

## **Eastcote Village Conservation Area Advisory Panel/Friends of Eastcote House Gardens.**

### **Review of the Year 2010.**

December 2010.

2009 was a very successful year, at the beginning of the 2010 I wondered ‘ how do we beat that’ ..... well we did, so many groups and individuals working together have made a difference not only to Eastcote House Gardens but to many other areas in Eastcote.

Sadly, Eastcote has lost two dedicated conservationists,

**Norman Dann**, who had served on the Conservation Panel for many years, passed away in May.

**Sheila Liberty**, former Conservation Panel Chairman, who dedicated 50 years to keeping Eastcote a beautiful place to live, including saving the Walled Garden at Eastcote House Gardens from demolition, passed away in October. Sheila laid the foundations for us to build on today.

### **Hinman Shield.**

The Shield was awarded to the **5<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Cubs**, St. Andrews United Reformed Church, Rushdene Road, Eastcote, in June. The Cubs took part in the 2009 Community Day, clearing and Bulb planting on the banks of the Pinn.

This year many Schools and Uniformed Groups have taken part in activities in Eastcote, it is hoped that in 2011 many more projects will be available for our young people.

**Newnham Junior School Gardening Club** goes from strength to strength. **Field End Infants School** garden project is almost complete. It has an outdoor classroom, and the Children have been able to grow and eat their own produce.

This year the Hinman Shield was sponsored by an anonymous donor. Next year the Shield will be sponsored by **Forget Me Not**, Field End Road, Eastcote.

### **Warrender Park/Highgrove Woods.**

Warrender Park was awarded a **Green Flag** for the second year running. The Friends Group held a successful Flag raising and consultation Picnic in September, to assess the residents ‘wants’ for the park.

The re-development of Highgrove House is causing some ecological problems, which are being monitored by Ian Thynne LBH.

The Highgrove Woods Volunteers, meet regularly, as does the River Pinn Volunteers, currently without their LBH Officer **Dragana Knezevic**, who is on maternity leave.

Dragana is now the proud Mum of a baby boy, Lenny, brother to Maya. Our warmest Congratulations to Dragana and family. Damien Searle is standing in for Dragana.

### **Bessingby and Cavendish Parks.**

The Friends Group goes from strength to strength. Holding regular Litter Picks, and a highly successful Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Monday 2010. The EEH was so well attended an emergency dash to buy more Easter Eggs was needed.

A Play Builder Scheme and the Changing Rooms have been installed, and other improvements are in the pipeline.

### **Eastcote Village and Town.**

The Chrysalis bid for the enhancement of the parapet of the Pinn Bridge High Road Eastcote, was successful. The new parapet should be installed early in 2011.

**Graham Pellow** Chairman of Eastcote Arts Society, designed [without charge] a new sign for Forge Green. Graham unveiled the new sign in May, afterwards, refreshments were served in the Walled garden, Eastcote House Gardens. The previous sign had been painted by Sheila Liberty, but after nearly thirty years had weathered beyond repair. Sheila's Grand daughter will restore the sign, and it can then be displayed indoors.

May also saw the General Election, and Eastcote further divided, as well as being spread over three wards, we now have two MPs. John Randall MP is now responsible for the part of Eastcote in Cavendish Ward, Nick Hurd is still MP for the rest of Eastcote. John Randall being conscious of the division of Eastcote, has arranged in conjunction with LBH for 'Welcome to Eastcote' signs to be installed.

As part of the Borough wide programme **Eastcote's War Memorial** was renovated and re-dedicated in June.

New seats, Notice boards and Litter bins have been installed, from the Ward Councillors 2009 fund.

The bulbs planted earlier in the year [ from the WCF] cheered up Tudor Lodge Corner, Pretty Corner, vehicular entrance to EHG and Chapel Hill this spring.

The information board for Pretty Corner should be installed early in 2011.

All of Cheney Street, one of Eastcote's oldest roads, has now been included into the Eastcote Village Conservation Area.

The proposals put forward by **Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society** for Locally Listed Buildings were accepted, also Field End Schools and Venue 5 [formerly the Clay Pigeon] and The Manor were also locally listed. Thanks to Narita Chakraborty LBH .

