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Parish Plan Implementation Committee



Hampstead Norreys Well Garden Newsletter
presented by
The Environment Group

The Hampstead Norreys Well Garden Project by the Parish Plan Environment Group

What is a garden? Is it a place to relax and enjoy nature or is it purely functional place to grow plants to eat? Whatever our own ideas, a garden is much more than a collection of plants!

The “Well Garden” is aptly named, sitting beside the Village Well in Church Street and along the banks of the river Pang. There has been a garden here for many years which has, in the past, been lovingly maintained by local parishioners but, sadly, of recent times, has become rather neglected and left to Nature, to take its course!

Set in the heart of the village, the gardens of the ‘White Hart’ and the ‘Silver Jubilee’ seat, situated by the Village Well, offer a wonderful opportunity to enjoy and watch an abundance of wildlife and glorious flora and fauna.

Under the auspices of the Hampstead Norreys Parish Plan, volunteers, from the Environment Group, have been working on the restoration of the Well Garden. This is a very exciting project but there is a huge amount of work to do. Many of us are not very experienced gardeners so it is proving to be quite a steep learning curve as well as a challenge!

The river Pang is a chalk stream, which is often dry for part of the year. This can present certain problems, when creating a garden, so one of the first objectives was to obtain a sympathetic design for plants, robust enough to withstand wet and dry spells but using species native to chalk bourn streams.

Well Garden Planting Information

No	Latin Name	Common Name	Comments
1	Berberis thunbergii	Barberry	Spiky!
2	Trollius europaeus superbus	Globe flower, sometimes called double buttercup	Yellow flowers 45-90cm
3	Lobelia cardinalis ‘Russian Princess’	Cardinal Flower	Purple-tinged foliage
4	Primula florindae	Giant Cowslip	Nodding, pale yellow flowers from July to August
5	Liatris spicata	Gay Feather	Spikes of mauve flowers
6	Pericaria bistorta superba	Knotweed	Bottlebrush-like, tiny mauve-pink flowers are packed tightly together on thin stems, above the dock-like foliage.
7	Lychnis Flos-Cuculi	Ragged robin	Vary from purplish pink to white and are star-shaped, with deeply cut petals
8	Iris laeviagata	Iris	White flowers from early to midsummer
9	Cornus Alba Eligantissima (Silver) Cornus Alba Spaethii (Gold)	Dogwood	Winter stunners
10	Lythrum salicaria	Purple loosestrife	Poker-like heads of bright purple-red flowers
11	Rosa canina	Dog rose	
12	Caltha palustris	Kingcup or marsh marigold	Large, shiny golden flowers like giant, waxy buttercups
13	Crocoshia lucifer	Crocoshia	Searing paprika red
14	Malus Zumi Professor Springer	Crab apple	
15	Primula veris	Cowslip	Funnel-shaped blooms, rich yellow and sweetly fragrant
16	Juncus effusus	Soft rush	Clusters of tiny brown flowers
17	Alnus Incana Aureus	Alder	
18	Crateagus Persimilis Prunifolia	Hawthorne	
19	Corylus maxima purpurea	Filbert	Opulent deep purple foliage, the male catkins, suspended from the bare branches before the new spring foliage develops, are reddish-purple with yellow highlights

What's next? Well, although we have already planted a variety of trees and shrubs there is still plenty to get involved with, if you are interested! The rest of the year will involve "parties" (that's "working parties", though I'm sure this will involve lashings of ginger beer) to keep down the ever invasive weeds. This will be on-going until all the remaining plants are planted, which will take us up to Autumn 2008.

Then we can all sit back; enjoy the fruits of our labour and the new tenants of the Well Garden, including dragon, damsel and butterflies, water voles and shrews whilst rubbing our aching muscles!

The Environment Group has several projects on the go at the moment, including:

Well Garden, Tree Survey, Lousley Memorial Clearance, House Insulation, Solar Panels ,Aircraft Noise, and Village Composting Events.

Please contact us to get involved in these projects or if you have your own ideas for new environmental projects.

