

Brent Island Trust

Newsletter, October 2022



A Message from Graham

Dear Members,

We are now really into Autumn and although a lot of trees are starting to turn colour, most still retain their leaves, at least until the next strong wind or gale! In the meantime, please visit The Island to see the trees in all their glory.

We have recently replaced (at last) the bench that stood near the fallen “Elephant” Beech tree, with three new benches (see below) and we hope they will last for many years and provide a place for rest and contemplation. They are fairly close together and will allow larger groups to meet in comfort.

Although I personally can't start to think about Christmas, I must remind you that we will be holding our traditional, annual Christmas Stall event outside the Village Shop on Saturday, 3rd December. This is our biggest fund raising event of the year so please do come along on the day to test your luck with the tombola, buy goods and cakes or even to take part in the carol singing. The Mare and Foal shop will have a box from mid-November to accept your donations for the Tombola. I hope to see many of you then, but in the meantime, best wishes and good health to you all.

Graham Royle (Chair)

One Becomes Three

As Graham mentions above, we've now replaced the single bench near the fallen 'Elephant' tree with three larger ones. Some of the wood was kindly donated by Mavis Hewitt while the larch is locally sourced from Hillyfield Woodland Farm near Harbourneford and so the benches should last for many years to come. Thanks to Bridie, Felicity, Graham, John & Phil for their efforts. And, of course, official photographer and coffee provider, Guy.



Three balding heads are better than one



The installation team



The finished result

Meadow Update

Thanks to John Severn for, once again, bringing his tractor onto The Island to cut the meadow. This year the central section has been left uncut. This is part of the management plan to leave one area to grow for 2 to 3 years in rotation which allows wild flowers to develop.



Once cut, it's important to rake up the mown grass to prevent it enriching the meadow to the detriment of wild flowers. One Saturday morning in late October the autumn working party, armed with an assortment of rakes, set to work to do just that – and then to put the grass into a small number of mounds around the periphery of the meadow.

There were ten of us this year and other tasks accomplished included stabilising the granite column near the gate, cutting back growth beside the paths all the way around The Island and cleaning signs on the gate. And not forgetting the critical task of providing the industrious team with coffee and biscuits. One major outstanding task is to scallop the bramble growth around the edge of the meadow. This is to stop it encroaching too far and also to create a valuable habitat for wildlife of many sorts – reptiles, mammals, invertebrates, birds. To address this we may decide to hold a second autumn working party or leave it until early next year.

Thanks to Felicity, Geraldine, Graham, Guy, John, Mavis, Phil, Ted, Tim and Tony for their hard work.

Christmas Stall

On Saturday, 3rd December from 10am we will be taking up our regular spot outside the Village Shop for our Christmas stall. Featuring a tombola, cakes and the dulcet tones of carol singers we look forward to meeting you. If you would like to contribute to the stall we will have a box in the Mare and Foal charity shop for you to leave tombola prizes from 17th November and cakes can be brought to the stall on the day or contact Graham (details at the end of this newsletter). Please do drop by to say hello to us.



Last year's stall



Ron Akehurst

We sadly report the death of former town crier Ron Akehurst who was a long-standing member of Brent Island Trust. To quote him from the October 2006 Parish Newsletter "A question often asked - why do you do it? I also answer because I enjoy it and the role is historic."

This photo of Ron is borrowed from the South Brent Community Group Facebook page

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