**St. Andrews Untied Reformed Church** hosted a very successful evening ' Our Eastcote' in June. It was standing room only! Presentations were given by Susan Toms, Secretary of RN&ELHS, Chris Groom, Chairman Eastcote Residents Association, Lesley Crowcroft Chairman Eastcote Village Conservation Area Advisory Panel. Cllr. Catherine Dann and Nick Hurd MP also addressed the audience. Refreshments were served afterwards.

### **Eastcote Community Volunteer Day. Oct 31<sup>st</sup>.**

Last year we happily sloshed around in the mud on the banks of the Pinn. This year, not only was there plenty of mud, there was continual rain as well!

This did not deter the 44 stalwart volunteers, including **Nick Hurd and his daughter Katie, 4th Eastcote Wednesday Beavers, 5<sup>th</sup> Eastcote & 6<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Cubs** plus **Cllrs. David Payne & Ray Graham** from having a happy time. 5000 bulbs were planted in the Walled Garden, sponsor The Big Lottery Fund, 500 bulbs on the Rockery sponsor Taylor Wimpey, 2000 crocus at Forge Green sponsor Eastcote Residents Association. Some bulbs were kept back, these were planted by groups from **Newnham Junior School, Field End Infants School and Coteford Infants School**. Who visited the gardens during the following two weeks.

### **Eastcote House Gardens.**

The Gardens have been the busiest place of all.

- The 'Friends' gardeners meet every month,[what ever the weather] at times more than once a month to bring the Walled Garden, the Orchard and other areas in the Gardens to a high standard. Some volunteers, namely Peter Saunders, Linda Furnell, Keith Barnard, Jane Neave, Rosemary Bucksey have worked tirelessly in the Gardens. The 'Friends' have been supported by LBH officers, Damien Searle, Dragana Knezevic and the Park Rangers, often giving up their free time to help us.
- The Steering Group set up to produce a Conservation Management Plan for the Restoration of the Grade II listed buildings, met frequently and the plan was approved by the LBH Cabinet in September. Funding was also approved for emergency repairs to the buildings. A bid will now be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund and other bodies for the funding to restore these historic buildings. Our thanks go to Charmian Baker & Sarah Harper LBH for their work on this project.
- **JANUARY**, the 'Friends' promoted the Gardens and Conservation generally, at a Streets Ahead Fair in Northwood. The Mayor of Hillingdon Cllr. Shirley Harper O'Neill visited a gardening session as part of Streets Ahead Week. The EHG Management plan was completed and an entry for Green Flag status was made.
- **MARCH** Drop in Sessions were held at EHG for the Conservation Management Plan [CMP] consultations, many 'Friends' gave up their time that weekend to act as stewards.
- **MARCH** In conjunction with Dragana & Damien a led walk was organized starting and finishing at EHG. Volunteers gave short talks on places of interest passed, to and from Ruislip.[ There are a great many places of interest between Eastcote & Ruislip, we only covered a few]
- **APRIL** was a hectic month, **1st** April the Rockery was replanted, funded by Taylor Wimpey and the plants sourced by Haste Hill Nurseries. **10<sup>th</sup>** In conjunction with **Eastcote Horticultural Society** 1500 native English Bluebells[funded by an anonymous donor] were planted in the wooded areas near

the Pinn, also, some clearing and planting on the outside of the garden walls. **15<sup>th</sup>** The Herb beds were replanted. **25<sup>th</sup>** a Community volunteer day, 47 volunteers planted 1813 plants in the L-shaped borders. **30<sup>th</sup>** Field End Infants School helped with planting in the Walled Garden.

