

Tenth Anniversary Newsletter

A Fruitful Time: Reflections from our Chairman, Stanley Cohen



English Bluebells in bloom in the Parks Trust plantation

It certainly has been a challenging but exciting Tenth Year of TMAEG. In particular, I am delighted to be able to announce two major successes for our biggest project, the Bluebell Circuit.

First, four remaining planning conditions attached to our planning permission have been discharged. Secondly we have won a big grant from the Milton Keynes Community Foundation that paves the way for us to build the bridge crossing and do related works. More below.

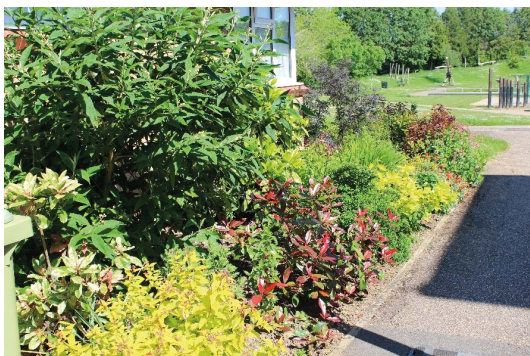
This and other progress has been achieved in a period of great difficulty. At this time last year we had to announce that our Annual General Meeting could not go ahead except virtually due to the Covid 19 lockdown conditions but we had resumed our environmental project working in groups while following strict risk assessments and conditions which included bringing our own snacks and drinks. How was I to survive a labour intensive morning's work without several chocolate digestive biscuits supplied by our leader Chris Gossop?

Our ever faithful and cheerful volunteers, however, kept turning up in excellent numbers to ensure that our projects received the TLC and creativity required.

The newer gardens at the Park Gateway and Kepwick II blossomed into magnificent maturity and some earlier projects like the Woodland Walk (Milesmere/Thornclyffe), the Edge of the Golf Course and the Bee Garden and Fernery were enhanced with new planting, natural hedges and glades.



Our volunteers at the Fernery amidst hollies, hazels and thriving ferns



The western side of the Twin Gardens, looking towards the Local Park

Our plans for an Open Gardens weekend in June 2020 were frustrated by Covid but through modern technology the volunteer gardeners were able to show off their creativity on a virtual tour. (See below for news of Open Gardens 2022).

On the advocacy and campaigning front, together with affected local residents, we were able to negotiate a landscaping plan for the V4 Underpass area, comprising a substantial screening hedge, interspersed with attractive native trees. This will, in part, replace the trees destroyed during the recent highway works (for more detail see below).



Brian and Anne planting climbers in the Kepwick II Garden



One of three clusters of Marie Curie daffodils planted along the redway serving Fairways

I have now completed my four year stint as Chairman of TMAEG, having extended my tenure by one extra year because of the unprecedented circumstances . I have enjoyed helping our prime mover and Secretary Chris Gossop to manage the ambitious work of the group but have continued to enjoy seeing the results of our collective efforts and to relish the friendship, dedication and good humour of all the volunteers.

I will continue to volunteer as long as my ageing bones allow and wish the next chairman and committee members all the best.

Stanley Cohen



Volunteers at TMAEG's Edge of Golf Course site taking advantage of their newly built log pile for a short mid-morning break

The V4 Underpass – remedial action for Two Mile Ash



This is a view towards Two Mile Ash taken from our neighbouring area, Whitehouse, showing the new redway connection opened in the spring of 2021. Sadly, the construction has involved the loss of a 300m stretch of the wide tree belt that formerly screened this edge of TMA from the V4 grid road and its traffic. As can be seen here, Burewelle is particularly affected, with residents suffering acute environmental harm, particularly through visual impact and vehicle noise.

The case for remedial action has been championed by TMAEG member Andrew Stockbridge working with the affected residents and aided by the TMAEG committee. A couple of meetings have been held with council members and officers and, as a first step, a 3m wide landscape strip is to be planted some 5m away from the existing boundary hedge to TMA. This will span the present gap and combine semi mature trees (for early screening impact) with native shrub underplanting. This will become an important ecological corridor as well as landscape feature.

The Bluebell Circuit – Almost ready for the link up!

TMAEG has recently received two pieces of very good news about the Bluebell Circuit, our biggest project.

First, in terms of the planning permission we have had our application for the discharge of four planning conditions on the original approval passed by Milton Keynes Council. These cover drainage consent, effects on the existing trees and various aspects of design and materials.

The second is the news that we have won a substantial grant from Milton Keynes Community Foundation. The precise sum is £5061.00 which will fund the steel and timber structure of the 11m footbridge (together with some publicity costs).



*The bridge location at the edge of the plantation.
This picture was taken in January 2020 at a time when the stream was in full spate.*

That grant money is complemented by the ‘in kind’ contribution in terms of the labour to be provided by the direct works team of the Milton Keynes Parks Trust who will also provide the materials for the woodland paths to be constructed by TMAEG’s volunteers.

Taken together, this means that some 90% of the funding for the bridge is already secure. While we await the outcome of two further applications for the remainder, we are confident of being able to proceed with the works very shortly.

We thank the Parks Trust and everyone else involved for the support that has been given to this project.

You can read more about the Bluebell Circuit on our website through the following links:

[New walking connections for Two Mile Ash](#)

and

[The Bluebell Circuit – an update](#)



*TMAEG volunteers tending English primroses alongside the Milesmere/Thornclyffe Woodland Path.
This path is an existing part of the Bluebell Circuit.*



Open Gardens 2022

We're delighted to announce that there will be an Open Gardens event in June 2022, on the weekend 11-12th, our fifth! Put it in your diary now.



Already offers of gardens have come in. We hope that next year's event will be even more enjoyable than past ones, for visitors and gardeners alike.

Your garden does not have to be immaculate or manicured, though such a garden would always be welcome. It just has to be a place you love to work and relax in, that you would like to share for a few hours. Remember that you can choose to hold a small fund-raising for your own favourite charity – teas? cakes? books? plants?

Use this link to take a look at past [Open Gardens](#) especially the 2020 Gallery, our Virtual Tour, for inspiration.



More information at:
pavlagossop17@outlook.com

Membership renewal

Your subscription for 2021 ends on October 31st. If you have not yet paid it, you can do so now, together with the upcoming subscription for 2022, ahead of our AGM. If you're not sure whether you have paid for 2021, contact pavlagossop17@outlook.com
Our household membership remains at £5 – excellent value, we're sure you'll agree.

The simplest way to renew is by Bank Transfer (Account Name: Two Mile Ash Environmental Group; Sort Code: 30-96-26; Account Number: 56 93 54 68) In the Reference Box put "Sub 2021/Sub 2022/ Donation" as applicable.

Alternatively, a cheque payable to "Two Mile Ash Environmental Group" or cash, together with relevant details, can be dropped off at 15 Stonehill, Two Mile Ash, MK8 8DN.
A receipt will be issued in due course. Thank you for your continued support!

Announcement of TMAEG's Annual Meeting

For your Diaries!

We are delighted to announce that our Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday **September 25th 2021** between 4.00 and 5.30 pm in Holy Cross Church, the High Street, Two Mile Ash.

The meeting will be in two parts – a plenary session, with the annual report and business matters, this to be followed by tea, coffee and cakes to celebrate TMAEG's Tenth Anniversary!

Further details will be sent to all members shortly, including the Annual Meeting Papers.
