

MANAGEMENT REPORT 2023

Welcome everyone and thank you for coming.

Our last AGM was 4 years ago and im sure we will all agree that at least 2 of those years have been very hard for all of us with the pandemic.

Just to reassure everyone right through the pandemic our sheep were looked after and checked on daily.

Some sad news our President Jean Riesco passed away in August 2019 peacefully in her sleep, Jean was 104 years old. She was such a lovely lady and will be greatly missed by us all.

Zelda also passed away in January of this year aged 91. She was part of Croydon Ecology centre for many years, attended every event and always had ideas how to raise funds. It was Zelda's idea to have a spring plants and seedling sale which was always a huge success .

Tom our Bee man passed away which was very sad, the bees with his loving care produced lots of jars of honey which were always much sort after by the locals. We are very lucky to have Sally who has taken over the task of looking after and caring for our Bees.

Also in September in 2020 our sheep Sam passed away after reaching a very good age. Ben now has a new playmate called Harry who is a hogget and much more confident than Ben has ever been. They are always together but Harry knows who the Top Sheep is BEN

Just a quick update on the Old Orchard in Lockdown.

In the 1st Lockdown the orchard became very overgrown but when the restrictions were eased it enabled our wonderful volunteers to return in small numbers , things got back to normal very quickly. Obviously no main projects were attempted it was just a case of keeping things ticking over.

The Bee enclosure also became overgrown with Brambles but was gradually cleared and the new bee keeper carried on the most important work of bee keeping. The Bees are now thriving.

We returned for our monthly committee meeting from May 2022 and as you are all aware started to look at the constitution which was last reviewed over 10 plus years ago. As everything in life, things change, goals change and to keep the ecology centre viable and not having use of the house anymore everything needed a re think. We are allowing time before the end of the AGM for any questions that have been raised in regards to the Constitution. But can I point out these changes were only to modernise the wording and remove the points that do not apply anymore. Also only members can raise questions about the constitution.

Unfortunately we cannot take questions in this meeting about the long term plans for Heathfield House, as we have not been made aware of Croydon Councils current intentions.

For some major project news , our volunteers have made labels identifying our old variety trees for visitors to see.

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We now open also open on Tuesdays and Fridays to allow more people to visit and experience our different spaces. The volunteers are always very willing to answer visitor questions and this helps to raise awareness of the centre in the local community.

The lining of Skittle pond was cracked and leaking so it no longer held water effectively. It was drained of the little water/sludge left in it. The re lining process which was a huge job but it has now been completed in time to properly support its aquatic inhabitants over the summer months.

We have also had interest from a lady who has recently obtained her Dormouse Licence and would like to set up a site for the National Dormouse Monitoring Program in the Old Orchard. We have agreed to explore this further which is very exciting. Although we have never seen any you never know what might be found.

To close I would like to say that our commitment to the ecology centre is to encourage young people to become involved, to come and visit, to volunteer, to ask questions about our Old Orchard. About what we do to look after and nurture nature in all its many guises.

Thank you again for coming without you all and your support there would be no Ecology Centre

That concludes the report of your management committee.