

December  
2022

Volume 3 Issue 1

# Harrow Heritage Trust



## Caring for the environment

### Message from the Trustees

#### Special points of interest:

- \* AGM—New Board
- \* WWYP—Wood Meadow Project
- \* Corporate Volunteers
- \* Our Space award
- \* Statement of Financial Position

Our AGM was held in the Mayor's Parlour on October 11th. It was one of the last meetings in the parlour before the closure of the Civic Centre. Surrounding us, as we sat, were mementoes and displays of Harrow Borough history. It was an appropriate setting for The Trust's 37th AGM and Executive Board Meeting. We bid farewell and thanks to former Chair Keith Ferry and welcomed Cllr Marilyn Ashton as our new Chair. The dry and hot summer brought challenges for Harrow's nature reserves. Nevertheless project work in green spaces continued strongly. There was less to report on projects in the built environment. Read on to see The Trust's Annual Report and Financial Statement and highlights of other activities.

### AGM & Executive Board Meeting

Keith Ferry stood down as The Trust's Chair after 7 years. We thanked former Cllr Ferry and wished him well after his move to Buckinghamshire. He continues as a member of HHT. We welcomed Cllr Marilyn Ashton as our new Chair. She has been a co-opted member of the Executive Board for many years. The new Chair spoke passionately about Harrow's historic heritage and how it benefits everyone to learn more about the place all of us live. Members of the board offered suggestions on what The Trust might do to increase awareness and also enjoyment of Harrow's historic places.

The Trust has made a commitment for future meetings to be open to all members so that a wider number of voices may contribute to The Trust's work and to publicise more widely and in a variety of places, guides to Harrow historic built and natural environment.

Our next meeting will be March 8th at 7:30. It should take place at the Harrow Hub which is the new office building on the Civic Amenity site. Written invitations will go out nearer to the date however, if you know you would like to come along to the meeting please email [info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk) or call 07812519231 and let us know.

#### Inside this issue:

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Executive Board       | 2  |
| Membership            | 3  |
| WWYP                  | 4  |
| HNCF                  | 5  |
| Peter Peretti—tribute | 10 |
| Financial statement   | 11 |
| Picture Gallery       | 12 |

## **Election of executive board officers— AGM Results**

**President (ex-officio)** - The Worshipful The Mayor Janet Mote

### **Honorary Officers**

Chair- Cllr Marilyn Ashton

Vice-Chair -Vacant

Treasurer - Leslie Bolsover

Minutes Secretary - Virginie Lambertucci

### **Local Authority Members**

Cllr Janet Mote

Cllr June Baxter

Cllr Ghazanfar Ali

### **Elected Members**

Stephen Bolsover Harrow Nature Conservation sub-committee

John Williams Stanmore Society & Plaques sub-committee

Margaret Huitson Harrow Nature Conservation Forum sub-committee

Eileen Kinnear Harrow Hill Trust

Robin Youle Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre & Pinner Association & Pinner Society

### **Co-opted Members**

John Orchard—Heritage Grants sub-committee

Simon Braidman - Work With Young People sub- committee

## **Heritage Grants—John Orchard, Chair**

Chair John Orchard reported on repairs to a Grade II Listed Building where, unfortunately, the owner did not submit a complete Harrow Heritage Trust application form and provided only two of the three quotations necessary to qualify for a Heritage Grant. In this case, no grant could be forthcoming. He has also advised on reliable local builders for Canons Park Residents Association concerning the rebuilding of the demolished estate entrance gate piers. The Chair reported that there was nothing new at this time regarding Roxeth Mead, Middle Road re-roofing; Stuart Cottages, Belmont Lane re-roofing; Old Pye House, or the West Street structural survey.

Enquiries concerning providing grant contributions towards refurbishment works to fenestration (windows) of houses in conservation areas continue to arrive in the Harrow Heritage Trust emails. As has been reported previously, The Trust is now focussing only on environmental and historical heritage assets in conservation areas so we are continuing to try to communicate that message to all and sundry.

