

# HARROW HERITAGE TRUST

*Caring for the built and natural environment*



## Message from the Trustees

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This newsletter comes with apologies for delays in delivery. We strive to produce two issues a year; one which follows our AGM in October and the other after our June Executive meeting. This year our June meeting was delayed till July therefore the newsletter has lagged behind as well.

Hopefully, we will be back on schedule for subsequent issues! Inside you may notice fewer pictures in this issue. We have much going on around the borough and have tried to represent stories fairly while also giving readers pictures where space allows.

Most of you will have read John William's articles on Harrow, and especially Stanmore, heritage and history. Most of you will also be aware that he passed away recently. Harrow Heritage Trust was greatly enriched by his efforts over the years on behalf of local history initiatives and, for us, his work emplacing Brown Plaques in the borough. Look for a retrospective in our next issue.

# **HARROW HERITAGE TRUST**

## **Charity No. 1072773**

### Trustees

### Executive Committee

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John Orchard (Heritage Grants)

Meena Gosrani (Hatch End Association)

Vacant (Stanmore Society & Brown Plaques)

Robin Youle (Pinner Association)

**Minutes Secretary:** Nik Jackson

## Heritage Grants

### Chair: John Orchard

No new grants have been disbursed since the last newsletter.

Chair John Orchard has contacted and advised several residents and also visited properties.

Grant enquiries:

① Grade II\* Listed Grims Dyke Hotel, Harrow Weald - restoration of heron statues. Having visited the site an application form was issued on the 14th April 2025 to Helenka Jurgielewicz, Head Gardener at the hotel. Currently no completed application form and quotations returned.

(ii) Grade II Listed The Billiard Room, Harrow on the Hill - restoration to fenestration.

Having visited the site an application form was issued on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025. The completed form and quotations returned and a grant contribution toward the fenestration renovation works agreed by the HHT Grants Sub-committee. Grant monies to be paid upon satisfactory completion of the renovation works.

(iii) Grade II Listed Goodengate, Stanmore Hill - roof repair works.

The completed application form and quotations returned on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and additional information requested prior to further consideration.



*Heron at Grims Dyke Hotel with clear damage at the base of the neck and a picture of both.*

## Harrow Rivers Group

### Chair: Angelique Soon

***Our own Harrow Rivers Group has made a bit of a “splash” in the Crane Valley Catchment. Here is an article detailing their recent work. It is kindly reproduced by permission from the Crane Valley Partnership Newsletter.***

**Issue 13 Crane Valley News 28 May 2025**

#### **Monitoring pollution remotely in Harrow**

Citizen Scientists have embarked on a new initiative in Harrow to monitor water quality using remote sensor equipment. The technology will detect pollution as it happens, hopefully allowing the source to be quickly traced.

The Harrow Rivers Group (HRG) has been set up locally to help protect and enhance all the watercourses in the London Borough of Harrow. Sections of three major river catchments - the Colne, the Crane and the Brent - are all located in the Borough, so HRG has a lot of ground (or rather water!) to cover. HRG is itself a sub-committee of the long-established Harrow Heritage Trust.

For some time now HRG members Angelique Soon and Alan Patterson have been actively involved in Citizen Crane's river quality monitoring effort, regularly sampling the Yeading Brook West for invertebrates at Yeading Walk in North Harrow. The new HRG monitoring initiative will complement this effort, and hopefully add to our existing knowledge of water quality in the Crane Valley's headwaters.

The initiative utilises equipment already successfully used by CURB (Clean Up the River Brent) in the lower Brent catchment with funding support from the Environment Agency. One of HRG's aims is to establish a network of remote monitoring stations along the Yeading Brook West stretching from Headstone Manor Park to Roxbourne Park.

But Angelique and Alan have also been looking at potential deployments on the Yeading Brook East in the Rayners Lane area where LB Harrow, Thames Water, the Environment Agency and Harrow Nature Conservation Forum (HNCF) are working collaboratively to address some chronic pollution problems.



Each remote monitoring unit consists of probes, a circuit board, a battery and a SIM card set within a water-proof housing. A separate small solar panel helps to keep the battery charged. Wooden boxes are used to hold the units and their solar panels to stakes deployed in appropriate locations where they are well hidden. Alan and Angelique have themselves been involved in the assembly of the monitoring kits/wooden boxes that will be used on the Yeading Brook.

The probes are able to detect Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and temperature. Sudden increases in TDS and/or temperature can be indicative of pollution so this is useful information. The monitoring units automatically relay all the data they collect to a server, and the readings can then conveniently be looked at on a laptop dashboard display.

