

Kingston Action Group: report to KPC February 2023

Our last report to the KPC was made in November 2022 when we gave a full account of progress on the Community Wildlife Garden. Since then, there have been a few developments, as follows.

- The number of hours spent by volunteers on the Garden has risen to 534.
- We have assembled staging for the greenhouse
- We have levelled the greenhouse floor and paved it
- The bog garden is a stage nearer completion
- A new notice board has been built and erected on site
- We have planted a second hedgerow with 100 whips obtained free from the Woodland Trust. This was underplanted with snowdrops.
- We have applied to the National Garden Scheme's Community Garden Project for a grant of £2200. If this is successful (we will hear in late March) we hope to get Sussex Green Woodworking (based on Kingstonridge) to build a shelter/outdoor classroom on the site.

By the summer of 2023, the Garden will include a range of features to attract wildlife and engage the interests of children, as well as providing a new public space for people of all ages to enjoy.

Elsewhere in the village

We have planted bulbs including crocus, wild tulip, grape hyacinth and cyclamen in the space adjoining the lower tennis court.

Plans for a meadow area on St Pancras Green are currently in abeyance until the proposed outdoor exercise equipment has been installed since there appears to be a potential clash between these two projects.

Financial help from the KPC

The KPC decided to give the Action Group £10,000 spread over four financial years, beginning with £1000 in 2021/22. That first tranche was used on the Community Wildlife Garden to supplement the grant from the Chalkcliff Trust for the path and fence; for repairs to the shed; and for the purchase of hedging plants and some garden tools.

In round terms, we have used the £3000 given to us for the current financial year as follows:

Crocus bulbs (for Snednore)	1050.00
Other bulbs (St Pancras Green/tennis court)	610.00
Shrubs, perennials and climbers for the Community Garden	600.00
Wildflower seeds & hire of turf cutter (for the village green)	320.00
Snowdrops – “in the green” (for The Avenue and the top of The Street)	<u>420.00</u>
	£3000

We have outline plans for spending next year's allocation and that for 2024/25. We will present these for the KPC's approval in the Spring.

Volunteers

Apart from the work done on the Community Wildlife Garden and bulb planting elsewhere, some litter-picking has been done but activities have been restricted by illness of our Group leader.

In Bloom

We have suggested that we enter this year's competition, again jointly with the KPC, given our success in 2021 and again last year.

Traffic calming

The Group would like the KPC to consider a form of traffic calming widely used on mainland Europe which, on the face of it, has the potential to reduce considerably the average speed of through traffic in the village. The system involves:

- a notice warning drivers that they are approaching a speed control point
- a sensor measuring the speed of each vehicle
- a signal from the sensor which causes a traffic light ahead to turn red if any vehicle is exceeding the speed limit, the light remaining red for a specified time.

This system operates (at least) in Portugal, Spain, Italy and France. While it may not reduce the volume of traffic, it has been proved to reduce traffic speeds as very few drivers are willing to risk passing a red light.

Steve Berry
on behalf of the Kingston Action Group