

# Brent Island Trust

## Newsletter, June 2022



## A Message from Graham

**Dear Members,**

Welcome to our June 2022 newsletter and I hope that as many of you as possible are enjoying the benefits of having The Island on our doorsteps to explore, walk and relax as Summer is bringing out the best in the trees, shrubs and the wildflowers beginning to show in the meadow areas.

We have recently had successful events on The Island; the Easter Egg trail which attracted large numbers of young families and a working party to attend to various maintenance tasks. Thanks to all who helped, joined in or attended! Many of you will be aware that there is to be a big event "Fair For South Brent" organised by Sustainable South Brent, to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> July at Palstone Recreation field. Brent Island Trust will be having a stall there to help promote interest in The Island and hopefully generate some new members too! Our stall will also be hosting Brent Birders with contributions from Brent moths and the Avon Valley Project. Please feel free to come along on the day for a chat, or to exchange memories or comments about your Island experiences! Photographs are also always welcome and, if permitted, can be added to our archive records.

Finally an upcoming date for our AGM on 21<sup>st</sup> June, see below. Yes, I know it was only last held in October, but we are reverting to our normal calendar of events following the COVID disruption! I hope to see many of you there.

**Best wishes, Graham Royle. (Chair)**

## Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be in the Stansbury Room of the Village Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 21st June. This will give you the opportunity elect the committee for this financial year, to ask any questions and also to listen to our guest speaker, Tim Ferry who many of you will know. His talk will be "**Nature Recovery on Dartmoor**" and will give us both the good and bad news about efforts to reverse nature's decline on Dartmoor. As usual we'll be serving refreshments in the form of cheese, wine and soft drinks.

## Wild Water Swimming

The river surrounding the island is regularly used for wild swimming by a number of local residents. Many have been doing this all year round, not just during the warmer times! Cold water swimming and its health benefits are very much being publicised at the moment - great to see it happening at The Island.



## Working Party

This year's spring working party was on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April. Seven willing volunteers tackled many tasks ranging from ritual bracken bashing to updating the committee sign in the linhay and planting a walnut tree (see photo). Thank you to all who came along.



### Bracken Bashing

And while on the subject of bracken, many of you will have spotted that bracken is encroaching further and yet further into the meadow at the lower end of The Island. We do try to tackle it during our two working parties each year, but it really needs a war of attrition to reverse its expansive trend. When you visit The Island, if you happen to pass by a stem of bracken do feel free to crunch it underfoot. They really object to this treatment unlike simply cutting the stems which they just shrug off and come back with renewed vigour. Here is a photograph to show what it looks like. Ferns can look remarkably similar, but we wouldn't want those to be destroyed!



### Easter Egg Trail

The weather was truly kind to us on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April to help make a success of our Easter Egg Trail a success after an enforced absence of two years due to COVID. All but 14 of the 120 Easter eggs were claimed as youngsters hunted for clues and sorted the resulting anagram. They also had the option of a basket of fruit instead of a chocolate egg. Those 14 eggs have now been sold through the Village Shop – thanks to Rob and Donna for their support. Thank you to all who visited The Island.



## Projects in the Planning

You've probably noticed that the path leading from the gate to the bridge is becoming increasingly wet and muddy. Not so long ago we had the bank of the leat repaired to prevent leakage and so it's unclear precisely where the water is coming from. In any case we're planning to put a soak-away under the path where the water emerges which should solve the problem.

Other up and coming projects include replacing not just the one broken bench near the old, fallen 'elephant' beech tree but also adding a further two. This will give groups who amble down to The Island a place to relax and chat. Perhaps not so obvious is the garage at the top of the lane which a kind local person lets us use to store tools for work on The Island. The hinges on the right-hand door are broken and need repair.

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