Funding for the monitors on the Yeading Brook system has been provided through the Smarter Water Catchments (SWC) initiative. Alan and Angelique hope that the new monitoring network will be up and running by the summer once final calibration checks are completed. They have already been liaising with the Friends of Headstone Manor Park and the Friends of Roxbourne Park to identify suitable deployment locations at those sites.



*Alan and Angelique of Harrow Rivers Group with the monitoring equipment*

## Work with Young People

### Project Leader: Simon Braidman

A total of seven Harrow schools directly benefited from nature activities run by Simon Braidman, Project Leader for WWYP, with help from volunteers.

Simon attended, once again this year, YES FEST, an environmental festival run by West Lodge Primary School Headteacher Jim Dees. Jim Dees has been running the festival since 2022. Each year between 9 and 13 local and not so local primary schools come to the festival where they do a rotation of environmental activities. The event is run by Alex Bell of Portland Education and has been a big success. In the first year the event ran at West Lodge Primary School. Last year the event ran at Harrow School and this year it ran at both Harrow School and West Lodge Primary School. WWYP has attended every year running pond dips and bug hunt activities. The good relationship between us and Jim Dees has meant we got in right at the beginning and are partners with other practitioners in good standing.

Simon also designed and ran a one week's work experience course for a student interested in nature conservation as a career. This was for Joshua W who is doing his A levels. He did 2 site visits one to Stanmore Common and one to Bentley Priory where habitats and management were shown and discussed. On the evening of the second day he went to a Moth trapping session on Stanmore Common run by ecologist Ted Walliker and his girlfriend Simi. He learned brush cutting of Bracken on Stanmore Common and participated in a botany survey of Pinner Recreation Ground Woodmeadow and also looked at the deadwood invertebrates of the site. On Joshua's final day, Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July, he helped at a Newton Park West outreach session. This was organised by Leslie Bolsover working with St. Anselm's School. The school children did litter picking and aquatic invertebrate identification on rotation. The litter picking was run by Casey Dalton and Jo Payne from Harrow Litter Pickers. The water for aquatic invertebrate identification was collected from both Roxbourne Rough and Newton Park West so that the students could compare. Steve Bolsover and Simon ran the identifications. Simon is continuing his support of Joshua sending him information on volunteering opportunities, important textbooks to purchase and Joshua has come to one of the HNCF work parties.

As a result of the St. Anselm's nature visit to Newton Park West, Simon was asked to visit to the school and give advice on how to improve the school grounds for wildlife.

WWYP & HNCf combined to run a Simon Braidman designed Bug Hunt at Harrow School Farm. Leslie, Steve, Simon and 2 lovely volunteers from Harrow School, Jo Payne and Anne helped run sessions for 240 (!) children from 4 different Harrow primary schools: Grange/Cedars/St. John Fisher and St. Bernadette's Primary Schools. We got excellent feedback; we could have been the best thing there! Also present was My Yard, a local food charity, Woodland Adventures Forest School, Ark Animal Farm and West Lodge Primary School. Harrow School are re-launching the farm as an educational resource. This was an event run by the Harrow School in conjunction with Young Harrow Foundation (YHF) a charity which helps to support young people in the borough. The idea of the farm re-launch is an interesting one and it is fantastic to be involved at the inception of the project. Simon will keep in contact with Harrow Farm School planners and organisers.



*Dozens of children and adults attended the all day Bio Blitz on Churchfields in June. During the daylight, insects were caught and ID'd and at night there was a bat walk and a very successful moth trapping event. On the right is a Poplar Grey moth caterpillar found on the underside of a poplar tree leaf on Churchfields.*

## Membership

Membership numbers are static at 54 of which 25 are Lifetime Members. The position of Membership Secretary remains unfilled. Please contact [info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@harrowheritagetrust.org.uk) if you would like to become our Membership Secretary.



## Support from Shree Raj Saubhag UK

Harrow Nature Conservation Forum has recently received both financial and volunteer support from the Shree Raj Saubhag UK, a registered charity and part of the Jain faith community. In December 2024 the group gave us £250 to support our activities and members of the group have regularly come along to working parties at Stanmore Common to help maintain that site.

We thank the Shree Raj Saubhag UK very much for this donation, which we used to:

Buy five good quality secateurs for the warden of Stanmore Country Park to use at his working parties. These have been used at a number of working parties including by a school group from St. Dominic's school on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025.

Buy a blade to convert a Stihl battery powered trimmer into a brush cutter. We use brush cutters all the time to cut long grass and cut back encroaching bramble. The next time that this machine will be used is August 5<sup>th</sup> 2025 at Lady Gilbert's Orchard, to cut back the bramble around the old fruit trees.

Buy a standard solution to check the calibration of our six ammonia colourimeters. These colourimeters are used by volunteers all over Harrow to test the pollution levels in local rivers.



