

FRIENDS *of* LONG LANE PASTURE

NEWSLETTER

No. 12 May 2009

We are about to receive our lease. The 25 year lease between the Trust and LB Barnet has now been approved by both parties and we confidently expect it to be in our hands in the next few days. We could have trained to be doctors in less time, and the lease isn't all we wish, but with your help and continuing belief we've got there. We have been greatly supported throughout by all our Friends who have shared our belief, signed petitions, attended Council meetings, written letters and personally taken up the saving of the Pasture with Councillors and Council Officers.

What next? We are planning an official opening in June and will be notifying you later to confirm details. Having the lease will enable us to take charge of the management in accordance with the plan agreed with the Council, open the Pasture to the public, and develop an educational programme, including the involvement of local schools. It also allows us to take up offers of funding, which were dependent on securing long-term tenure of the land.

And we are off to a flying start. The Trust has recently been awarded no fewer than **three grants** that will support its ambitious work programme. First, the North West Community Foundation **Grassroots Fund** is giving us £4,950 over a three year period for volunteer support, grassland management and basic running costs. Secondly, the **Milly Apthorp Trust** has donated £500 to help us purchase tools. Thirdly, the Big Lottery **Breathing Places Fund** has awarded £4,991 to pay for materials, plants, first aid training, and educational and promotional materials. We are very grateful indeed to all of them.

Moreover, with a substantial grant of £16,700 from the **Bridge House Trust** we will be able to complete the palisade fencing along the public footpath. This will incorporate a pedestrian gate at the bridge end leading to a 'viewing platform' for visitors to appreciate the fine view over Finchley (not to mention the Pasture itself). We are not able to start on this until we have the lease in our hands – probably by the time you read this Newsletter.

The **Friends Annual Meeting** will be on **Saturday, 23 May** starting at **2.30 p.m.** All Friends of the Pasture are warmly invited to come along and see the progress that has been made over the past year. There will be a guided walk, with trustees on hand to answer questions and listen to your comments and suggestions. We will have our artefacts collection on display for the first time – Victorians threw away empty bottles rather than cans so there has been plenty of broken glass. We have recently compiled scrapbooks showing the key events in our 11 year struggle to save the Pasture. Note the date: we look forward to seeing you.

In the years since we first started to clear brambles and restore the Pasture we have been rewarded by many discoveries and our **wildlife records** continue to grow. There has, however, been one permanent resident and constant companion. Meet



Foxy Boy

We first saw him in the summer of 2005 when he was just a few months old. As you see, he has grown to be a very handsome adult. There is no doubt that he recognises and trusts those he sees regularly, Wayne especially. Not tame, though. He is still very much the wild animal.

The average lifespan of an urban fox is very short – about 15 months – so at over four years he is quite a senior citizen. We have to accept that he will not be with us much longer, but it is a consolation to know he has established his dynasty. With at least two different vixens he has raised an annual litter consisting this year of a remarkable five cubs. They can be seen every day at dawn and dusk romping and play-fighting in the corner of the Pasture where their earth is.

Events 2009: Much has changed and improved over the year, so do come along and enjoy the Pasture at its best:

27 June	Wild Flower Day in National Insect Week
25 July	Butterfly Day in Save Our Butterflies Week
15 August	First Blackberry pick (and on other occasions too) and Wildlife Day with pond dipping and dragonflies
19 September	Moths after National Moth Night
? October	Spider Day (date to be arranged)
28 November	Tree Planting Day in National Tree Week