

Friends of Hayes Common - Update Report January 2021

Finally after much preparation, on Tuesday 27 October, FoHC managed a session back on the Common. Sadly, 9 days after that we went into National lockdown again and everything came to a grinding halt. As I sit here and write this article, I am desperately hoping that by the time it is published we will be back again knowing that at least we have had a practice run and everything worked beautifully except for a distinct lack of tea and chocolate biscuits!

idverde allowed 15 of us to work so we had 3 groups: one cutting down holly trees, another cutting them to manageable sizes and a final group at the fire burning all the felled trees. Despite a few showers the fire was magnificent (well



done Colin) and everyone worked incredibly hard so we managed to clear a large area. It was so lovely to see all the familiar faces again and we managed to catch up with socially distanced chats.

It is wonderful to walk on the Common at the moment – the autumn colours are making it look stunning and the sound of children racing about and having fun is really heart- warming. One family I saw were picnicking on one of our old worksites whilst their children had a great time collecting sticks, making dens and playing hide and seek.

On the downside the quantity of litter has been astronomical with so many turning to the Common to eat their take-aways. Vast quantities have been collected and as much recycled as possible but it really is upsetting to know that people want to picnic in a beautiful place but are then happy to leave it in a real state. Thank you so much to all of you who go walking with your litter pickers and bags; it is really appreciated.

Lastly a rather good boost to Hayes: the Common has been awarded a Green Flag, which means we have been recognised as having a well-managed green space, open to everybody and helping to set the benchmark standard for recreational outdoor spaces across the UK and around the world. We will be able to celebrate this with our own flagpole and flag.

In normal times we meet every other Tuesday morning. An introduction to the group can be viewed on Youtube; 'FOHC AGM'. Looking forward to seeing you all again.

Clare Britton, FoHC