



August 2023 Newsletter

A busy and varied summer for TMAEG

This has been another busy summer for TMAEG. In project terms we've made important progress, notably at the Twin Gardens and around the Bluebell Circuit.

The summer months saw new public seating along the High Street which we helped bring about, together with a range of walks and garden visits.

Looking back to the spring, we ran two big evening events, one on gardening, the other on domestic energy.



This August Newsletter highlights these and other achievements in our Year 12 and is a sampler for the fuller reports to be presented at our **Annual Celebration and AGM on September 23rd**.



The Twin Gardens and Park Gateway

One of our big achievements this summer has been to plant up the Twin Gardens extensions creating a beautiful feature at the entrance to our Local Park from the High Street.

Our volunteers can be very proud of what they have done here, both in these new areas and elsewhere in the Park Gateway – notably the two big planters where we work in partnership with business members, **Hair Culture** and **the Dental and Implant Clinic**.



The Bluebell Circuit – Work continues



The Oxeye Daisies in June

Our team is now turning to the long-term maintenance and enhancement of the Bluebell Circuit, formally opened on April 23rd 2022.

Above the eastern bank of the stream our first sowing of wildflower seed has resulted in a wonderful spread of colourful species dominated initially by Oxeye Daisies (left) with other plants in the 23 species mix emerging later in the summer.

Once those (Phase 1) plants have finished their flowering and are in seed, we'll be cutting this area down in readiness for a new 'crop' in 2024.

Probably because of the highly variable weather earlier this year, we've been less successful with the adjoining Phase 2 area.

We'll be re-seeding this land in the autumn, with the same cornfield mix; light digging over is already in progress.



Preparing the Phase 2 bed

Within the Bluebell wood itself we've been trimming back regenerating Norway Maples and Ash trees (threatened by ash dieback) and looking after the replacement trees (of other species) that TMAEG volunteers planted last year. That is in line with fostering a change from a largely single species plantation to a more biodiverse, mixed species woodland.

Another aim is to keep open the views across the wood for Bluebell time. We are working closely with the Parks Trust in the decisions that are made. (The following photos show the pilot area for this work, alongside the log path leading up to the bridge on its western side).



‘Before’ – showing the regenerating trees.

‘During’ – with the team cutting back those trees down to their stumps and revealing some of the replacement trees planted in the winter of 2022.



‘After’ – showing the full opening up with one of the new *Sorbus torminalis* (Wild Service) trees in the foreground.

New Benches for Two Mile Ash

Since their installation in June, the two double benches on the High Street edge of the golf course have proved very popular with residents.

The collaboration between a generous benefactor, MKCC, Abbey Hill PC and TMAEG has resulted in a much-needed resting and meeting place.

More about this story [here](#).



Summer Outings



Our two group visits in July were voted a success by all participants. A rainy start did not detract from our visit to the historic Georgian garden at the **Cowper & Newton Museum** in Olney.

Snug in our shelter we were served delicious cakes and tea.

When the skies cleared we enjoyed a stroll among traditional flowers and shrubs and admired the heritage vegetable beds and the little summer house where William Cowper wrote some of his poetry.



At **Coton Manor Gardens** the skies stayed clear and sunny for our exploration of the exquisite terraces and flowerbeds.

We enjoyed our home cooked lunch in the open air at the Stableyard Café. We encountered wandering flamingos and fluffy fowls and several unusual souvenirs were bought from the well-stocked Nursery Shop.

The Stableyard



Bee Balm or Bergamot



The flamingos

Gardeners' Question Time

Back in March our first, and very well-attended, Social of the year featured **Chris Day of Buckingham Nurseries and Garden Centre**.

The History of Gardens was his opening topic, with many fascinating illustrations. He then answered questions on a wide field of plant and gardening issues.

Finally, he presented Garden Colour Through the Year – a beautiful array of colourful plants and shrubs that will ensure year-round interest. He even added plants that will thrive in Buckinghamshire soil and conditions. With his permission we have reproduced this useful resource on our website [here](#).

Happy and colourful gardening!



Energy and our Homes



As an environmental group TMAEG is branching out into domestic energy matters. We see locally that our weather is fluctuating to an extent beyond anything we have experienced before and this acute variability is all too apparent world-wide. Our climate is changing.

In our second TMAEG evening held in April we looked at the challenge of upgrading our homes to lessen our individual use of energy, particularly gas. And we can save significant money in the process.

We are fortunate to be working with **Wolverton Community Energy** and the **National Energy Foundation** and have set up a first list of TMAEG members who have shown an interest in their Home Energy programmes. There is the possibility that some support will be available for the funding of Whole House Retrofit Plans, although the total amount of money is quite limited. Beyond this the Home Energy programme provides access to an excellent series of Energy Guides ranging from insulation to solar PV and heat pumps.

For further information about the Home Energy programmes, contact:

<https://homeenergymk.org/housewarming-mk/>



Open Gardens for 2024?

Will there be another Open Gardens for Two Mile Ash in 2024?
The answer is in your hands.

Over ten years we have organised 5 events plus a Virtual Open Gardens in 2020, a proud record – click [HERE](#) to find out how it all began.

However, the time has come for a serious discussion on the future of Open Gardens in TMA. Those of us who have worked together over the years to keep the event going are no longer able to continue. Unless a dedicated group of maybe 4 people comes forward and undertakes to organise a 2024 event, there will be no more Open Gardens for the foreseeable future.



If such a group appears, we would be happy to share our past experience with them.



The future of Open Gardens TMA will be on the Agenda of our **AGM/12th Year Celebration on September 23rd** when we intend to make a decision.

Naturally, we need to have prior notice of any interest in continuing the event. Please contact Pavla on 01908 561365 or pavlagossop17@outlook.com for further information.

Membership Subscription Reminder

Membership Subscriptions – still only £5 per household per year – fall due in October every year. We still have a few outstanding for this year and would appreciate receiving them before our new year starts. If you have yet to subscribe for 2022/2023, you'll shortly be receiving an email with payment details.

Payment by Bank Transfer might be the simplest method:

Account Name: Two Mile Ash Environmental Group.

Sort Code: 30-96-26.

Acct No: 56 93 54 68.

In Ref Box please specify Sub/Donation

Otherwise cash, or a cheque payable to Two Mile Ash Environmental Group (in full, please!) is fine, the address is

15 Stonehill, Two Mile Ash, MK8 8DN.

Don't forget to include your name and address! Thank you