

# BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 61 – December 2014

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

BHCG was set up in 1984 as a volunteer conservation group for Fryent Country Park and Barn Hill. Currently our volunteers are out working in the Park every Sunday morning for two and a half hours. Our volunteers come from all over Brent, and some from Harrow. They devote their time to the Park for wildlife and people. Over the years we have maintained the ancient meadows, planted thousands of trees, hundreds of daffodils, cut back invasive blackthorn, planted hedgerows, cleared ponds, and recorded wildlife. We have over 500 species of flora and fauna on the Park. However, over the last few years we have noticed more litter and rubbish left on the Park and some of our project work now involves litter picking and rubbish clearing rather than conservation work. In 2013 we collected 297 bags of litter and rubbish.

In the last six months things have got into a very serious state in regard to the nature and extent of the rubbish being dumped and left behind in the Park. In 2014 we have collected 398 bags of rubbish on our Sunday morning activities. We drag the rubbish to the kerbside for LB Brent to dispose of it the next day.

The type of rubbish we have collected included tarpaulins, duvets, pillows, chairs, buckets, rubble, iron frames, window frames, glass, foam, tents, clothing, BBQs, carpets, cases, bags, axes, spades, rakes, rope, prams, chipboard, large TVs, cleaners, hedge trimmers, wine equipment, hippo bags, electrical fittings, mops, adhesives, tables, iron beds, fire extinguishers, polystyrene, wood, planks, 3m metal rods, telephone pole, baking trays, a door, 2 settees, tyres, lighters, armchairs, mobile phones, advert board, scooter, bathroom basin, toilet, corrugated plastic, oil drums and mattresses. On average we are collecting one mattress per week. This rubbish is to be found in the innermost areas of the Park and most of it is undoubtedly left behind by people sleeping rough in the undergrowth.

If we do not remove this rubbish it would be left in the Park, and we would have a rubbish dump on our doorstep on both Fryent Country Park and Barn Hill open space.

We need to alert people who live in the area as to what is happening to our Park. We have a beautiful Park. Our thanks to all who keep our Park green and litter free

If anybody would like to help on Sunday mornings please contact us on 0208 206 0492.

Kim

## **Apple juicing at Roe Green Walled Garden Open Day**

On the 6th of September a number of volunteers including members of our John Muir Award group descended on Bush Farm Orchard. They were armed with hard hats, goggles, fruit pickers and crates. They set about harvesting our apple crop. No easy task as the growth of vegetation resembled an impenetrable tropical rainforest. Three and a half hours later our indomitable harvesters emerged into the sunlight with over 100 kilograms of apples. The following week at our Open Day in Roe Green Walled Garden the John Muir Award group chopped, pulped, crushed and squeezed the juice from those apples and sold it to visitors. Their response was wholly positive with one customer exclaiming that 'it was the best apple juice he had ever tasted !'

This summer nine young people were awarded The John Muir Award for voluntary work in environmental conservation. They had completed over 24 hours discovering, exploring and conserving the green spaces looked after by Barn Hill Conservation Group. Well done ! David

### **Vegetable Plots at Roe Green Walled Garden**

We have 18 vegetable plots in the Garden of the size 1m x 3 m each and four larger plots behind the barn. Our summer produce included a number of crops grown in the garden for the first time. These included sweetcorn, Indian radish (mooli), mustard leaves, leeks, fenugreek (mellie), cucumber and broccoli - in addition to our main crops of runner beans, potatoes, peas, courgettes, beetroot and cauliflower.

In particular we had a good harvest of sweetcorn. 25 plants produced 60 pieces of sweetcorn, We had four very big pumpkins as well as some smaller ones. We had a good crop of beetroot, potatoes and tomatoes this year. Set

### **A Russian Tea Party at Roe Green Walled Garden**

On a day when the rain was torrential we were visited by a group of Russians from Kolma. They bought with them Pastila an interesting jelly type sweet made from baked Apples whisked with honey and dried in the oven.

A van crammed full of equipment arrived in the morning accompanied by a charming young man who could not speak English. Soon after the arrival of the van, a party of about 20 Russians strolled through the gates having travelled on the Underground. Only one could speak English.

This delightful party of Russians acted out a traditional tea ceremony in pre-revolutionary costumes, using the most beautiful china, which had arrived in their van. Local MP Barry Gardener and his wife joined our party for tea, pastila and a fluffy dessert made from apple puree whisked with egg whites and sugar.

The deluge of rain meant that we were crammed like sardines in 'the cottage' but it did not spoil our enjoyment.

In the barn, they organised T shirt stencilling and played musical instruments. One young man had set up wooden electronic machines at different locations around the garden and they 'bonged' giving the impression that you were in a Russian town with the church bells going.

The day was a magical experience, our thanks go our Russian visitors for leaving us with such pleasant memories. Rose

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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. Training and Refreshments are provided. A free Green Gym at your disposal!

We are now collecting old pottery garden pots. We collect scrap metal such as copper, brass, aluminium, including aluminium cans, which help in fund raising.

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

|                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| General Meeting     | Saturday 24 January 2015 |
| Open Day April 2015 | Saturday 18 April 2015   |
| Open Day June 2015  | Saturday 13 June 2015    |

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

Website: [www.bhcg.btck.co.uk](http://www.bhcg.btck.co.uk)