## **Membership**

Membership numbers are slowly edging up after the Covid epidemic. They now stand at 50 with just under 50% of members opting for Lifetime Membership—available for £35. We have an opening for a membership secretary. This does not need to be a time consuming job. Please let us know at [info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk) if this position appeals to you.

## **Plaques—John Williams, Chair**

Chair John Williams is researching further sites for historic Brown Plaques and is refurbishing one of the older plaques. Members are invited to send suggestions for further Brown Plaque locations to the chair at [johnwilliams-stanmoresociety@msn.com](mailto:johnwilliams-stanmoresociety@msn.com) or to [Info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk](mailto:Info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk).

## **Harrow Nature Conservation Forum and Harrow Litter Pickers—Joint events**

Members of Harrow Nature Conservation Forum have undertaken several joint litter clean-ups with Harrow Litter Pickers. The first was in March 2022 when an energetic group cleared a large area of Belmont Nature Trail, a project which took three days and resulted in many bags of rubbish sent to the dump. Removing some bramble also means the area can be better monitored. The successful partnership has continued with several joint litter picks along Old Redding, Harrow Weald and several picks at Newton Farm Ecology Park.

Harrow Heritage Trust has also supported Harrow Litter Pickers by contributing graffiti remover and replacement litter picking rubber tip ends as a charitable donation to the cause of a cleaner Harrow. If you see them out and about please give them a BIG “thumbs up”.



Late autumn sunset over London's first Wood Meadow

During the drought, a local resident made water available so that families and individuals might give water to the newly planted saplings to keep them alive. Saplings are vulnerable to drought in the first two years after planting before their root system develops. Water was absolutely necessary this summer! Each watering session volunteers used two 40L water rollers to get water out to the saplings as there is no stand-pipe on Pinner Rec. It took about an hour for two teams to give each sapling a "sip" of water. The water was of benefit to insects as well and small patches of green vegetation circled each sapling all through the hot, dry summer.

## Work with Young People – Simon Braidman and Antonia Savvides (till Autumn 2022)

Even though the weather challenges have been daunting, it has been a fantastic first year in the Pinner Rec Wood Meadow Project. The community has come together to ensure that the new Wood Meadow plants grow and thrive. And that improvements to biodiversity continue to increase. Here's the story in pictures.



During half-term in October, young people came to plant volunteer grown wild-flower seedlings to further enhance the Wood Meadow's biodiversity. Project leader Simon Braidman taught the young people where and how to plant the seedlings. In the background you can see one of the attendees trying out the log bridges over the drainage channels!

Although the drainage channels were dry over the summer they are now pleasingly full of water. Project leader Simon Braidman is documenting the increases in biodiversity brought about because of the changes made and is very pleased with the progress.

## Harrow Nature Conservation Forum—Steve Bolsover, Chair

We are very sad to report the death on November 21st of Peter Peretti. Peter first became involved with Bentley Priory nature reserve in 1988 and became chief warden a year later, only stepping down in 2021. Much of what we see at Bentley Priory today is the result of his vision. Read our tribute on page 9.

To the west of Bentley Priory lies Old Redding Nature Reserve, where the young team are doing fantastic work improving the site for Great Crested Newts and other wildlife. They are active both on the ground, jumping into ponds to clear mud and leaf litter, and in raising money for the site, with grants from the Mayor of London's ReWild London fund and the Rivers & Wetlands Community Days fund. One of the main changes visitors to the site will see is that now all the basin that used to hold a lake in W. S. Gilbert's time is now visible. In Gilbert's time the lake was kept full by constant pumping from wells; without that much of the basin is dry but it still holds pools and marshy areas, perfect for newts and other aquatic wildlife.

