

AGM Chair Report 2026

The friends of Pinner Village Gardens have had another successful year. The Gardens have been complimented for design, maintenance and tidiness. We have continued to work very closely and have a great relationship with the Harrow Council Green Team.

The Gardens

The donations to FoPVG enable us to buy both the right plants for the right places and soil improvers in the bulk quantities in the scale of the park needs are much appreciated by park visitors.

Our current planting policy is to maintain and enhance the Pinner Village Gardens, rather than develop entirely new areas. There are , however 'hybrid' or 'crossover' areas where an areas needs re-working.

Rayners Point

One such area is Rayners Point. This lies roughly half way between the Rayners Lane and Compton Rise entrances and faces down the centre path to 4-bench 'Everest' Circle. Here brambles had overtaken everything and the soil level had sunk.

We began with restoring the front area – retaining bramble at the rear - and improving and building up the level by bringing in gravel, new soil and good compost. New planting was chosen and positioned according to their likes and dislikes. The area is partially shaded by trees, but one side is much sunnier and warmer in the afternoon. The choice of planting should ensure all year interest.

Colour and fragrance for Spring

At the **Stone Circle** we replanted the Queen of Night black tulips and the Muscari (grape hyacinths) and they do not last for ever. We try to get 3 flowerings out of tulips before replanting. New was a ring of *Hyacinth Sweet Invitation* (peach colour) that was visible from some distance and helping to show off the existing deep blue hyacinths and noticeably filling the air with fragrance.

At **Whittington Way** we added to the new shrubs on one side with more of the orange tulips – Toronto and Ballerina and more Alliums – that had performed so well on the opposite side and centre bed.

At **Hereford Gardens** , in the beds by the tennis courts, we continued with the pink, deep reds and white scheme with *Leucogem* known as Spring Snowflake, hyacinths and Midnight Rose Heuchera, all supporting the pink wall of *Viburnum bod' Dawn*

that has pink fragrant flowers from November through to April. New *Narcissus Jack Snipe* and *Iris reticulata* were planted at Compton Rise.

We also topped up the Lottery bed and outer **Rayners Lane** beds with new *Bergenia*, *Heuchera*, golden *Carex* (grass like) and *Tulip Bright Eyes*. Everest Circle benefitted from new *Primulas* for a splash of Spring colour.

Fifty-four new *Lavender Hidcote* replaced old brittle woody ones at the Stone Circle. We are trying out a creeping Phlox to keep out the weeds in front of the gold Lonicera hedges at Compton Rise. Six new Azaleas joined the existing ones in Spring to maintain the fantastic show of bright colour and fragrance.

In round figures we planted about 4,000 bulbs, 300 plants and emptied 12 dumpy (cubic metre) bags of soil & compost (with a further 8, funded from next years income). **All planted and moved by volunteers** including helps from the Geocachers.

Most new planting in the park is paid for by FoPVG Annual Memberships and donations of money. To keep the park looking as good as it does need your continued support. By donating funds to the park, we can get the plants that are needed to fill gaps, maintain interest all year, are suited to the various conditions in the park. We purchase at trade rates. We really appreciate all the membership contributions and donations – it makes a difference for the whole community.

Volunteering

Work parties & volunteers

We have continued to hold regular weekly work parties gardening on alternate Tuesday and Friday mornings throughout the year, except Bank Holidays. We normally have up to half a dozen regulars our supplemented by occasional participants. We always need more help and can happily accommodate most requests in terms of timing, although generally our regulars are otherwise occupied at weekends.

We are immensely grateful to our regular and occasional litter pickers who keep the park looking clean and tidy, which is not always the case in parks and public spaces.

While we focus on the four entrances, the azalea beds, the pond arc, the Everest Circle and our newest creation Rayners Point . Other parts of the park have received occasional, although

often intensive attention, such as Compton Copse, and the children's playground. One of our volunteers devotes enormous energy to maintaining the wild garden elements at North Green. We also ran some ad hoc sessions which have helped to boost the amount we have been able to do.

Geocache volunteers have been to help us with pond weeding and planting, tasks which are difficult to achieve without their waders and enthusiasm. We are extremely grateful to them and look forward to their regular support.

We have also done a fair amount of watering of the newer plants and trees in this very dry weather.

