



Honiton's Millennium Green News

Issue 5 Spring 2012

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Poetry Competition results

Another new year, doesn't time fly!

Isn't it interesting looking back at this time last year, when we had thick snow and a prolonged cold spell. Birds and plants really suffered, despite us all enjoying the beautiful sight of the white carpet. This year (so far) has been much less dramatic, in fact quite mild, which seems to be causing nature some confusion bulbs are poking through the ground and buds are appearing on trees and yet there is still a possible month of Winter left, bearing in mind we often have frosts and big temperature drops well into April. Although this year we have had several gales, causing damage to branches on the trees in the top corner of the Green.

As there hasn't been the firm grip that Winter had last year, we are able to start to plan our maintenance jobs early. We do this each season setting tasks for ourselves, as well as routine chores. Pruning trees and bushes in the middle of winter is one of those jobs you don't really feel like starting, but you can really see how the health of the trees benefit in the Summer as a result. It is important to follow a few 'golden rules' when pruning, such as when and how much and which trees to consider. For example, the Apple, current bushes and most broad leaf trees should be pruned in Winter. Whereas the Cherry should not be pruned until the Summer, because of the risk of introducing Silverleaf disease. As long as trees are not pruned too hard, it produces a strong framework of branches for the rest of the tree's life.

Before any pruning and thinning in the Green, we will of course get professional advice from our contractors. I am planning to spend time with Rob Cruse of Goodlife Gardners, who will be able to give us advice so we can start planning for the coming year. Part of this will be to consider the environmental impact, so we need to be conscious of the appropriate disposal of branches by arranging collection for either chipping or composting.

Aside from all the plants, the majority of our native mammals are active through the Winter, with the exception of the bats, hedgehogs and dormice, who truly hibernate. The rest of the inhabitants are all out foraging food, however, this year without snow, it's harder to follow their footprints. Most birds are silent at this time of year yet there are a few exceptions here too. Robins will sing to try to maintain their territory all year round and the Tawny Owl can be heard as they start pairing for the coming spring. I was lucky enough to be in the Green last week and was startled by an unexpected flash of white. I looked up just quickly enough to see a Barn Owl, soundlessly swooping into the tree behind the Green.

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Thanks to the Big Lottery Fund

We are most grateful to the Big Lottery Fund for its grant of £4234. This has enabled us to buy four splendid new seats for the Green.

The Big Lottery Fund distributes half of the National Lottery good cause funding across the UK.

The Fund is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need.



LOTTERY FUNDED



Freda Dandy

We are very lucky to have such an abundance of wildlife around Honiton. Now the Winter solstice on 21st December has passed, the nights have begun to draw out again and the inevitable increase of daylight triggers new life and beautiful skies. I think it would be a great idea to capture some of the photo's in the magazine. Perhaps next time you are there and feel like testing out our photography skills, try and freeze frame some of the many wonderful sights the Green has to offer.

by Kassa Retter

Bethany wins £10 book token

The winner of the poetry competition was Bethany Nutting. Bethany is 11 years old and frequently stays in the Honiton area. She loves the countryside and whenever she stays she loves going for long walks around East Devon. The weekend she wrote the poem she had spent the morning in the Green and then wrote the poem that afternoon.

Entries for the competition were so good that the judges had a difficult decision to pick the winner, so they have awarded a runners up prize of a £5 book token to the second placed entry P.J. Glaeser.

Chairman's Chat

By the time you read this, Honiton Town Council will have decided on its grants for the forthcoming financial year and we shall know whether we can afford to have the grass cut and pay our annual insurance premium. These days it is relatively easy to find grants for setting up a project, buying equipment or enhancement, but money for maintenance and replacement is nearly impossible to come by. Since the Green was established in 2000, the Council has paid the annual recurring costs, without any commitment for the following year. But whatever I say about my committee from time to time they are not quitters, and if this lifeline is withdrawn they will do their best to keep the Green open.

On a more optimistic note, we have ordered, and have received delivery of, our four new seats. They have been purchased with a grant from the Big Lottery Fund. The Green is for rest and recreation by local residents, so attractive and comfortable seating in accessible and well-chosen spots is required. The layout and planting of the Green is kept as natural as possible, and we intend the new seats, which combine the best of modern and traditional design, to set off the Green's natural charm. We hope you will like them.

I have chosen to write here about two matters that have preoccupied us much recently, but of course the usual seasonal work for and on the Green continues. You will see us there over the next few weeks tidying, trimming, repairing and otherwise preparing for spring. Another round of work by our contractors is planned for the next month or so. The spring bulbs should soon be in flower. We have a couple of molehills, but hopefully these won't spread too far. More Band Concerts are planned for later this year. Why not make the Green your venue for an outdoor event.

Enjoy the Green (we do!)

Richard Howe
Chairman of the Trustees

Tiny Tim

1st Place

I found a caterpillar in the Green,
I named him Tiny Tim.
I wanted to take him home with me,
So I put him in a tin.
He did not seem to want to play,
Just rolled up in a ball.
My mum said I should take him back,
I guess that's best of all.
I took him back to the Green,
And then I let him go.
I feel a little sad,
He could have been my best friend you know.

by Bethany Nutting

One day I found myself in the Green,
The weather was bright and breezy.
But with my hay fever and high pollen count,
It started to make me wheezy.

The Green looked lush with all its plants,
An artists dream no doubt.
Would love to have taken a photo with my new camera,
But I just couldn't work it out.

I took a Puriton to ease my symptoms,
So I could enjoy the scenes and views.
I would've easily spent all day there,
If it weren't for the lack of loos.

The Green is for the people of the town,
For them to enjoy all year round.
And all money raised goes into its keeping
Every single pound.

I shall visit again when the seasons change,
When the trees are looking lean.
And this time I shall take the family,
To show them our 'Millennium Green'.

Runner-up

by P J Glaeser