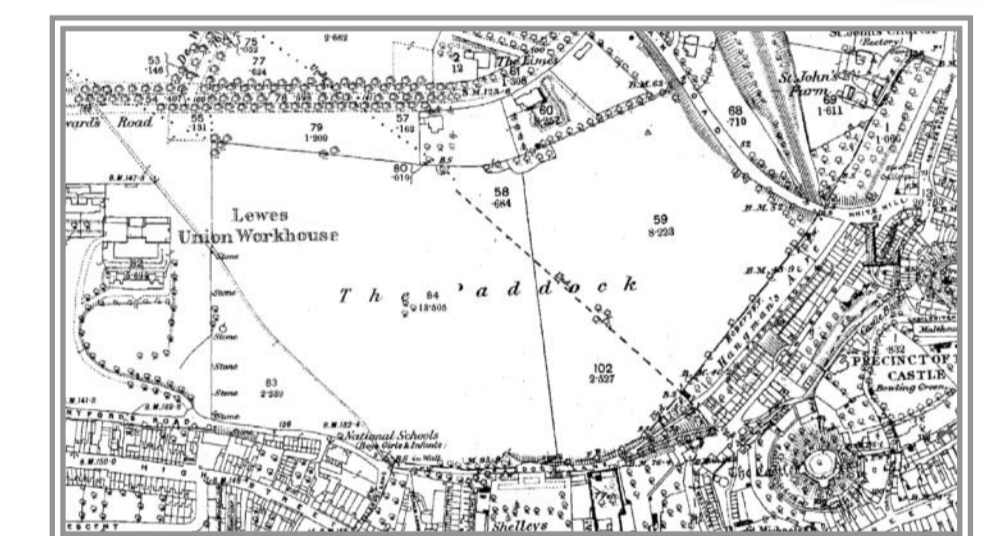


# TYTHE COPSE

## History of the Tythe Copse



OS 1874

An early map of Lewes, dating from the 17th century, shows the Tythe Copse in the Paddock as part of a sweep of grazing land between the castle and the communal fields on the Wallands. In Georgian times, the maps show trees planted at regular intervals alongside Paddock Lane, where they stand today, following the line of the old Lewes borough boundary. Limes were planted around borough boundaries in Georgian times to denote Hanoverian sympathies.

By the late 19th century (see map), there was a new road to the north, Prince Edward's Road, and a workhouse where the Ousedale flats now stand. By 1910 Baxter's Field was surrounded by development; the Avenue formed its northern boundary and the 'Paddock Syndicate' owned the whole Paddock.

Baxter's Print Works established an athletic club in 1921 and bought most of the land that now forms Baxter's Field. The Paddock Syndicate kept the site of the copse. That land was leased to the sports club for

999 years in 1927, at a ground rent of £12.50 per year. This land was later given to St Anne's Church in 1928 and now forms the copse for which we still pay the same ground rent.

The 1987 hurricane felled many trees, including the giant beeches by the gate. Local residents and 'Trees for Lewes', planted new beeches together with some birches on the grass bank in 1988 (see photo). Other trees have self-seeded. At the start of this millenium two limes fell. One lime died but the other lives on in its horizontal state. In 2003 Baxter's Field was bought by the community who also lease the copse land.

If you follow the path, you will walk through the history of the copse, alongside the stately old standing limes, through the middle of the dead lime and across the bridge over the living lime, returning under the 1988 beeches and seeing the new seedling trees.

