



# Honiton's Millennium Green News

Issue 2 Spring 2011

Page 2

Millennium Greens - a history

Page 3

Chairman's Chat

Page 3

The Future of Millennium Greens

## The Millennium Green..... .....some background

by Liz Tirard

Our Millennium Green was created in the years 1999 and 2000, under the Government's Millennium Green scheme. It is legally owned by a group of Trustees, who hold the land on trust as laid down by the terms of a Trust Deed. The Trustees are to provide and maintain an open space for all those who live and work in the town.

The Trust Deed goes into considerable detail about the aims of the green, which is registered at HM Land registry in the name of the Official Custodian for Charities, and because the Trust is a registered charity, it is subject to the supervision of the Charities Commission.

The Green is funded primarily by the Town Council, which since the beginning has made an annual grant, generally sufficient to meet the costs of grass cutting and insurance. This is augmented by small donations from the general public and also sponsorship by Honiton Lions.....very gratefully received.

Day-to-day care is provided by a Committee which includes the Trustees, with a Secretary and Treasurer and some other interested individuals; we should like to see these increase in number. We employ contractors for the grass cutting but some of the individuals on the Committee do all the other maintenance work themselves, and by the time this newsletter comes out, the first tranche of Spring maintenance will have been undertaken. To give you an idea, these are some of the jobs for March:-

- Pruning, trimming and lopping trees and shrubs
- Coppicing some of the hazel
- Raking woodchips (and probably molehills also)

*continued on page 2*

## 'Circle of life'

by Kassa Retter

Another project we are hoping to tackle this year is the replacement of our seats, as after ten years they are all needing renewing. We have made approaches to charities to apply for grants and we are well on our way in gathering the funds needed, due to a generous donation from a Friend of the Green.

As for our wildlife, I think it's important that some of the undergrowth and brambles are kept. It is essential for the moth caterpillars, which in turn provide food for both the birds and the bats that inhabit the Glen. So in the wise words of Elton John, the circle of life continues.

You will have probably noticed the bulbs are starting to show through the ground and the buds are sprouting on the trees. Why don't you look out for an Oak tree flower this year, as many people are unaware they can have flowers.

Also on another note, information has been released from the Forestry Commission about the millions of trees across Britain that will have to be chopped down because of a

new disease that has been brought into the country from abroad. So far bleeding canker is affecting half a million Horse Chestnut trees over the country and Oak trees face acute decline. The commission are urging all gardeners and walkers to report any disfigurement

*continued on page 2*



Photographs by Helen Matthews



- Mending the chain link fence and tightening the wire
- Removing the remaining mulch fabric and tree stakes.

The Committee also decides management issues, such as:-

- The replacement of seats
- How do we deal with the moles?
- Policy on dogs
- Spending money
- New planting
- Thinning of trees and shrubs.

The Trustees would be delighted to welcome others who have a particular interest in the wellbeing of the Millennium Green, whether as volunteers on the Committee, or to join in work parties when arranged and, of course, to spread the word about this wonderful amenity in the heart of our town.

# Millennium Greens

## - a history

by Colin Wright

**245 Millennium Greens exist in cities, towns and villages across England. Funded in part by the National Lottery via the Countryside Agency, they are permanent areas of green space for the benefit of local communities. Each one is different, as local people have had an unput into the design of their green.**

The project to create 250 Millennium Greens across the turn of the Millennium was started in 1996 and ended when the last Green was handed over to its own, local charitable trust in perpetuity.

Each Trust now fundraises for and runs its own green, within the bounds of its trust deed, for the benefit of its local community. The aims of Millennium Greens, as stated in their trust deeds, are as follows:

- Make a substantial contribution to the life of the whole community
- Be able to be enjoyed by people of all ages and physical abilities
- Be open and evident to visitors of the locality as well as inhabitants
- Be an attractive place for people to take air and exercise, meet others and pursue leisure activities and pastimes consistent with the shared enjoyment of the whole of the land
- Include an area suitable for community events and celebrations
- Include significant natural areas, where people can enjoy nature and wildlife at first hand
- Make a positive contribution to the local environment and respect the established character of the area
- Remain safely and conveniently accessible from inhabitants homes.

and we would ask you to do the same Overall the Green continues to thrive. Its come on a long way from the land we first started with, so with the continuing support from you all we hope it will endeavour to become a truly beautiful area representing the best of the British countryside for all to enjoy.



