

Bernard's Blog No. 24

WILD FLOWERS AND GRASSES AT ST JOHN'S

On Tuesday 21st June St John's Churchyard hosted a workshop as part of "Love Your Burial Ground" organised by the CofE Environmental Group 'Caring for God's Acre'. There are over 20,000 burial grounds in England and Wales, ranging from small rural medieval churchyards to large Victorian city cemeteries, spanning different cultures, religions and centuries.



Burial grounds, including St John's, can be remnants of the landscape that once surrounded them, unspoilt by agriculture and development, home to plants, animals and insects now rare in our wider countryside. Our churchyard encapsulates the history of a community, it tells us about fashion, status and immigration of lives long-lived and those tragically short. It is a place full of stories.

We were pleased to have with us Georgina Sharp from GfGA, two experts from 'Surrey Wildlife' and Jane McLoughlin our local wildflower specialist and fourteen guests who had responded to our invitation on our website to join in a morning of wild flower identification. It was an amazing informative session, we were each loaned a x10 magnification hand lens to personally identify the differences of groups of flowers that we thought were the same name. One of our experts enthused over the ranges of grasses growing in our churchyard and I will try to remember to distinguish 'Yorkshire Fog' from 'Timothy' or Meadow Foxtail' or Cocks foot', 'Vernal Grass' or 'Bent'. But I've forgotten already. Perhaps we should have regular monthly(?) ID sessions when the Tea Room is open. Let me know if you are interested.

Bernard

It was pleasing to note that we were told we have the 'best managed' churchyard in Croydon (Thank you Charlotte & co)

A REQUEST FROM OUR CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE TEAM.

There are several sunken graves within the grounds which need topping up. If you are working on changes to your own garden and have any spare 'top soil'

(Not clay or rubble!) could to please donate a bag or two to St John's before we lose the mower down a hidden hole. Thank you.

Bernard