*Volunteers Julia F. and Mahesh R. do Ammonia testing on a Yeading Brook East water sample.*



*Marian R. and Neil M. using the Stihl brushcutters on Stanmore Country Park.*

## **Harrow Nature Conservation Forum**

### **Chair: Stephen Bolsover**

A quick roundup of news from our sites...

#### **Bentley Old Vicarage**

The Forest School on the site continues to serve Harrow's children. Meanwhile Jane Skelly, the warden, is trying to organize repair of the pond dipping platform, which is at present closed for safety reasons. She has quotes for the work and has spoken to the Northwick Park Rotary Club about possible financial support towards the cost.

#### **Bentley Priory**

The wardens have put in a lot of work clearing rhododendron around Summerhouse Lake to allow light into the shallow water and promote the growth of marginal vegetation. Bramble on the species-rich grassland has been cut by tractor or, in the case of Aylmer Meadow which is inaccessible to tractors, by volunteers using brushcutters.

#### **Headstone Manor Copse**

Volunteers have cleared masses of laurel to open up the woodland and encourage the growth of woodland floor flowers. A website describing the site is now active – follow the link from our homepage at [harrowcnf.org](http://harrowcnf.org).

#### **Newton Farm Ecology Park**

A winter tree walk at the end of January 2025 was well attended and included many new faces. Volunteers have done many tasks including pruning an old apple tree – a thank you to the experts from Lady Gilbert's Orchard, Charlotte Lippitt and Hilary Coombes, who came and helped.

#### **Old Redding Nature Reserve**

In April 2025 Lady Gilbert's Orchard held a very successful Blossom Afternoon with lots of stalls in the orchard near the Grims Dyke hotel. The orchard was looking absolutely splendid with plenty of blossom, numerous bluebells, wood anemones and other wildflowers. Several people expressed interest in future events and possibly conservation days.

#### **Pear Wood**

This has been an excellent year for bluebells in Pear Wood with many people commenting that it has been the best year yet. The bluebells are spreading into areas of the reserve as volunteers continue to clear & push back the holly. Claire Abbott and Rosemary Etheridge hosted a couple of small guided tours of the bluebells.

**Roxbourne Rough**

Bolton's Pande, the pond created specifically as a dog-free alternative to the site's original western pond, is now eight years old. It is very healthy, full of efts (baby newts) and terrifying dragonfly nymphs; but it is also full of vegetation with, in dry weather, very little visible water. Volunteers are going to work on clearing it out on Sunday August 10<sup>th</sup> 2025.

**Stanmore Common**

The environmental contractor Sherriff has completed a major project, funded by the Mayor of London's Rewild London fund, to create a second area of open heathland north of the existing Bluebell Heath. At the moment the clearing is bare but heather and other heathland plants will soon colonize the ground.

**Stanmore Country Park**

In April 2025 volunteers cleared an enormous amount of rubbish, much of it very old, from the extreme east of the site adjoining the old golf range. We moved the stuff to the top of Cleopatra Close, where it was picked up by Harrow Council's Green Team – a thank you to them! Meanwhile the chief volunteer warden, Nik Jackson, is now better equipped to manage the site having completed an on line course in Woodland Management for Biodiversity run by Ecology Training UK.

**Stanmore Little Common**

We are sad to report that the small wildflower area, created in 2022, has been abandoned. An increasing proportion of the local residents disliked this area and we regretfully went along with the Council's decision this spring to return it to close-cropped species-poor amenity grassland. This shows the importance of communicating with all the community and making sure that one is not only in contact with those who think the same way as oneself.

**Stanmore Marsh**

Volunteers have cut into the bund along the west side of the site to create areas of bare soil that we hope will be colonized by solitary bees. Bramble has been cut back along the edge of the north wood to encourage the growth of wild flowers.

**Sylvia Avenue Open Space**

Harrow Council's Green Grid project has approved funding for an information panel about the site. One of the volunteers at the site, Ann Lumley, who works as a designer at the British Museum, is creating the artwork.



## Wood Farm

The neverending saga of the sewage treatment system for the Wood Farm Close housing development continues. Marian Rastelli has managed to establish contact with people at PBM property management, and reports that the pipes have been reamed out and the pond smells better than it has recently. However there is no sign of the brick enclosure for the waste pipe's outflow into the pond, required in the original 2015 agreement between the developers and Harrow Council, and reconfirmed at a meeting between council officials and PBM management in 2022, being built.