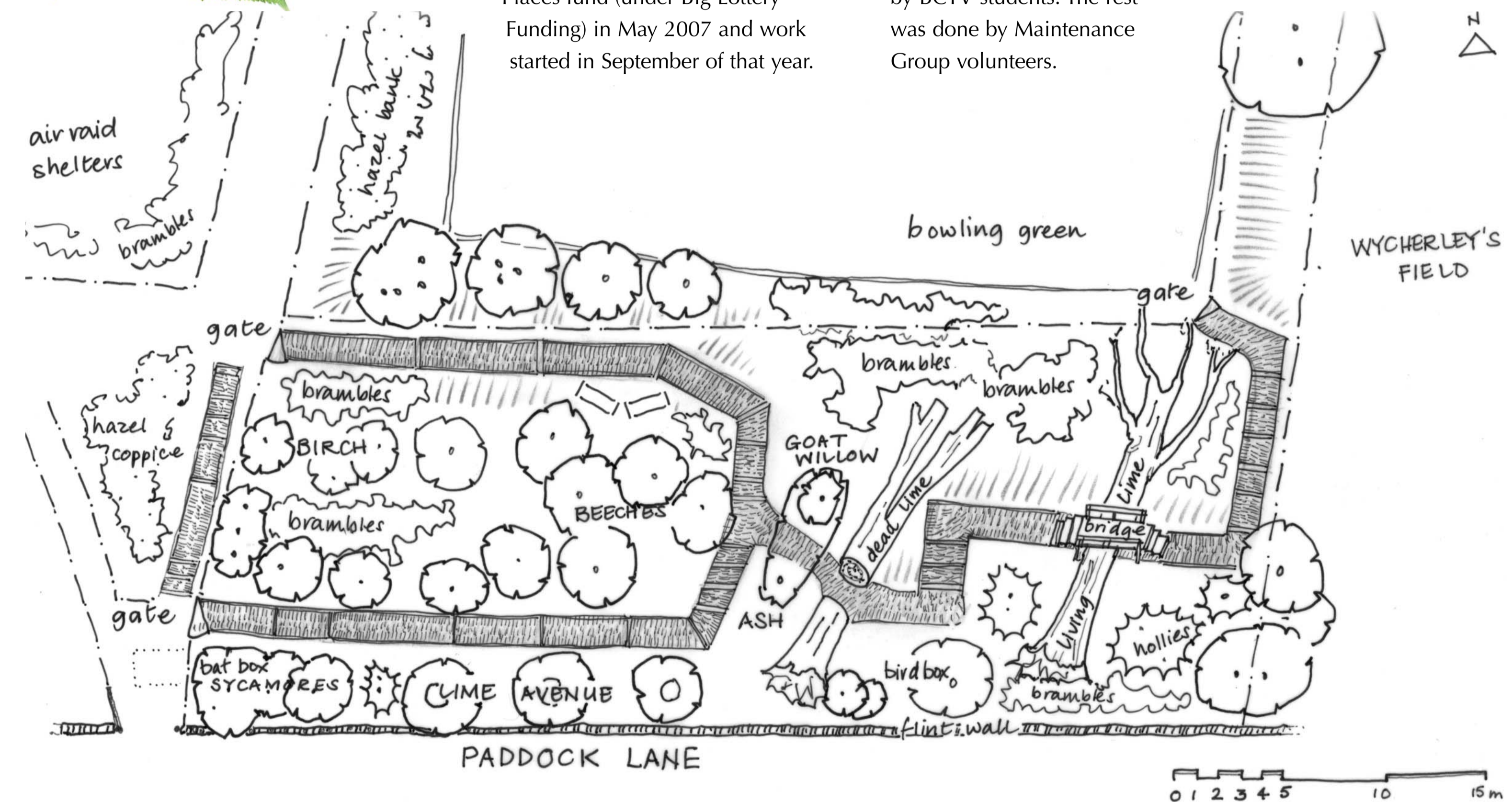
The history of Tythe Copse continues...



## Development of the copse

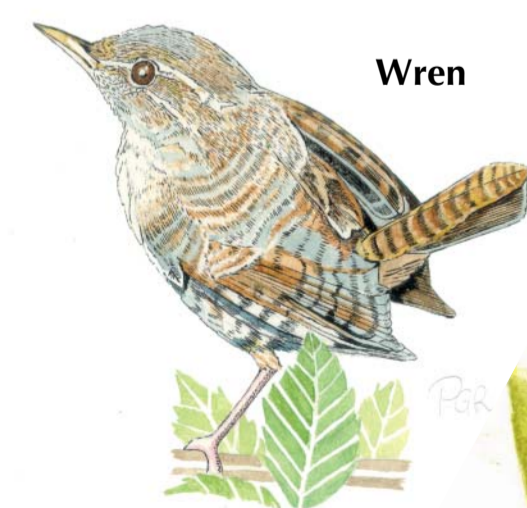
The route of the nature path was planned by members of the Baxter's Field Company – volunteers who regularly give time and energy to conserve and maintain the wildlife in the field. Money for the construction of the path was obtained from the Breathing Places fund (under Big Lottery Funding) in May 2007 and work started in September of that year.

