



Wychwood
WILD GARDEN

Wychwood Wild Garden

November 2022

Dear Member,

As I write this newsletter, the weather simply cannot make up its mind what to do, one minute blue skies and sunshine, the next a rain shower, some of biblical proportions; the leaves are gradually falling to the ground shortly to be whipped up into a frenzy with the gusting winds. Autumn is a time of immense beauty with the changing colours of the foliage against dramatic skylines and frequent rainbows. I am often reminded of John Keats poem 'To Autumn':-

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells ...

The Wild Garden has its own beauty at this time of year with amazing colours amongst the foliage and even when the leaves fall into the ponds, they still maintain their colours. As the season passes the Tuesday morning team continue to clear the leaves to stop them blocking the water courses and try and keep the pathways clear, as do many of our visitors, nothing gives quite as much pleasure as removing the leaves to hear the water begin to flow and cascade down the little waterfalls. As I have written before, we have much to be grateful for as our Tuesday morning team keep the gardens safe, clear and maintain the routes around the garden but help is always needed and we have another working party on 19 November 2022 as we begin to put the garden into winter mode.



At this stage of the year, it is not unusual to look back and reflect a little on the events that took place. I have attached an extract from the Trustees Report for the achievements and performance highlights of 2022.

"Visitor numbers are now back to normal after the disruption from COVID and membership remains at 166 with some inevitable losses and gains. Overall, the year was a success in terms of feedback from visitors and volunteers. COVID restrictions aimed at limiting the number of visitors to the Garden were lifted in March 2022.

Sipton-under-Wychwood Wild Garden and Woods

A company limited by guarantee

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We held two successful fundraising events during the year both of which met or exceeded expectations. Open Gardens involved four gardens all loosely associated with Shipton Court providing magnificent and contrasting styles. Good weather contributed to a very successful day and our thanks go to the garden owners and the volunteers who made the afternoon such a success raising just over £1800. We held a stall at Shipton fete, returning after three years, which provided an opportunity both for fund raising and for conversations with both current and prospective members, a number of whom subsequently joined as members. We also hosted a photo shot for a fashion magazine providing evergreen backgrounds for their Christmas catalogue.

The use of the Garden by the Cubs and Scouts has substantially increased, a welcome development introducing a new generation to outdoor pursuits and hobbies. Regrettably the planned access route for the Forest School from the school and pre-school has again been held up and we continue to work to try and resolve this.

During the year the volunteers have been involved in two major projects for the Garden. A new Glade for Reflection has been created in the north-west corner of the garden on what was a rather damp area. The centre piece is a Swamp Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), ideal for these conditions, surrounded by small trees and shrubs selected for their interest through the year and fruit bearing characteristics. Some further planting of damp tolerant plants will be carried out this autumn. The sluice dam at the end of the canal has been substantially restored with new shaped coping stones to cut down winter flooding and an extensive repointing of the existing stones. Hopefully this will serve us well for a number of years to come. We estimate that 65 volunteers have contributed to the maintenance and management of the garden over the year."

Feedback please!

As with many organisations feedback is always useful but we would love it if you would send us some answers to this question, please.

WHAT DOES THE WILD GARDEN MEAN TO YOU?

Answers can be emailed to us at info@wychwoodwildgarden.org.uk. Thank you in advance.

Dates for your diary

We are holding a **working party in the Wild Garden on Saturday 19th November** to clean up after the summer months and prepare for winter. We will be joined by the Shipton Volunteers.

The session will be from **9am to Noon** with a break around 10.15am for refreshments.

There are jobs for all ages and abilities so make it a family morning out!

We will be clearing the Avenue of general debris so please bring rakes.

Selected paths need a new layer of wood chippings, so please bring barrows, shovels and rakes.

There is ivy removal from the major trees, this needs loppers and secateurs.

A general litter search and pick is needed, we will supply black bin bags

Other jobs may well arise before the day!

Finally, wear strong footwear and gloves - and Enjoy Yourself!

Best wishes



Caroline Trevers
Trustee