

BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP  
(Registered Charity No.1085476)  
Annual report: 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016

We have seen another year's hard work by our weatherproof volunteers, with some 1,297 workdays in Roe Green Walled Garden and 286 in Fryent Country Park. Litter picking continues to feature on our project days in FCP. Although there have been fewer rough sleeper camps, fly tipping is still a problem. October saw the annual visit by the SEWA Day volunteers, with the focus once again on the acid grassland strips. Their efforts, together with regular project sessions and help from outside contractors with heavier work (e.g. tree felling) is resulting in visible habitat change. Young volunteers from the Headstart scheme have been doing a variety of jobs in the Walled Garden. We attract a steady trickle of new recruits for park and garden activities. A new in-house scheme for young people – Roe Green Challenge – has been set up to replace the Newt Club and John Muir Awards. We have hosted visits by pupils from several local schools. The Walled Garden received a Green Flag Community Award, and a Silver-Gilt rating by the London in Bloom judges.

Fruit trees are an outstanding feature of Fryent Country Park. We continue to add new stock to the hedgerows, woodland and mounds. This year we planted 150 trees (100 alder buckthorn, and 50 fruit trees – apple, pear and damson varieties). In September we held another all-day fruit pick with a team from Kensal to Kilburn Fruit Harvesters. In all, the pick produced about 1 tonne of fruit, easily beating the 2014 total.

BHCG has been involved with Froglife's Dragonfinder project, which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of amphibians and reptiles, and to improve the various habitats (e.g. ponds and sunny banks) which could support them. Froglife staff have visited the Garden and FCP to see where improvements could be made, and paid particular attention to work being done in the Lower Hydes area. A number of mats have been sited here, and in an acid grassland spot on Barn Hill. These will act as refugia (i.e. shelters) for (mainly) newts and slow worms. Regular inspection, particularly in April and May, should enable a picture to be built up of local populations.

We held 3 Open Days again this year, in April, June and September. Our members' culinary skills were demonstrated at four very enjoyable parties: a Summer Party in June, a Harvest Party in October, a Diwali Party in November and a Christmas Party in December.

Keep up the good work!

John Barrington (Chairman)