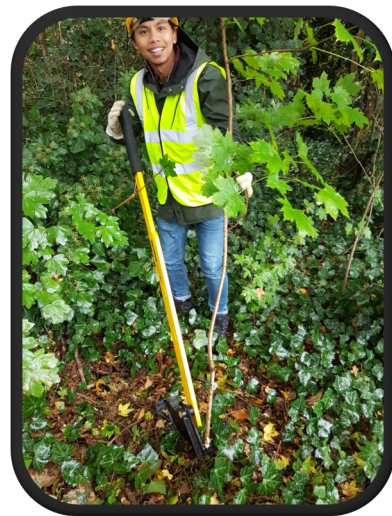
Two nature reserves suffered from fire during the drought. Wardens and volunteers were all asked to be extra vigilant for instances of barbecues, fireworks and any signs of smoke. Stanmore Common had several small fires and Roxbourne Rough suffered a grass fire over approximately one third of its area—a serious loss. Fire services attended promptly when called in all cases and we give our heartfelt appreciation to them. As summers become hotter and drier we may need to step up vigilance of vulnerable areas.

We have been pleased to host a number of corporate working parties this summer. Some contributing businesses have been local to the borough and some have been large UK-wide businesses. Two businesses came twice! They have worked at Old Redding, Bentley Priory, Stanmore Common, Stanmore Country Park and Newton Farm Ecology Park on tasks as varied as clearing holly from woodland, building leaky dams, raking cut grass on meadows and hauling mud out of ponds. Corporate working groups are such a great benefit to the borough as they provide many hands for large tasks. The Forum is very pleased as well because many corporate groups are willing to donate a small sum per attendee to cover our costs for tools, protective gear and, in some cases even portaloos! The 6 companies providing teams this year were Cadent gas supply infrastructure, Heineken Brewers, M & G investment management group, British Telecom, Turner and Townsend professional services and Promo Veritas who are based in Pinner.

Harrow Nature Conservation Forum went "all out" during Great Big Green Week, Sept 24-Oct 2, this year hosting 10 events. We started with an Open Afternoon at Newton Farm Ecology Park including guided walks and apple juice pressing. The grandest event, however, was a splendid Open Afternoon at Old Redding based in the rose garden of Grims Dyke Hotel. It had everything, children's activities, guided walks around Lady Gilbert's Orchard and the newt habitat improvement project area plus local artists and other stalls. The hard-working wardens were pleased to show Harrow Mayor Janet Mote around the whole site. Special mention should go to Virginie Lambertucci who led the organisation. See pictures on back cover.

Finally, a very big congratulations to Stanmore Common warden Simon Braidman for his recent Harrow Heroes award. Well done Simon. You have always been a Nature Hero to us!

## Corporate Volunteering with Harrow Nature Conservation Forum



We were very grateful to Pinner based promotional marketing agency PromoVeritas who came to do corporate volunteering at Newton Farm Ecology Park. They helped remove invasive non-native species and cleared along the front fencing. Arthur is holding a tree-popper, a tool much beloved by HNCF volunteers. It is used to quickly and safely remove invasive sapling species completely so there is no regrowth, no need for chemical herbicides and no fear of back strain either—ergometric!



Staff volunteers from Turner & Thompson have attended Old Redding nature reserve TWICE! They are helping with the restoration and improvement of the series of small water features and ponds which support Great Crested Newts, a species which suffers from habitat fragmentation. The work also improves access for nature reserve users. On the right other staff volunteers create leaky dams which will help slow the flow of rain water resulting in less flooding downstream.





Cadent volunteers spent their day removing ragwort at Bentley Priory. Ragwort can be harmful to the grazing cattle so controlling its spread is an important management task for the meadows.



Heineken volunteers take a whack at removing invasive holly from Stanmore Common. Holly spreads rapidly and shades out less robust woodland plants it is important to manage its growth and spread.



Staff volunteers from M & G helped with the massive job of raking mown grass on Bentley Priory after the annual hay cut.

Wildflower meadow management demands raking off the grass as wildflowers like a low nutrient environment. Grass left will encourage rampant growth which will smother emerging wildflowers. The raking keeps the meadows in good condition.