Corporate volunteering

We have continued to engage with businesses wanting volunteering opportunities for their staff as part of their corporate social responsibility programmes. Sky's engineers gave us a flying start to preparing the ground at Rayners Point even though a dozen Sky vans parked in Whittington Way seems to have caused some alarm among local people! BDO have been again and we had volunteers from Promoveritas based in Pinner and Mercers who look after Harrow's pension fund.

These days are very productive, and we are always keen to receive more corporate social responsibility groups. **If your work colleagues might be interested in helping us as a group (large or small) we'd love to hear from you**

Maintenance team

This small, hard-working group of volunteers give invaluable help with stone wall, bench and bin maintenance. In addition, they address water related issues such as fixing taps and topping up pond. Our hidden permanent hoses to make it much less labour intensive to provide essential water to plants at Rayners Point, Compton Rise and Whittington Way and we will look at extending these.

Hours

We have been careful to avoid making volunteering seem like work so do not clock our volunteers in and out nor record their hours. As a very rough estimate, we have put upwards of 3,000 Volunteers hours into park activities, the equivalent of more than two full time people!

Events

This Financial year the Friends have continued to deliver a programme of community engagement through both structured events and regular activities. Nature-led sessions included a well-attended pond dipping event in August, with around 25 participants, and an evening bat walk, attended by around 15 residents, both receiving positive feedback.

Bridge Street Gardens

In order to make needed improvements to the important green space of Bridge Street Gardens in the heart of Pinner, the Friends of Pinner Village Gardens have been engaged in its improvement process.

During the year, activity at Bridge Street Gardens has continued to build momentum, with a clear transition from early-stage planning into delivery and sustained community engagement.

Regular volunteer-led work parties have remained at the heart of progress, focusing on litter picking, clearance of invasive growth, pruning, and general improvements to the site. These sessions have played a significant role in improving the overall condition and accessibility of the gardens, supported by collaboration with Harrow Council.

A key milestone during the year has been the securing of external funding. The programme of planting has been split into 3 phases. For the first phase half of the funding was from Noman Stevenson and the Councillor Funds and half from The Pinner Association, enabling the regeneration project to progress at pace. This has allowed for the introduction of more structured improvements, including new planting schemes designed to enhance year-round interest, the development of wildlife-friendly areas, and upgrades to key features within the gardens.

Updates shared through Facebook have helped to demonstrate visible progress and maintain community engagement. These have highlighted both the practical work

being undertaken and the growing contribution of volunteers, reinforcing the community-led nature of the project.

They have helped to raise the profile of the gardens locally. Collectively, these activities are contributing to a transformation of Bridge Street Gardens into a more attractive, welcoming and well-used green space.

Most recent of these have been the 'opening' of a bug hotel by the Mayor of Harrow.

Overall, the progress made during the year reflects a positive trajectory, with continued volunteer commitment and community support positioning the project well for further development in the coming year. We continue to look for more volunteers

FINANCES

Income and expenditure this year has been steady and we have achieved our objectives to our planned budget.

INCOME	(April2025-March2026)	£4411.06
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Membership subs	£0776.35
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Life membership fees	£1300.00
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Donations	£2333.41
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EXPENDITURE	£4203.03
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Planting & maintenance	£3517.90
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Membership and Fundraising

We continue to operate a membership model which is an important source of income. Annual memberships paid for 2025 amounted to £776.35 We also currently have 92 life members who made a one-off payment of £100.

We have continued to experience decline in membership numbers and some of this is due to difficulties with accepting memberships via the website. Additionally many people wish to make a simple donation and we have experienced an increase in donations from the public which has ensured we can continue to do the work. We estimate it **costs £4,000 every year** to maintain the gardens to the standard the community currently enjoys.

We greatly value all donations and will work during 2026 to make this a more seamless process for people to donate.

Communication

The Facebook page continues to achieve good engagement with around 1,400

Followers. A new volunteer managing this has driven up engagement with the page and it is a great source of news and photographs of progress.

Junior parkrun (operated independently of the Friends Group)

The junior parkrun which takes place at 9am every Sunday morning continues to be a huge success. To date, there have been over 200 events since it began in 2022 with over 2,000 different children taking part. Recently over 200 children took part in the event which had a number of children from Reddiford School taking part in a charity effort. The success is due to the commitment of volunteers who run the event every week.