seasonal fairs. This project has been met with great success, building creativity, teamwork, and entrepreneurial skills. Everyone absolutely loves the lavender!

The Roe Green Walled Garden offers numerous opportunities for skill-building, with students benefiting from working alongside experienced Barn Hill Conservation Group volunteers. It creates a rich and supportive environment for social and emotional learning—key to developing a well-rounded personality. The Group volunteers, with their patience, kindness, and deep passion for what they do, serve as perfect role models. Recently, we have been offered a second vegetable bed in the Garden, providing more opportunities and inspiration for our students!

It is evident from the students' smiles and enthusiasm that this unique educational approach is not only effective but also deeply enjoyable, making a huge contribution to their mental health. Roe Green Walled Garden is more than just a garden, more than just a learning space—it is a vibrant community where generations come together to create something truly meaningful.

On behalf of all the happy students, The Village School, and myself, we sincerely thank you.
Jozefina Kovalcikova, teacher at the Village School

Butterflies in London

As a total novice to the butterfly world and someone who has recently joined the butterfly survey team in the Group, I read and I am fascinated with the new publication written by Group lead volunteer of the Sunday projects, Leslie Williams.

It details the changes in butterfly population in London since the first mapping in the 1980s. Packed with an abundance of colour photographs of over 409 species it methodically details the habitat, lifecycle, distribution, abundance and concentration of each one, supplemented by a map showing the distribution of each butterfly in the period 1980-1986 compared to 1915 – 2019.

In addition, the reader learns about London's geology and soils, landscape history and land use, all of which contribute to the butterfly population. I never thought of City Farms, railway embankments, golf courses, church yards, cemeteries, private gardens, playing fields, green roofs, and walls, woods, parks, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, and canals all contributing to a healthy butterfly habitat.

The section explaining the recording methods and survey limitations tells honestly how misidentification of species can occur, and the fact that some species are more elusive to recording methods and spend much more of their life in tree canopies

It concludes with a chapter on conservation and how we can all contribute in some way, perhaps in reducing the frequency of mowing the lawn or embracing dandelions, daisies and clover in our gardens. A thoroughly good read and one I would recommend.

Anne

Please note we are now a collection point for used ink jet printer cartridges. If you have any used printer cartridges please bring them along. We have a box for them in the 'cottage' and we can get them to a recycling centre. Inkjet cartridges only – not laser printer cartridges.

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 May. 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

Annual General Meeting
Open Day

Saturday 25th May 2025 10.30 am
Saturday 17th May 2025 11.00 am to 4pm

Telephone number 07421437441

Email: barnhillconservationgroup@gmail.com

Our Website: www.barnhillconservationgroup.org