M & G pose after a hard day removing invasive holly on Stanmore Common. The Forum was able to purchase 12 new bow saws and other tools and gloves with donation money from M&G's two corporate work days within Harrow Borough.

## OurSpace project at Stanmore Little Common

In January 2022 Robert Stone, warden of Stanmore Little Common, was awarded a grant of £3,822 from the OurSpace fund, which is mainly funded by TideWay, to improve the site for pollinators, pondlife and people. The idea behind the project was that Stanmore Little Common had the potential to be a "stepping stone" to help animals to travel between four larger nature reserves: Bentley Priory to the west, Stanmore Common to the north, Wood Farm to the east and Stanmore Country Park to the south. We proposed two main components of the project, both designed to make the site more welcoming and useful for animals.

The first and more obvious component was a wildflower area to provide nectar for insects as they travelled through – and make the site more attractive for human residents and passers by. Contractors stripped the turf off what had been a boring area of short grass and piled it into a linear berm. Robert then led a team from the local community which sowed a wildflower seed mix on the bare ground and trampled it into the ground. In the first year only the annuals bloomed, but put on a good show. Now we look forward to a more complex mix of flowers in 2023 as the perennials flower. The berm formed by the cut turf was used to make a bee bank by adding steep slopes of sand for solitary mining bees to build their nests in.

The second component of the project was less successful. Inconsiderate people have dumped terrapins in many water bodies in Harrow, including Spring Pond at Stanmore Little Common. These are voracious eaters, preying on amphibians and waterbirds, so we hoped to remove them to make the pond a safer refuge for frogs, toads and newts travelling between the large reserves. The A.G.A. group set traps in the pond but only caught two terrapins out of a total of at least five, so the pond has not become much safer for wildlife than it was.

We ran a number of courses and events for children as part of this project including:



In June, families gathered for a one day course on identifying aquatic invertebrates led by Steve and Leslie Bolsover.



In July we had a one day course on identifying pollinators (butterflies, hoverflies and bees) by professional ecologist Russell Miller.



In September, children built four bird boxes that were then placed in Stanmore Little Common ready for birds to use in 2023. They signed the backs!

The residents of Stanmore Little Common have been enthusiastic supporters of this project and provided the manpower for many of the tasks, so we hope that they will now take pride in and nurture the resource that they have created.

## **Peter Peretti 25th December 1928 - 21st November 2022**

In November we lost Peter Peretti, a tireless and enthusiastic supporter of nature conservation in Harrow and indeed at many other locations. Peter was a professional architect and a full member of the Royal Institute of British Architects from 1954. He worked in Switzerland and Africa, but most of his time was with the London County Council and then the Greater London Council. He worked on some very large social housing schemes in those days, the largest of which was around 2,000 units.

It is as warden of Bentley Priory that we in HNCF and Harrow Heritage Trust know him best. Bentley Priory Nature Reserve was established in 1974, initially as the area around Summerhouse Lake and then, in 1993, expanding to the area we know today and opened to the public. Peter became an assistant warden in 1988 and chief warden a year later.

Peter was tireless in organizing and monitoring the regular management tasks required to keep the complex mosaic of landscapes at Bentley Priory in good condition including the tractor cut of grass and bramble, the grazing cattle, and regular work by volunteers from The Conservation Volunteers. But Peter also had a remarkable ability to devise brilliant projects that would take many years to come to fruition, and persuade and cajole friends and colleagues until his vision became reality. Ten years ago if one entered Bentley Priory through the Glenthorne Entrance from Common Road (the A409) one passed through a dark, dreary tunnel under laurel trees to reach the gate into Spring Meadow. From there the concrete Weald Path ran eastward through a spring line beside Bevan's Marsh, where the path was often inches deep in water. Peter's vision transformed both these problem areas. He persuaded both Harrow Council and volunteers to clear the laurel from the Glenthorne corridor, dismantling an old wooden fence to open up the area. He then planted hazel and other small trees along the corridor, and arranged for them to be regularly coppiced. With Phil Attewell he translocated Southern Wood Ants from colonies in Burnham Beeches to the area (introducing plants and animals was allowed because the Glenthorne Corridor is outside the boundary of the Site of Special Scientific Interest). Now the Glenthorne Corridor is a pleasant sunlit route carrying walkers, including those hardy folk following the London LOOP, into Bentley Priory. The area has a biodiverse mix of low trees and open glades where the ants build their enormous nests.

