

KING HENRY'S WALK GARDEN

newsletter

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Welcome

to the first King Henry's
Walk Garden Newsletter



Our members are a valuable part of a valuable project. The idea behind the newsletter is to help you get in touch – and keep in touch – with what's going on in the Garden throughout the year.

Here we are at the start of the second growing season of the Garden, with lots of ongoing and new projects to get our teeth into. Since its birth the Garden has gone from strength to strength; people from all over the community have come together and got involved, building an urban oasis of both beauty and productivity. Besides the hard work and great achievements of individual ploholders, the pond has been re-built, communal areas planted and the lawn laid. There's been a Turkish BBQ and a Summer Fête—which proved a huge success and put the Garden firmly on the map, outreach projects to help tie in the patchwork of diverse local communities, the establishment of an Art Club on the



Summer Fête - lucky with the weather

If you have ideas, thoughts, comments or suggestions about the direction of the Garden, we want to hear from you. We are a community garden and a community of gardeners. Whether it's workday volunteering, a bit of know-how or a vision of what you want to see happen, we would all appreciate your involvement.

site, and much, much more besides.

We ask for 16 hours of volunteering from each member per year, but this is just a guideline – don't feel you have to stop when you get to 16 hours! So far you've helped not just with open afternoons, events and workdays, but also with filling in award application forms, graphic design, sewing, and donating expertise in skills like tree surgery and landscape architecture.

This opening issue of the newsletter

outlines some of the ideas already in hand – we take a look at ways of building community cohesion with Time-bank, plans for fundraising, the latest developments with the woodland and the pond, the Garden Classroom initiative and some Top Tips...

Gardening isn't just about plants at KHVG – it's about people who want to see their community grow ...



Community Champions from Newham helping to pot up daffs in November. KHVG has been busy networking with community projects across London

News from the committee

At the time of writing we're still waiting for our application for the Friends of King Henry's Walk Garden to become a registered charity to go through. It has taken much longer than expected as our initial application got lost in the system, but we're hoping it will be finalised soon. This will widen the range of funding sources available to us and allow us to claim GiftAid on donations. Also outstanding is our appeal against demands for business rates totalling over

£15,000 for our first 15 months' occupation of the site! We think the site should be zero-rated as it's run for charitable purposes by a not-for-profit organisation, and have lodged an appeal with the Inland Revenue's Valuation Office.

One piece of good news is that Islington Council Executive voted unanimously in January to award King Henry's Walk Garden a 50-year lease at a peppercorn rent. Now the work of thrashing out the terms of the lease begins!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SPRINGTIME EVENT

SATURDAY 25 APRIL 2009

This fun-filled day in the outdoors promises to be popular, and it's free!

All day – Plant Stall

A chance to stock up for Spring planting

10.30–1.30 Zoofari Animals

An exciting mobile zoo will introduce you to skunks, owls, meerkats and other creatures. Get close to animals and learn about wildlife conservation.

11.00–1.00 Singer Eric Maddern

What the Bee Knows: Songs and Stories to Restore & Sustain the World

12.00–1.00 Lunch

1.00–3.00 Wildlife and gardening workshops

Drop in for practical fun for the whole family

Provided by The Garden Classroom

BOTANICAL DRAWING WORKSHOP WEEKEND

23 & 24 MAY 10.00 – 4.00

Botanical artist Jane Goodson has been replaced by Sally Pinhey (www.sallypinhey.com) to deliver the botanical workshop weekend. Sally, who is also an award-winning artist, is one of the best known botanical drawing teachers in the country and we are very lucky to have her on board!

We still have some places available and it is only £35 so please email rsvp@khwgarden.org.uk to reserve a place and follow up with £5 deposit to secure your place. There will be a maximum of 15 people.

Please bring warm clothing and a jam jar. Lunch and refreshments provided. Please call Marnie Rose on 07974 353148 if you have any specific requirements or needs and we will do our best to accommodate.

OPEN GARDEN SQUARES WEEKEND

13 & 14 JUNE, 10.00–17.00

Refreshments provided, all welcome. Summer Fête on Saturday afternoon.

