

BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP
(Registered Charity No.1085476)
Annual report: 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014

We have had another active year, undeterred by the fickle English weather. A mild winter enabled us to continue working out in the Garden most days. Notable achievements included the felling of the clump of conifers in the back yard, a complete refurbishment of the herbaceous border, and the addition of many new colourful plants and bulbs. Two areas of the Park have received special attention. The strips of acid grassland have been cleared and expanded, with the help of outside contractors and the annual visit of Sewa Day volunteers. This has been the final full year of the Masons Field project and, with the help of the Parks Service and the contractors, work on the green lane has been completed, and a small shallow scrape has been dug. More trees have been planted, wildflower plugs have been put in, and wildflower seeds have been broadcast. This hard work has been recognised by a Green Flag award to both sites, and the Garden was judged to be Thriving in the It's Your Neighbourhood awards. We held 3 Open Days in the Garden, and continue to explore further ways of publicising our activities.

Work with young people has taken up a lot of our time. The Newt Club held 6 events, and the John Muir Award (which started this year) held 11 sessions. The JMA Discovery Award (the first of three levels) was attained by 10 young people and 14 adults (the latter being self-directed). Local schools continued to visit, and we have established good relations with the new Southover Partnership school in Kingsbury Manor.

The Masons Field project grant included provision for training events. During the year we have had sessions on: orchard development & restoration (London Orchard Project), hay meadows (Flora Locale), emergency first aid (St John Ambulance), amphibian monitoring & conservation (Froglife), and butterfly identification & conservation (Butterfly Conservation).

For the statistically minded –

The Group planted 24 trees, and 225 were planted by the contractors
We planted 4,000 wildflower plugs, and the Parks Service another 4,000
We planted 8,000 bulbs, including fritillaries, daffodils, snowdrops & anemones
The wildflower seeds included yellow rattle, yellow oat-grass, crested dogstail, marsh
birdsfoot trefoil, quaking grass & sweet vernal grass

Our volunteers put in some 1,147 workdays in the Walled Garden, and 253 in the Country Park.

A year to be proud of!

John Barrington (Chairman)