

# FRIENDS *of* LONG LANE PASTURE

## NEWSLETTER

No.5 January 2007

*... and a Happy New Year to all our Friends and supporters*

**The lease is nearly there**, so 2007 is looking promising already. Nine months after the Cabinet Resources Committee recommended leasing the Pasture we have seen the draft terms and are negotiating on them to obtain an agreement acceptable to both parties – and we expect to have this settled in the *near* future. When we have the lease we will be able to implement plans for the full restoration of the site: to improve it for wildlife and to open it for the local community to enjoy. Our current licence, extended to May 2007, is very restrictive, limiting us to providing essential maintenance and security, recording wildlife and making plans for the future.

**But we urgently need money for legal costs.** We have to pay the Council, in advance, for legal and surveying costs (in the region of £1,100) plus stamp duty. This, for us, large sum has to be found as soon as possible so that when the lease is agreed it can be issued without further delays. Can you help? Every contribution will make a real difference and take us a step closer to what we have all been fighting for for so long.

***Please complete the enclosed form and send it with your donation as soon as you can to: Wayne Armsby, Treasurer, Long Lane Pasture Trust, 256 Long Lane, London, N3 3SN.***

Thank you in advance for any support you can give.

You will recall from the Annual Meeting last April, that the Long Lane Pasture Action Group would be wound up and replaced by the **Long Lane Pasture Trust**. This has now been done, and the Trustees are: Ann Brown (Chairman), Frank Derrett (Vice Chairman), Dennis Pepper (Secretary), Wayne Armsby (Treasurer), and Janett Durrant. The registered address for the Trust is 1 Princes Avenue, Finchley Church End, London, N3 2DA.

The Trust itself will meet two or three times a year and will hold an annual meeting to which all Friends will be invited. Practical management of the Pasture has been delegated to a Management Committee, which meets once a month.

A **Management Plan** for the Pasture has been produced as part of the conditions for obtaining the lease. It covers a seven-year period (2006-2013) and is divided into two main sections: the People Plan (*A Green Space for the Local Community*); and the Biodiversity Plan (*A Haven for Wildlife*). It incorporates:

- re-opening the site for public recreation;
- creating an all weather path to provide access for visitors of all ages and fitness;
- a programme to promote the use of the site by all sectors of the community;
- a programme to encourage volunteers to participate;
- the use of the site for environmental education by local schools, and for young people in out-of-school wildlife activities;
- restoring the grassland habitat to benefit existing wildlife;
- creating a pond, ditches, hedges, a butterfly garden and bird feeding stations, together with a management regime to increase the site's biodiversity;
- improvements to the site's security.

We have identified a series of projects to make these proposals a reality, the estimated cost of which is over £75,000, and have also investigated potential sources of funding. We will apply to these organizations as soon as we are able to do so.

A **website** for the Long Lane Pasture Trust is currently under construction. We intend to make the Plan available on line as soon as we can.

You may not have heard of the **Neighbourhood Renewal Fund** managed by Barnet's Local Strategic Partnership, but we are delighted to tell you that the Trust has been awarded a grant of £9,600 from the Fund in order to make improvements to the Pasture. It will be used to replace the decrepit pedestrian gate, tidy up the entrance area generally, and erect some new fencing along the footpath boundary. Contractors will undertake the major construction work, but volunteers will be asked to prepare for it and to clear the adjacent areas. *As it all has to be finished by the end of March, we urgently need volunteers to help on workdays (see foot of page).* If you can come along for just a couple of hours it will be enormously appreciated.

**Wildlife** continues to flourish and we are surprised by what we discover. The hot summer brought out a large number of insects – butterflies, moths and, in particular, masses of grasshoppers. We recorded the impressive wasp spiders for the first time. (A few years ago they were rarities straying in from the continent but now they are not unusual in undisturbed, long grassland across London.) The small pond, newly created from a developer's soil test pit, attracted dragonflies and it is good to note their larvae establishing a population in the water. We ran a moth trap in June, July and September recording 15 new species.

Voles and foxes are regularly recorded, and we saw our first grey squirrel in November. Toads, newts and frogs enjoy the wetter areas and there are plenty of birds to be seen in the brambles and shrubbery. More than 200 starlings were spotted at one time.

**Workday meetings** are held every other Saturday morning from 10.00 to about noon. Everyone is welcome (there are jobs for all skills and abilities), but you need to be prepared for the ground to be wet underfoot. Tools and protective gloves are provided. Our workdays for the first half of 2007 are:

13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> January; 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> February; 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> March; 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> April; 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> May; 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> June.

In addition, we hope to organize a series of events and Open Days during 2007.