## Welcome to the Latest Addition on the M.G. Committee!!

by Liz Tirard

Freda Dandy is one of the Green's near neighbours and has shown an active interest in this lovely place for a long time. She and her husband attended the last open meeting and expressed an interest in a more involved way. So, Freda, on behalf of the Trustees and Committee members, we welcome you !

**AND WELCOME BACK, IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING, TO SYD TAYLOR !**

We are glad you are back with us, and look forward to working with you again.

# Chairman's *Chat*

Our colleague Elizabeth Tirard attends meetings of the Town Council and delivers a brief monthly report on the Green and our activities. This week she provoked a furore by referring to our intention to 'eliminate' the moles that are currently doing their usual moley things under the Green, throwing up the little heaps of soil known to us rustic types as molehills.

This led me to wonder what folk tales exist about moles, which have been with us thousands of years. Possibly they were associated with pagan magic and the Old Religion, in which case a quick visit by the Rector might be cheaper and more effective than the molecatcher. Or maybe they are benevolent earth spirits, children of Gaia, in which case it might be better to propitiate them with an occasional gift of fat earthworms.

Such lore must exist, but I could not find it in the brief time available. However, the mole is sometimes known as 'The Little Gentleman in Black Velvet', and as such his health was commonly drunk by Jacobite subversives in the eighteenth century. Why? Well, in 1688, the last Stuart King, James II, was ignominiously expelled and replaced by the protestant William of Orange and Queen Mary. The Stuarts' supporters had to meet secretly to plan their uprisings, for William's spies were everywhere. Things looked better for them after William died in 1702 when his horse stumbled over a molehill. Thereafter Jacobites would drink at their clandestine dinner parties to 'The Little Gentleman in Black Velvet'.

We haven't yet decided what to do about our little resident velvet-clad gentlemen (and no doubt there are also little ladies there too), but we accept that a row of little bodies hanging from the chain link fence would be bad karma. Maybe a sonic deterrent would work, or the grass cutting men could simply rake off the tops of the mounds. But as William would have pointed out were he with us today, there is a public safety issue, and doing nothing is not an option.

**Richard Howe**  
Chairman of the Trustees

# Millennium Green Project Success and Legacy

The Millennium Greens scheme was one of many UK projects funded by the Millennium Commission using National Lottery money. It was intended to form part of the permanent legacy of the celebrations at the Turn of the Millennium.

The Countryside Agency considered the project such a success that it launched a follow-on project to continue creating locally-run public green areas called "Doorstep Greens" in 2001. This initiative is still running through the CA's successor, Natural England. Millennium Greens and Doorstep Greens have won numerous Green Flag Awards and Green Pennant Awards.

The Royal Mail celebrated the Millennium Green project in its 'People and Places' stamps in the Millennium Collection in 2000.

# The Future of Millennium Greens

The Greens were intended to last in perpetuity and, as such, each was set up with a trust deed including requirements to keep the land and have it available for access by the general public. As charitable trusts their activities are regulated by

the Charities Commission.

Many Millennium Greens were established with formal links to other charities and official bodies. Their deeds enable them to work with commercial sponsors and, indeed a number of Greens have used sponsorship to further their aims.







## Meet the team



Terry Farebrother, our Treasurer.

This is what it's all about, a lovely Summers evening in the Millennium Green. Honiton Town Band playing a medley of tunes, the Conductor narrating his jokes to an expectant crowd, a glass of wine in one hand and a plate of food in the other. It really doesn't get much better than this. Devon at its best - pure bliss. This year the concert will be held on Charter Day, Saturday July 23, and we are looking forward to a second concert on either Sunday August 7 or 14, we will notify you of the date in the next newsletter and in the local press.

We hope to hold more concerts in the Green in the future.