

# . BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

## 'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 85 – December 2022

### **Our barn now has a new roof**

With the help of a grant from Brent Neighbourhood Community Levy (NCIL) we have now succeeded in having a new roof installed in the barn at the Walled Garden. The old roof was causing continual water leaks. New electrical points have also been installed. The next step is to make a stud partition to isolate the workshop area of the barn.

Thanks to Vrinda and John Parker for getting the project off the ground and managing it. Bernard

### **Memories of a long standing member**

We had our Christmas Party at the beginning of December and were pleased to welcome back Larry, a long standing member of the Group for over 25 years. Larry has now settled in Suffolk but still visits the Garden from time to time and usually follows up with a stint at Fryent Country Park the following Sunday. Visitors to the Garden in the past may have seen Larry demonstrating the use of a pole lathe making chair legs – an old country craft. Larry was actually the creator of our original pole lathe using bits of wood and a branch from an ash tree.

Recollecting our previous Christmas parties Larry writes - - “In a moment of reflection during our festive get-together I cast my mind over past Christmas gatherings. These were held at Brenda's house. Cheek to cheek in her front room we were somewhat crammed, but that lent added intimacy to the setting. The camera clicked as Leslie displayed stills of the progressive yearly growth of the hedgerows cultivated by our green-fingered touch. On another occasion an old-timer Mike Andre, a law unto himself, turned up wearing a sinister-looking homburg hat and pedometer the size of a dinner plate (pre digital) strapped to his waist. Was he making a bold statement? - that we too should consider revealing another side to our characters by donning bizarre outfits for these events”.

Larry Bosman.

### **Work on Honey Slough Pond**

In spite of the rain we have recently had Honey Slough pond has remained an area of squelchy mud. We set about removing all the sediment, improved the base of the pond and formed some shallow surrounds. The pond is now back to normal. Overhanging shrub is being cut back to reduce future leaf drop into the water. The improved light and water should be conducive to more plant growth in the pond and hopefully for amphibians.

Bernard



Honey Slough pond – working to clear the mud

## **Repton Woodlands**

Between September and March tasks labelled “Repton Woodland” appear on the Sunday tasks programme. But what does it mean?

We have to go back to the 1790s for the answer. By that time the Page family owned a large area stretching from Barn Hill down to the current site of the stadium. Around this time, Richard Page hired Humphry Repton to landscape his estate. Repton was the last of the “great landscape gardeners”, following on from the more famous ‘Capability’ Brown. He and Page had big plans for the top of Barn Hill. They had introduced cattle grazing because they thought that the existing hay meadows made for boring views. And they may have created the pond at the top of the hill for the cattle. They also planned to build a tower, which they called a “prospect house”, somewhere at the top of the hill to allow Page's visitors to view his Wembley Park estate, see across to the City of London and St. Paul's, and also see Page's other estate near Harrow. Page and Repton soon parted ways and the tower, if it was ever started, never got finished. We do not know exactly where it was going to be.

Restoring those views is part of the work that we do on a Repton woodlands day. The view from the trig point towards the city is now largely completed, mainly thanks to Colin Mac. The view over Wembley Park from the same place has always been open, even though it has changed dramatically since Repton's day, and still is. Meanwhile, the view towards Harrow-on-the-Hill is still very much a work in progress. Look down the path, next to the bench opposite the poplar avenue, and there are a number of substantial trees and a few overhanging branches blocking the view. These still have to be removed. This work also creates a variety of habitats by letting more light and air get down to ground level each side of the path. We end up with an open path, distinct areas of undergrowth on either side (hopefully without too many brambles), and then the wood beyond that. This is what we do on most paths through the wooded area but here we get the added advantage of re-instating an historic view.

Martin Ridgeway

## **Number crunching at Fryent Country Park**

The number of bags of litter collected at Fryent Country Park this year is 313, including 29 bags from a fly tip in one single day. In addition we have collected large items such as mattresses, lavatory cistern, chest of drawers, a motor bike, shopping trolley, gas cylinders, and garage doors, many removed from well inside the Park. This compares with previous years

2021	354 bags
2020	353
2019	290

The record is held by 2015 when 1043 bags were collected.

Kim

---

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 January. Please see the web site below for details, or telephone the 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 28 January (11am to 4pm)

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

Email: [barnhillconservationgroup@gmail.com](mailto:barnhillconservationgroup@gmail.com)

Our Website: [www.barnhillconservationgroup.org](http://www.barnhillconservationgroup.org)