At Bevan's Marsh Peter persuaded Harrow Council to dig first one, then a second, then a third pond in a chain down the slope, each feeding the next. The concrete path was broken up and the concrete left in a pile – Peter's plan being that if any Common Lizards, last recorded at Bentley Priory in 2003, were still around they would love to sunbathe on the stones. A new all weather path was laid curving around the spring so that walkers can pass by dry shod and the water can run clear into the ponds, now named Dragonfly Ponds because of the eighteen species of dragonflies and damselflies that have visited and been recorded at this lovely new resource.

Peter stepped down as chief warden of Bentley Priory in 2021 after an amazing thirty-three years guiding and taking care of the site. This did not stop him pushing for new projects, prominent among them being the idea of creating a home for swifts, either in the clock tower of Bentley Priory house itself, or as a standalone structure in the grounds of the house or in the nature reserve. It would be a great memorial for Peter if we could turn that idea into reality!

Steve Bolsover December 2022. Thanks to Carole Lis, Margaret Huitson and Elizabeth Stainthorpe for help with facts and dates.

**Peter in Glenthorne next to a stump containing one of the Southern Wood Ant nests.**



**Peter next to one of the flail mowers used to keep the meadows at Bentley Priory in good condition.**

## Statement of Financial Activity for the year ending March 31st, 2022

| Charity Name<br>Harrow Heritage Trust                 |                                | No (if any)<br>1072773                     |                              | Receipts and payments accounts                 |       | CC16a                                       |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------|---------|
| For the period from                                   | Period start date<br>01-Apr-21 | To                                         | Period end date<br>31-Mar-22 |                                                |       |                                             |         |
| <b>Section A Receipts and payments</b>                |                                |                                            |                              |                                                |       |                                             |         |
| <b>A1 Receipts</b>                                    |                                | <b>Unrestricted funds to the nearest £</b> |                              | <b>Heritage grants to the nearest £</b>        |       | <b>Public works of art to the nearest £</b> |         |
|                                                       |                                | <b>to the nearest £</b>                    |                              | <b>to the nearest £</b>                        |       | <b>to the nearest £</b>                     |         |
| Subscriptions, donations + other income               | 5,491                          | -                                          | -                            | 165                                            | 95    | 5,751                                       | 4,699   |
| Local authority grants                                | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| Other grants                                          | 8,322                          | -                                          | -                            | 5,565                                          | -     | 13,887                                      | 12,431  |
| Deposit interest                                      | 14                             | 13                                         | 8                            | -                                              | 1     | 36                                          | 103     |
|                                                       | 13,827                         | 13                                         | 8                            | 5,730                                          | 96    | 19,674                                      | 17,233  |
| <b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>    |                                |                                            |                              |                                                |       |                                             |         |
|                                                       | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
|                                                       | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| <b>Sub total</b>                                      | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| <b>Total receipts</b>                                 | 13,827                         | 13                                         | 8                            | 5,730                                          | 96    | 19,674                                      | 17,233  |
| <b>A3 Payments</b>                                    |                                |                                            |                              |                                                |       |                                             |         |
| <b>General fund</b>                                   |                                | <b>to the nearest £</b>                    |                              | <b>Work with Young People to the nearest £</b> |       | <b>Total funds to the nearest £</b>         |         |
| Direct charitable expenditure                         | 3,109                          | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| Harrow Nature Conservation Forum                      | 5,554                          | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | 3,109                                       | 1,329   |
| Postcode Lottery grant                                | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | 5,554                                       | 3,474   |
| Work with Young People                                | -                              | -                                          | -                            | 5,442                                          | -     | -                                           | 8,303   |
| Public Works of Art                                   | -                              | 1,270                                      | -                            | -                                              | 203   | 1,270                                       | 440     |
| Headstone Manor                                       | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | 2,015                                       | -       |
| Admin expenditure                                     | 2,015                          | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | 203   | -                                           | -       |
| <b>Sub total</b>                                      | 10,678                         | 1,270                                      | -                            | 5,442                                          | 203   | 17,593                                      | 13,246  |
| <b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b> |                                |                                            |                              |                                                |       |                                             |         |
|                                                       | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
|                                                       | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| <b>Sub total</b>                                      | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| <b>Total payments</b>                                 | 10,678                         | 1,270                                      | -                            | 5,442                                          | 203   | 17,593                                      | 13,246  |
| <b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>                     |                                |                                            |                              |                                                |       |                                             |         |
|                                                       | 3,149                          | 13                                         | 1,262                        | 288                                            | 107   | 2,081                                       | 3,987   |
| <b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>                     |                                |                                            |                              |                                                |       |                                             |         |
| 2020 Debtors & Prepayments - settled                  | - #                            | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | -       |
| 2020 Creditors & Accruals - settled                   | - #                            | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | 2,015   |
| 2020 Creditors & Accruals - not settled               | - #                            | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | 9,372   |
| 2021 Bank Balance adjustment                          | -                              | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | 1,700   |
| (Basis: 2020 Accruals to 2021 R&P)                    | 23 #                           | -                                          | -                            | -                                              | -     | -                                           | 23      |
| <b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>                    | 37,955                         | 29,592                                     | 20,747                       | 13,377                                         | 2,830 | 104,478                                     | 91,411  |
| <b>Cash funds this year end</b>                       | 41,081                         | 29,605                                     | 19,485                       | 13,665                                         | 2,723 | 106,559                                     | 104,409 |