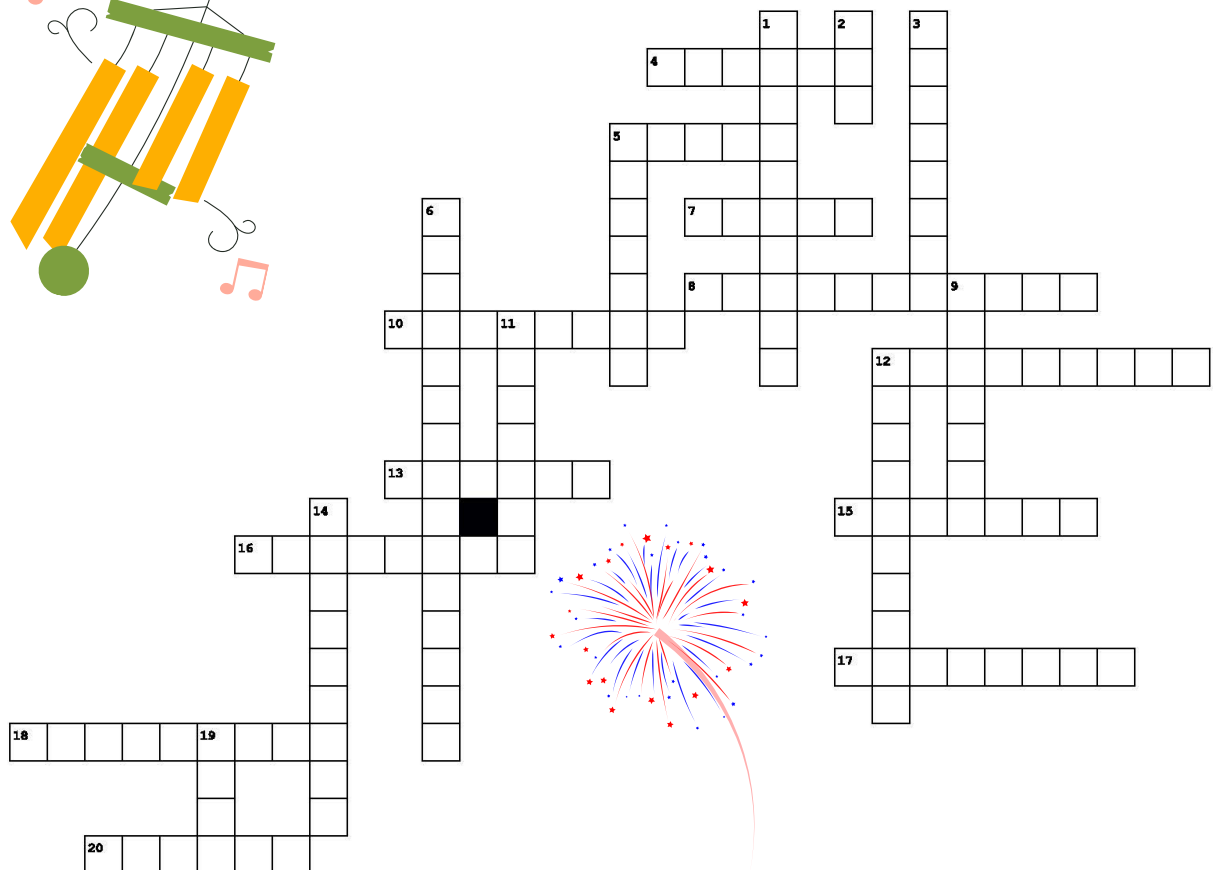
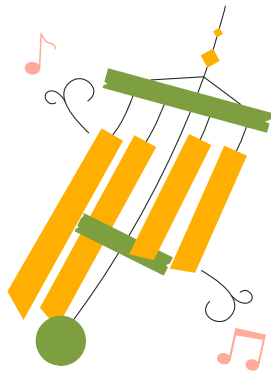
*Corporate Work Days continue to be an important and valuable volunteer contribution to HNCF sites. Here, employees of RBC help to rake cut bramble at Bentley Priory Nature Reserve.*

*Virgin Media do their bit for raking up cut bramble at Bentley Priory! So far this financial year, support from corporate groups has resulted in £425 in donations to Harrow Heritage Trust.*





## Summertime



### Across

4. Noisy Mediterranean insect
5. "Dampish" summer weather
7. Tree? beside the ocean
8. What people wear in water
10. Cold summer treat made from cream
12. People hang these in their homes
13. Walking through nature
15. A round throwing disc
16. Activity people do in water
17. Cold summer treat made from frozen juice
18. A popular summer flower
20. Eating a meal outside

### Down

1. House made from sand
2. A way to keep us cool
3. Doing nothing
5. Day(s) off
6. A machine to keep us cool
9. Summer footwear
11. Sleeping outdoors
12. Large green fruit
14. Noisy lightshow
19. Portent of winter