High interest rates – and great returns – at the time bank



Ruth Crater

By Paul Tabram

What's Time Bank? you ask. A 'deliciously messy' way to get people working together. That's how Peter Roberts, broker of the Mildmay Time Bank, describes the community-building project he's involved in. Outreaching throughout NI, across London and the country, time banks are schemes that set out to bring people together, pooling their time, skills and knowledge, helping each other out and building community cohesion.

The idea is simple. Time is the currency. Let's say you have some know-how – gardening perhaps – and some don't-know-how – you want to learn the guitar. You invest an hour of your time working with someone who wants horticultural help, and withdraw from the bank by getting an hour's lesson from the Flamenco player who's signed up at the website.

It works. Nationally the movement is celebrating its 10th anniversary, and Peter's had the local branch running since 2003. 'It's all about cohesion,' says Peter. 'People getting together to share their skills, any skills at all.' The six time banks in Islington currently have around 500 members on their books. 'The hope is people come along and get involved. We don't push people.'

Mildmay Time Bank has a plot at KHWG with members coming in to maintain it, and they've run a cycle maintenance workshop at the Garden. The organisation has also put up half

the funding for the Micro Food Farm on the site.

Peter, a plotholder himself with partner Rosie Norton, says 'KHWG is a group of people with a vision coming together'. He believes the Micro Food Farm will help broaden the profile of the Garden. 'It's an interesting way for people to learn,' he says 'and makes gardening accessible to older people and to children. I just want to encourage people to grow their own food, get interested in food.'

With projects running across Islington, Time Banks are bringing people, talents and communities together, and have made a real impact. As Peter points out: 'It stops loneliness and it stops waste.'

By registering yourself as a Time Bank volunteer, the hours you put into KHWG workdays can earn you credit in the scheme. So if your lifelong urge to strum and twang Flamenco licks is yet unfulfilled, or you need an accountant to help you through the sturm und drang of the credit crunch, a couple of hours in the garden could put you on the right path - in this day and age it's got to be good to get credit without the crunch.

If you want to contribute some skills and time – or help out with the Mildmay Time Bank's plot – and get something back in return, you can contact Peter on 020 7249 5373 or by email at mildmaytimebank@btconnect.com. For more information about Time Banking, visit the website at www.timebanking.org.uk.

 **KHWG ONLY RUNS ON VOLUNTEER POWER: MAKE YOURS COUNT**

Woodland update

We're delighted to announce that the Forestry Commission has awarded us a grant of £5000 to regenerate the woodland, the first time they've given a grant to any project in Islington. Access to the woodland has been restricted until now for safety reasons, so the work will make this area more accessible, remove any dead or dangerous trees, and will involve planting many more trees to improve biodiversity and increase its value as a haven for wildlife.

In the past few weeks, over 600 hours of volunteer work have been carried out, much of it quite heavy going due to the amount of rubble in the ground, and we're very grateful to everyone who's pitched in to lend a hand. Special mention must go to Balfour Beatty - Carillion, JV who provided us with teams of about a dozen workers for two days whose muscle power made a tremendous impact on the work. Thanks also to local firm MBA IT Ltd who gave up a couple of hours one lunchtime to come and lend a hand with the digging!

17 trees have been taken out, and 37 new trees planted. A hedge of 600 native trees has been planted round the edge of the woodland, and a woodchip path laid to make access easier. At the end of March we're looking forward to the arrival of a couple of beehives in the woodland. Further work will be carried out on the woodland in 5 and 10 years' time to stagger the disruption caused by the improvements.



New trees awaiting planting. They include field maple, birches, hornbeam, oaks and rowan

Fundraising

Rosey Lyall, committee member, has an idea for a potential source of funding

Will your employer support KHVG? Did you know that most employers have a community responsibility policy? This means that the directors have agreed that they should support charities and this may be in the form of national charities or they may support the community in which they are based. More importantly lots of businesses have a commitment to support the charities in which their employees are interested. Sometimes they'll match funding – so if you raise £200 with a cake stall at the summer fete they'll match it with £200; sometimes they'll match time – so if you give up two days a year to work at the garden (which you all do!) they'll give you two days back; sometimes they'll donate goods

or services they provide as raffle or auction prizes and sometimes they'll just make a cash donation for an item the garden needs. Shops, banks and building societies (get in quick!) and professional service providers are all great supporters of their employees' charity work. If you are employed, please ask your personnel or human resources department what they do to support employees' charity work. If you get a positive response I'm happy to help with applications. [Contact me on ryall@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ryall@blueyonder.co.uk) Now's a good time to try, so they can spend any money they have left in their budgets before the end of this financial year. ... Give them a call and let me know how you get on.