- **MAY.** Still as busy. **5<sup>th</sup>** Newnham Junior School visited for a planting session. **10<sup>th</sup>** The gardens were judged for a Green Flag. Regrettably it was not awarded, we will try again in 2011. **11<sup>th</sup>** Coteford Infants School planting session.
- **JUNE.** Hillingdon hosted the International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration Conference, EHG was part of their tour.
- **JULY. A crazy month.** **7<sup>th</sup>** A visit by 4<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Beavers, for history and ecology. **13<sup>th</sup>** EHG was judged as part of the Hillingdon entry for London Bloom. **15<sup>th</sup>** Again we were judged for 'It's your Community' part of the London in Bloom programme. We were awarded the highest ward for achievement. **16<sup>th</sup>** 4<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Scouts helped litter pick, so that the Gardens were perfect for the Celebration Picnic on the **17<sup>th</sup>**. The Celebration Picnic to formally open the newly re-planted Walled garden was a fantastic success. Cllr. David Yarrow, Mayor of Hillingdon unveiled a commemorative plaque, and Nick Hurd MP presented certificates to the three schools involved in the re-planting. John Randall MP, Eastcote Councillors and many Hillingdon Councillors attended to wish us well. The St. Lawrence Players performed an updated version of the Eastcote Mummers play, many other groups and local organizations took part. The event was generously supported by the Eastcote Business Association and Eastcote Residents Association. **20<sup>th</sup>** Our dedicated Green Spaces Officer Damien Searle was elected Employee of the Year 2010.
- **September. 6<sup>th</sup>** We were visited by park managers from the Norwegian City of Sandnes, one of their members had visited with the IFPRAC in June, and was so impressed she brought all her team to visit. They all found the concept of 'Volunteers' unusual! **19<sup>th</sup>** London Open House Weekend, again was very busy, with visitors eager to see inside the Stables and Dovecote.
- During September & October, Coteford Infants School held a 'Local history' fortnight, part of their programme was to visit EHG.
- **October/November** The Community Volunteers Day, Schools visits for bulb planting. Extra bulbs sent from ex-Eastcotians in Cornwall were planted. **16<sup>th</sup>** The Friends attended the Streets Ahead Fair at Manor Farm to promote EHG. **22<sup>nd</sup>** the gardens were mulched and put to bed for the Winter, helped by the Blue Sky Team, and Damien of course. The Mayor of Hillingdon attended this session as part of Streets Ahead Week. Jon Gurr Tree Officer LBH came to give training in coppicing and tree work. A delegation from the Friends attended City Hall to receive the It's Your Community Award, presented by Richard Barnes Deputy Mayor of London.
- **December. 4<sup>th</sup>** The Friends had a stall at the Eastcote Christmas Fair, promoting the Gardens and selling EHG calendars. In conjunction with the Eastcote Business Association, the Conservation panel organized a Christmas Card Competition for the Schools, Graham Pellow judged the entries, and Coteford School gave a seasonal performance of Carols.

A very busy and successful year. So many people gave freely of their skills, expertise, advise and time, so THANK YOU TO:-

Eastcote Conservation Panel, Eastcote Residents Association, Eastcote Park Estate RA. Ruislip RA. Northwood Hills RA, South Ruislip RA, Eastcote Horticultural Soc., Eastcote Arts Soc., St. Lawrence Players, Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Soc., Harrow & Hillingdon Geological Soc., Newnham Junior School, Coteford Infants School, Field End Infants School, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Uniformed Groups, St. Andrews United Reformed Church, Methodist Church Pamela Gardens, St. Lawrence Church, Eastcote Tennis Club, Eastcote Cricket Club, Highgrove Woods Volunteers, River Pinn Volunteers, Friends of Warrender Park & Highgrove Woods, Friends of Bessingby & Cavendish parks, Yeading Brook Working Party, Eastcote British Legion, Eastcote Councillors:- Catherine Dann, Bruce Baker, David Payne, Michael White, Eddie Lavery, Ray Graham, Andrew Retter, John Morgan, Jonathan Bianco. Eastcote MPs Nick Hurd, John Randall, Ray Puddifoot, Leader of the Council, Cllr. Scott Seaman-Digby, Cllr. David Routledge and many other Hillingdon Councillors, Richard Barnes Deputy Mayor of London, Jess & Graham Lee Hillingdon Green Print, Haste Hill Nurseries, Eastcote Business Ass., James Cracknell & Chris Longhurst of the Gazette, The Eastcote local team, The Blue Sky Team, Enterprise, Hillingdon Officers:- Damien Searle, Dragana Knezevic, Jon Gurr, Stuart Hunt, Paul Richards, Park Rangers, Alison Shipley, Carys Walker, Charmian Baker, Sarah Harper, Narita Chakraborty, Ian Thynne, Trevor Heaps, John Lawson, Lyn Summers. The **many. many residents** past and present who help, even from a distance, BUT most of all to the 'Friends of Eastcote House Gardens' a Garden could not have better Friends!

2011 will bring many challenges, we can look at the proposed cuts and sink into gloom and despair, or we can be determined and continue to make things happen. I chose the latter course, together we can achieve many fantastic things and at the end of 2011 another successful review of the year will be written.

I wish you all the three H's for 2011

Be Happy. Be Healthy and work Hard for Eastcote

Lesley

Lesley Crowcroft  
Chairman EVCAAP/FEHG.

