

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 24 May 2012

I confess that every time I come to prepare this annual report, my initial feelings are somewhat pessimistic and gloomy – the things not done (e.g. the hold ups on getting better paths laid), the bad things that have happened (e.g. the planning inspector's decision to approve flood lights for the Pavilion sports club), the manifestations of people's lack of respect for our open spaces (e.g. the incidents of fly tipping and litter), and so on. Then, quite shortly, I find that an inventory of the previous year starts to dispel those negative perceptions. The CREOS area is still here and largely intact, our organisation is well supported and financially strong, we do get things done (another 100 trees planted again this year, mountains of litter and fly tipping removed, paths repaired, overgrowth cut back, planning applications reviewed and responded to, newsletters produced and distributed and also the triumph of the Christmas social!). These things alone require a fair number of person hours and I think we should notch up these basics as an achievement too.

What has really lifted me this year has been the wonderful article prepared by Ian Holt – Haringey's Conservation Officer – for our last newsletter. Ian reminds us of the vital role open spaces like ours play in the wider picture, whilst on a day to day level we obviously think of the area as simply a place for a reflective walk and a breath of fresh air, a place for a game of tennis or cricket, somewhere to jog or walk the dog, play with our children and so on. Ian's piece celebrates these aspects but also makes links between areas like ours and to issues such as flood control, enriching the ecosystem and encouraging biodiversity. Important too is the 'stepping stone' effect – i.e. the importance of closely linked sites allowing species to move through the landscape and survive and flourish. For CREOS to be a part of that endeavour banishes the gloom and makes all the Sunday workdays, committee meetings and the letter writing stuff worthwhile.

Even in a comparatively quiet year like this one where we have not had major threats or progressed some projects as far as we might like, we still need to remember that the very existence of CREOS has a kind of 'sentry' function and our mere continued existence is useful. Developers, clubs and Council know we are here and ready to challenge threats to the area, and the community knows that we are here as an organisation they can turn to with their concerns.

All the committee would like to do more, and in the coming year we want to get contractors on the ground to make a start on developing more durable pathways, we want to finalise and run a website and also to develop a basic management plan with the school and the clubs. We will also be watching all developments at the Pavilion to make sure all planning restrictions are abided by. To help with these and our basic tasks, we would benefit from new members joining the committee and better attendance on our work days – usually the third Sunday of each month and this year starting and finishing earlier 10.30 am – 12.30 pm.

Thank you all so much for your continued support which makes it all possible and a particular 'thank you' to all those members who have volunteered help with work projects, production and distribution of newsletters and with the picnics and other social events. Finally I must, as always, thank my fellow committee members for all the hours, care and labour they have put in on behalf of CREOS again this year.

Mel Cairns *Chairman*