

# Whatever is Happening in the Wild Garden?

A lot has been happening since the Wild Garden was opened in November 2010. The most important challenge has been to understand in detail just what was in the garden and what state it was in. This involved commissioning a number of professional surveys to give us expert insights and we also set out to inventory the major trees and to document the progress of the seasons in the garden with a Nature Survey. These last two projects involved a large number of you and we are especially grateful to the time you have given up and the diligence you have shown in the work carried out.



Wychwood  
WILD GARDEN

## Restoring the Water Course

The ponds and streams need urgent attention; they are leaking and badly silted up. Our priorities are to stop the leaks in the top pond, to carry out restoration of the Round Pond and to repair and restore the lower canal pond and sluice. The total project is beyond our current financial means and we are looking for sources of possible grant funding although some preliminary work will be carried out.

## The Lime Avenue

One of the great features of the Wild Garden is the Lime Avenue leading down to the ponds. Some of these trees are at least 250 years old and in the next generation will probably need replacing. Our job now is to manage these veteran trees, so they can continue standing gracefully for as long as possible. To extend the life of the limes we will reduce the heights of any that are showing the stresses of old age, and also remove overhanging branches where these, if they

were to fall, would cause the loss of the whole tree.

## The Ha-Ha

The ha-ha bounding the cricket club had previously been partially restored and we are now completing this work as far as the Junior Cricket Pavilion. (See the

article on page 36.) During February we will be planting a mixed-species hedge along the rest of the boundary with the junior cricket ground.

## Tree Surgery

Last November some significant tree work was carried out in the garden. 13 trees had dead branches removed where these could pose a safety risk and four trees by paths were dead and have been reduced to three metre stumps. 11 trees were removed from the avenue where they were either competing with the limes or damaging the ha-ha, and seven trees were removed from the Round Pond where they were growing in the wall and damaging the stonework.

## Keeping Wild

The Committee is fully aware of the desire to keep the Garden as 'wild' as practical, while acknowledging its origins as a Victorian Pleasure Garden and accepting that nature sometimes needs a helping hand. The Conservation Management Plan sets out this balance, maintaining the formality of the Avenue and the Round Pond and managing the rest of the Garden as a haven for peaceful relaxation and nature. We believe these initial projects are in keeping with these objectives.

**Mike Watson**