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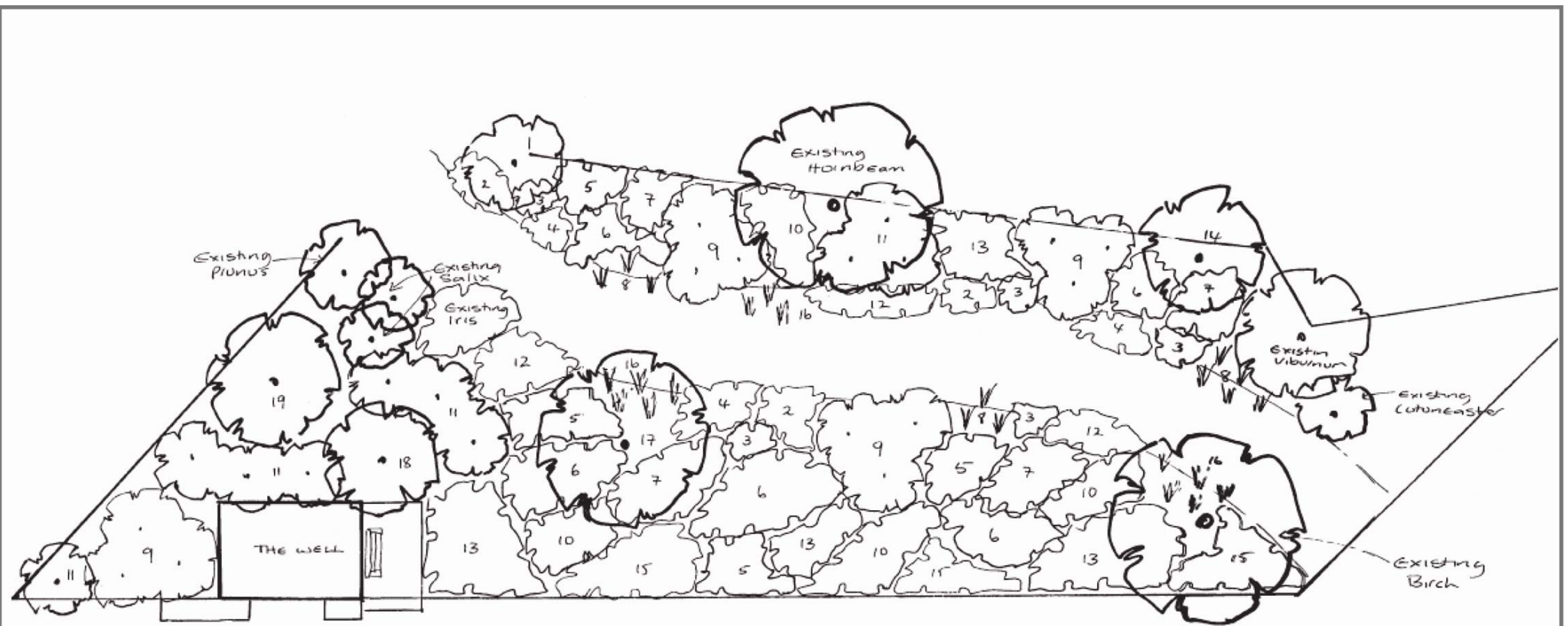
Before work could commence on the garden, the Environment Group had to obtain a grant to purchase materials. The next challenge was to find a garden designer, who could put the ideas into a feasible planting scheme, then we had to organise working parties to clear weeds and prepare the site for future planting.

We owe much to our local (Kew trained) garden designer, Vanessa Wells, who volunteered her considerable expertise in designing the garden, in which she chose to use species native to chalk bourn streams, in order to emulate natural planting. Herbaceous perennials, trees, shrubs and bulbs , that would thrive in wet conditions but survive periods of drought (if we ever get one) were selected.

The Parish Plan Steering Committee through the Parish Council secured funding from the West Berkshire Council's Open Spaces Fund. This enabled the group to purchase plants and material as well as clearing dead trees and debris from the site.

The hard work then began and the first working party started in September 2007 to clear weeds, including 5 foot nettles! This is easier to write than it was to perform but the wonderful results allowed the group to see the blank canvas for future planting. After a few weeks, when our various muscular aches and pains had vanished, work resumed. Vanessa applied a proprietary licensed weed-killer which started killing off the top growth of weeds. The Well Garden's new hair cut settled into the Winter! A further spray followed in early in Spring 2008, to catch the New Year's weeds. Two drains, from Church Street, were cleared and a new drain installed and the dead and dying birch trees were felled.

FINALLY, planting started on 26th April 2008.



Planting Key

*The Well Garden
Church Street
Hampstead Norreys*

*New Planting Design
by Venessa Wells
20th November 2007*

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|----|---|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Berberis thunbergii</i> | 11 | <i>Rosa canina</i> |
| 2 | <i>Trollis europaeus</i> | 12 | <i>Caltha palustris</i> |
| 3 | <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i> | 13 | <i>Crococsmia lucifer</i> |
| 4 | <i>Primula florindae</i> | 14 | <i>Malus Professor Spenger</i> |
| 5 | <i>Liatris spicata</i> | 15 | <i>Primula veris</i> |
| 6 | <i>Persicaria bistorta "Superba"</i> | 16 | <i>Juncus effusus</i> |
| 7 | <i>Lychnis flos cuculi</i> | 17 | <i>Alnus incana aureus</i> |
| 8 | <i>Iris laevigata</i> | 18 | <i>Crataegus persimilis</i> |
| 9 | <i>Cornus alba elegantissima </i>
<i>Cornus alba spaethii</i> | | <i>prunifolia</i> |
| 10 | <i>Lythrum saliciana</i> | 19 | <i>Corylus maxima "Pupurea"</i> |