

# LONG LANE PASTURE TRUST

*Restoring a green space for the local community  
and protecting a haven for wildlife*

## ANNUAL REPORT 2007

### **Governance**

There were no changes in the Trustees during the year. They are: Ann Brown (Chairman), Wayne Armsby, Frank Derrett, Dennis Pepper, and Janett Durrant.

Day to day management decisions are conducted through a Management Committee. Derek Warren is an additional member of this group, which meets monthly.

In order to obtain insurance, training and other benefits the Trust is an Associated Group of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, and is also a member of the Barnet Voluntary Service Council.

### **The Friends of Long Lane Pasture**

By the end of 2007 the number of Friends reached 90. There is no subscription to join, but donations are requested. A total of £1,499 had been received by the year-end for which we are enormously grateful. A Newsletter was produced in May and October, and circulated to all Friends. On 12 May we held our annual Friends Meeting at the Pasture – unfortunately a rather wet affair.

We did not hold further specific events for Friends because of works on the site. However, all Friends were encouraged to come along to work days to either take part or view progress. A gazebo tent was acquired to provide shelter for future special visitor days and events.

We are also grateful for the continued support of the following organisations: Barnet Federation of Allotments, The Octavia Hill Society, and the Finchley Society.

### **Progress on Securing the Site**

Another year has passed and it is yet again disappointing to report that we still have no lease. However, there have been encouraging negotiations with London Borough of Barnet and detailed discussions on a draft lease based on a 7-year term. This was not felt to be acceptable when it was revealed that there would be no allowance for renewing the lease at the end of this relatively short period. In order to extend the lease term, which had been agreed by the Council's Cabinet Resources Committee, it had to be referred back to that Committee. This was done on 4 January 2008 when a term of 25 years was agreed. Unfortunately this is not all good news because a condition of this longer term will be a break clause every 5 years for the Council to reconsider if it wishes to take back the land (ie we gloomily assume for selling off for housing development). Our big challenge is to make sure that the Pasture is strongly supported, visited and appreciated by the local community by the end of 2013 so that such a decision is politically impossible.

### **Activity on the Pasture**

By the end of the year we had increased our workdays to every Saturday morning. During twelve months a total of 436 work hours had been undertaken. As seems to be traditional, the weather was kind on almost every one! Considerable advances were made with bramble clearance in the autumn and winter months, thanks to having our own brushcutter. Increasingly large open areas and the paths have been mown throughout the spring and summer months. It was quite a struggle to keep on top of this but purchasing a second mower helped considerably. A power scythe was hired for the annual cut of the rougher areas. Litter has been cleared on a regular basis, particularly from along the footpath fence line, and graffiti removed from the boundary wall. In Tree Planting Week we planted a

diverse wildlife hedge across the middle of the site and a hawthorn hedge next to the part of the allotments fence. Our volunteers deserve a huge thank you for all the efforts they have put in over the past twelve months.

There has been good progress on larger scale projects. Early in the year we were able to replace the entrance gate and put in secure fencing along part of the path boundary. In August a large pond was created with a ditch along the bottom of the embankment, shortly followed by installation of an all-weather path alongside the boundary wall.



*Planting up the new pond*



*Raking up cut hay*



*The new entrance gate*

### **Wildlife**

The Pasture now has plants in flower for most of the year, though it looks at its best in early summer. Altogether we have recorded 86 plant species, including 13 different grasses. Foxes continue to enjoy raising a family here. No new records were noted for birds or butterflies but both continue to provide an unusually good range for this part of Barnet. Our small pond, developed from a test pit dug by Fairview Homes, has developed into a wonderful hive of activity with dragonflies, damselflies, frogs and newts frequently seen.



*Gatekeeper butterfly*



*Wildflowers*



*Cinnabar moth caterpillar*

### **Finances and Fundraising**

The Trust was fortunate in securing three major grants during year: from the L B Barnet Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, and two from the Big Lottery (Breathing Places and Awards for All). We are very grateful for this support, which funded our 2007 major project work. For our regular on going expenses we maintained sufficient income to cover necessary expenditure. The balance of income over expenditure at the year-end (£7,062) includes some grant monies, which remain to be spent in 2008, and donations from Friends to pay for legal costs associated with the long awaited lease.

### **Looking forward to 2008**

Our efforts remain focused on securing the lease, but also on preparing the Pasture for its public opening which we now anticipate sometime during the forthcoming year. Although great progress has been made with implementing the Management Plan, much remains to be done and major works need to be completed – notably the butterfly border, pond and footpath fencing. We will be applying for further grants for this work. In January 2008 the Long Lane Pasture Trust was registered as a charity (number 1122236) which places us in a better position to do so.