

Life and Death in Hampstead Project

Newsletter – December 2009



Welcome to the first edition of the 'Life and Death in Hampstead' project newsletter.

Hampstead Parish Churchyard will be given a top to toe makeover thanks to a grant of £324,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project started in July 2009 and is being delivered by Camden Council in partnership with Hampstead Parish Church.

The improvements to this picturesque churchyard will include new footpaths and restoration work to its gravestones. The site has been open to the community with a variety of exciting events, including practical conservation sessions and wildlife walks.

Conservation work: The Churchyard was identified by the London Ecology Unit as being of Borough Grade 1 Importance for Nature Conservation.

Conservation work is taking place in accordance with the site's management plan to ensure that the valuable and unique habitats are preserved. So far we have built a stag beetle loggery, installed bird and bat boxes, cleared and realigned some of the stone paths in ABG, removed the excessive vegetation and agreed an appropriate, wildlife friendly grass cutting regime.

We are now running regular volunteer workdays on first Saturday of each month and on Fridays.

We have also engaged other organisations to help us to undertake the work. These include:

- BTCV 'Green Gym'
- LWT 'Bugging Together'
- Hampstead Women's Club
- UCL students, American Institute for Foreign Study and Abbot Association of London

From February the Friday workdays will be delivered by the 'Green Gym'.

Events: Since July a variety of events took place in the churchyard. These included: bat and tree walks, bumblebee workshop, nature detectives, nest boxes building and tree dressing. Also, our volunteers helped to run a project stall during the Hampstead Heritage Festival that was visited by more than 200 people. There is more to come in the New Year. Please check our website for details.



Wildlife surveys: Volunteers have assisted with a variety of habitat surveys. These included: bats, trees, insects and mosses. Also, a regular monitoring of flowering plants is being carried out. We have planned to undertake more surveys over the next two years such as butterfly transects and breeding birds monitoring.

Spotted in the churchyard!

Birds: green woodpecker, nuthatch and gold crest

Butterflies: speckled wood and gatekeeper.

Plants: male fern, creeping Jenny and mind your own business.



Historical research: Volunteers have been collating historical information about people buried in the churchyard. This will be used to develop a History Guided Walk that will be delivered by volunteer guides. We are aiming to launch the first walk in April 2010. Please get in touch if you'd like to help with the research or to guide the walks.

Additionally, we will create a sound trail that will be available on CD's and to download from the website.

Schools: We will be working in partnership with the Hampstead Parochial school to develop an education programme using the churchyard as a resource for history and environmental lessons. Also, the pupils will help to plant two sensory gardens in the entrance yard and a medicinal garden in front of the Columbarium.

For more information and volunteering opportunities please contact:

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