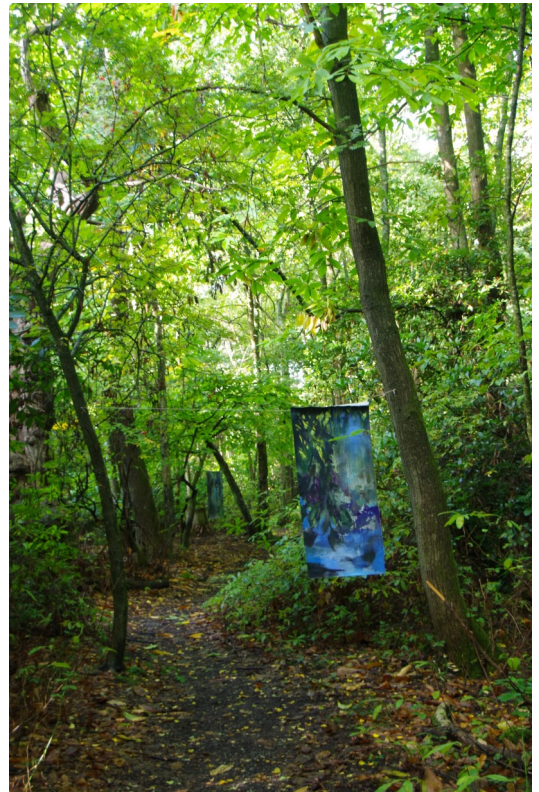
**Old Redding Open Day in the Rose Garden of the grounds of the Grims Dyke Hotel was a fantastic success.**



**Warden Robert Stone led local volunteers in planting trees, sowing seeds and building bee banks at Stanmore Little Common to make a green corridor between local nature reserves.**



## Picture Gallery



**Art work by Arlene Sharp displayed in the grounds of Old Redding during the open Day. The work is inspired by the nature reserve.**



**Will he? Won't he? Go in the trap....one of the wily terrapins eyeing his options on top of a terrapin trap in Spring Pond, Stanmore Little Common. Mostly the terrapins decided that they would not go in the trap!**