Confused about fertilisers?

First...what are they? Easy...stuff to make things grow better, like horse poo. Well, no. That's a soil conditioner, which helps your soil form a nice crumb. Actually, fertilisers don't affect soil structure. There are two types of fertiliser: organic, animal-sourced (blood, hooves, bone – the yucky stuff) which work slowly, and inorganic, minerals and synthetics e.g. Tomorite; these work faster.

APPLICATION Top-dressing for faster fertilisers; apply in spring round growing plants. Base-dressing – actually getting fertiliser into the soil before sowing and planting. Water-on fertilisers – diluted concentrate watered into roots during growing season (good for greenhouse, pot and bedding plants). Foliar-feed – diluted solution applied directly onto leaves (good in emergencies if nutrients are low). Controlled-release – coated inorganic to release nutrients slowly for up to 18 months. Granular for compost or cartridge form for potted plants.

The Garden Classroom: a new social enterprise

By Marnie Rose

The Garden Classroom is a new Islington social enterprise set up to run imaginative gardening, wildlife, science and environmental workshops and events.

Initially for children age 3-11 the aim long term is to expand the service to other age and community groups. We are currently in the middle of a pilot involving three local primary schools and a children's centre at King Henry's Walk Garden. The aim is to extend activities to other organisations using other community gardens and green spaces (and on site at schools using their own outside spaces), in Islington in 2009. Teacher feedback so far includes: "The session was very educational and lots of fun" and "The children are thrilled with their bulbs and bird feeders. Thank you".

Each two hour session takes groups of children through either the basic principles of gardening or an insight into the world of wildlife. Through demonstrations, practical activities and creative games, experienced and enthusiastic workshop facilitators encourage interest in our natural environment and the scientific world.

When working with schools, each session will link to the relevant

"Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances." Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto.

The pond

You may have wondered if the pond is ever going to be finished ...

Following the identification of flaws with the initial design and construction of the pond, work was carried out last autumn to reshape it. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this back-breaking job. The concrete lining then has to dry out for 6 weeks, and despite the tarpaulins covering the pond, rain has been seeping in over the winter which has delayed this process. Once the concrete has dried out properly, it needs to be coated with waterproof sealant which stabilises the concrete. This then needs to dry for a further 2 weeks, and it's only then that we can fill the pond with water and start planting. Hopefully as the weather improves we'll be able to get this done and have the pond filled and planted up this spring.



"I feel passionately about what King Henry's Walk Garden can bring to an urban community such as Mildmay. Growing plants and holding events in a community garden brings together the local population encouraging people to share and talk to each other in a beautiful setting. Our pocket of Mildmay has been identified as one of the 'most deprived' parts of the ward and I think it is a valuable resource to everyone who engages with the garden and what it has to offer. I make KHWG a top priority for our family and am committed to finding a considerable amount of time to work on the garden. My husband Richard Rose and I have been involved with the project from its conception and have a strong sense of belonging to it"

Marnie Rose

curriculum (Key Stage 2 / International Primary Curriculum) aiming to reinforce and compliment the work of the classroom teacher. We ask for feedback so that the teachers are able to evaluate at the end of each session and create evidence of the learning outcomes more easily. All sessions are held whatever the weather with a 48 hour cancellation policy. We also encourage groups to walk to the garden classrooms

as much as possible.

Conservationist Professor David Bellamy says about The Garden Classroom: "Wow! Little Green Corners and Little Green Fingers come together in Islington's Garden Classrooms. What a fantastic backdrop for active healthful living and learning in the leafy glades of London N1".

☀ For further information or to book a series of workshops or talk to us about an event, please contact Marnie Rose, 07974 353148. marnierose@btinternet.com www.thegardenclassroom.org.uk


KING HENRY'S WALK
garden

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