

## **Friends of Eastcote House Gardens. Update March 2018 in place of cancelled QGM.**

The meeting set for 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 was cancelled due to the extremely poor weather conditions. With many committee members taking holidays during March it was decided to issue an update to everyone via email rather than try to arrange another meeting. Information below is based on the most recent committee meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018. If you have any questions please contact [lesley.crowcroft@gmail.com](mailto:lesley.crowcroft@gmail.com)

### **Future Committee Structure.**

After 10 years in post, Lesley Crowcroft will be standing down as Chairman at the summer AGM. The work load will be split between other members of the group. Lesley remaining as Head gardener plus other jobs, some of which she would like to pass on.

The Committee agreed the following:-

Steve Place will be Chairman Elect to be ratified at the AGM

Sue Place will stay as Deputy Chair

Andy Weller will fill the vacant post of Secretary, until the AGM he will be Secretary elect.

Other committee posts stay the same.

Cllr Catherine Dann retires from the Council at the May elections. Catherine has supported the Friends of EHG from its inception, she has been asked if she would become Vice President. We are pleased to say that she has accepted the role. This will be ratified at the AGM.

### **Heritage Lottery Fund Project.**

The restoration project ends in June 2018. Which means all monies will have been spent.

The completion of the last two projects will take place as soon as the ground is fit, they are

1.]marking the outline of Eastcote House in paving slabs, with an interpretation board.

2.]The Wildlife Images Trail rubbing posts will also be installed in the children's play area and Long Meadow as soon as the ground is dry enough. A leaflet is in production for a guide to this trail.

A meeting between representatives of the HLF, LBH & FEHG will be held later in March to consider the legacy of this project.

### **Archaeology**

The last 'dig' took place last July [2017]. We are still awaiting the final report from AOC.

Once received with a full list of finds we can then start the process of having some of these finds returned to EHG to go onto display. It appears that this process might take up to two years. A long, convoluted and frustrating process!

In the meantime, the artifacts found in the gardens and Long Meadow by FEHG [outside of the official digs], will be on display in the Dovecote.

### **Reports**

#### **Chairman's report – Lesley Crowcroft**

FEHG continue to flourish, as can be seen from the reports many people are busy making EHG a brilliant place to visit with many interesting events taking place. We can proudly say that we have put EHG back into the heart of the community.

**Treasurer – Keith Barnard**

General Fund (excluding 2018 Picnic income). £6,390-40

HLF Money. £184-71

Archive/Publications. £5,074-42

Craft Group. £391-00

It was decided at the Committee meeting, that a contingency fund should be built up. The running costs of the group are in the region of £2.5K per annum.

**Countryside Conservation – Steve & Sue Place**

Built three sections of dead hedge along the boundary of Long Meadow with local roads to restrict motorised vehicle access to the meadow.

Installed one tawny owl and one kestrel nesting boxes in Long Meadow and one tawny owl box in the grounds of EHG.

Kindly paid for by Northwood Hills RA and installed by the council's tree contractor, Glendale.

Thanks to all involved in making this possible.

A height barrier has been installed at the High Road entrance to make it more difficult for Traveller incursions. The welcome boards are still awaited.

**Craft Group – Sue Smales**

Members celebrated the second anniversary of the creation of the craft group and are enjoying each other's crafts and company for a third year. Members have now taken responsibility for funding their own refreshments. Streamers and banners for the Poppy Project have been designed and are being assembled. Members have agreed to Joan Butfield's request to make a number of small items for the lucky card stall at the picnic.

**Web Site – Trevor Dixon**

The website continues to receive in the region of 40-50 hits per day, although occasionally more. As there have been no major events recently - the number of hits always rises dramatically in the run-up to those - and as winter cannot be considered as peak visiting season for outdoor sites, this is encouraging.

**Archive & Publications – Andy Weller**

Sales of publications are steady. The final report from AOC Archaeology is awaited. Once received the next FEHG publication will be finished and printed.

The archive is funding the exhibition 'Eastcote Remembers' to take place in November.

The 2019 calendar is being produced by Terry Butfield.

The revision of all leaflets plus new additions are in progress.

**Garden Works**

A woodland garden has been created on the High Road boundary. Yards of laurel have been removed and replaced with trees, shrubs and plants beneficial to wild life. A small stumpery has been installed along with habitat piles. A leaflet explaining the area will soon be available. The section nearest to the

car park will be cleared of Robinia seedlings soon and a more appropriate planting added in the autumn.

Pamela Gardens boundary, another section of bramble and scrub has been removed and replaced with both native and ornamental shrubs. These shrubs are chosen to give blossom in the spring, good autumn colour and berries for all wild life. The next section will be planted up this autumn.

### **Forthcoming events.**

#### **Tree Walk Sunday May 20<sup>th</sup> 2pm.**

‘Every Tree has a Story’ Come and discover the facts and folklore of the gardens magnificent trees. Free event

#### **Picnic. Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 11am -4pm.**

Another full and varied programme of events and stalls is being organized. This year we will have Ferret Racing and the Harefield Dogs trust will be joining us with their ‘dog run’. **Offers of help will be gratefully received, both on the day and during the run up to this annual event.** If you can help please contact [Lesley.crowcroft@gmail.com](mailto:Lesley.crowcroft@gmail.com) Free event

#### **Dovecote Opening.**

New this year the Dovecote will be open to the public free of charge on the following Tuesdays, 1.30 - 3.30pm throughout the summer months.

May 15<sup>th</sup>, June 19<sup>th</sup>, July 17<sup>th</sup>, August 21<sup>st</sup>, September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Exhibitions and displays will be on view.

#### **Open House. Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September**

This will include the ever popular Classic Car and Bike rally. A Tree walk, plant sales etc. Free Event

#### **Archive Film showing. October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

An afternoon of archive films about the Urban District Councils that were merged to form the London Borough of Hillingdon. Free Event.

#### **Eastcote Remembers. November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>**

Two weeks of concerts, talks and an exhibition to commemorate the Armistice of 1918. All monies raised to be donated to Eastcote British Legion.

#### **Tree Dressing Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December 1.30pm**

The very popular Tree Dressing will start the festive season. Free event