The project had the support of St Anne's church and local junior schools. BCTV provided consultancy on path construction, and the first part of the path, a circular route from the upper gate to the first fallen lime and back down to the lower gate, was constructed by BCTV students. The rest was done by Maintenance Group volunteers.



## What you might see in the copse

In spring early flowers push up through the earth and trees become clothed in new bright leaves. Birds are building their nests and singing to attract a mate.

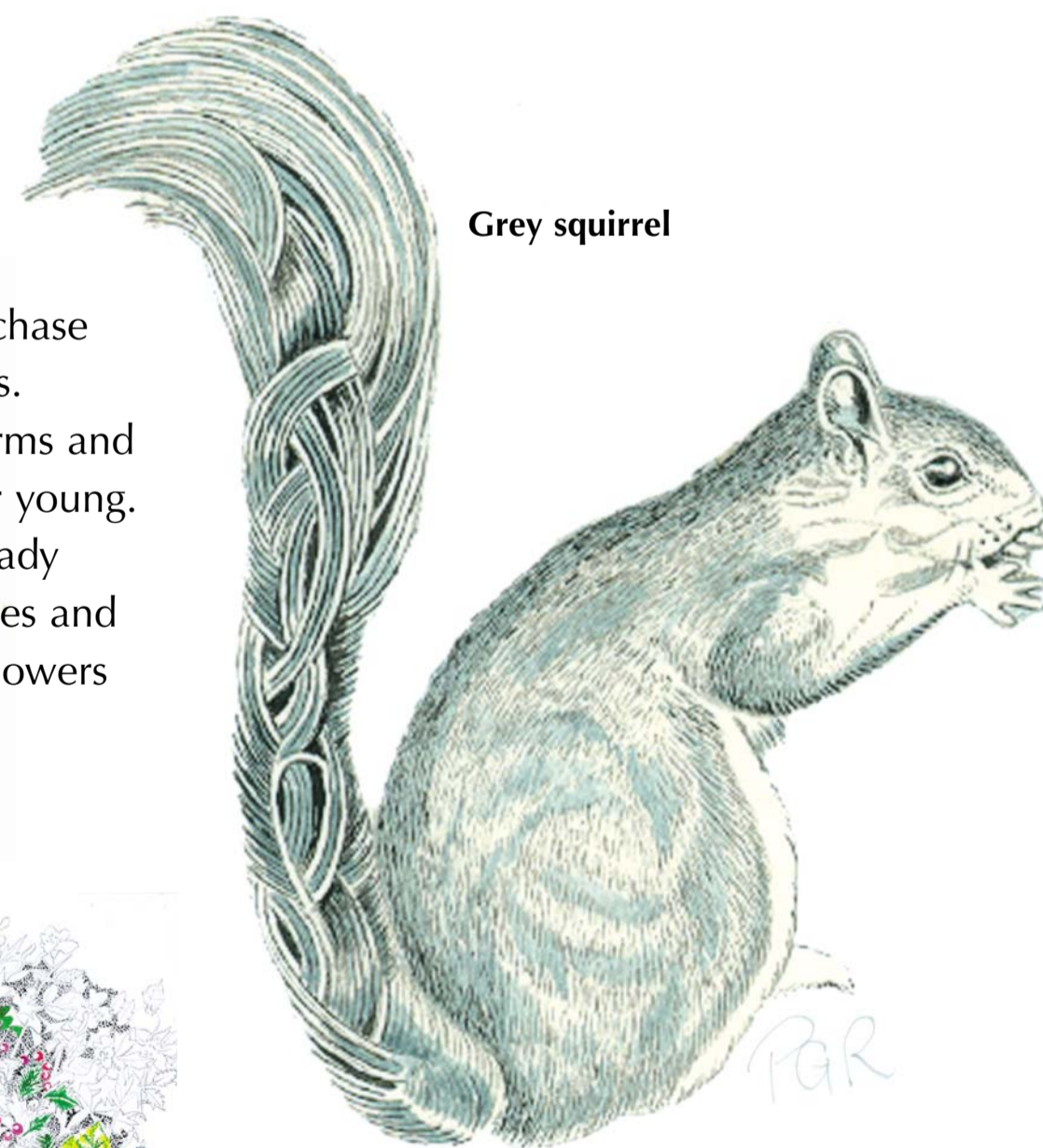


Wren



English Bluebell

In summer, squirrels chase along the branches. Birds collect worms and insects for their young. It becomes shady under the trees and the spring flowers fade away.



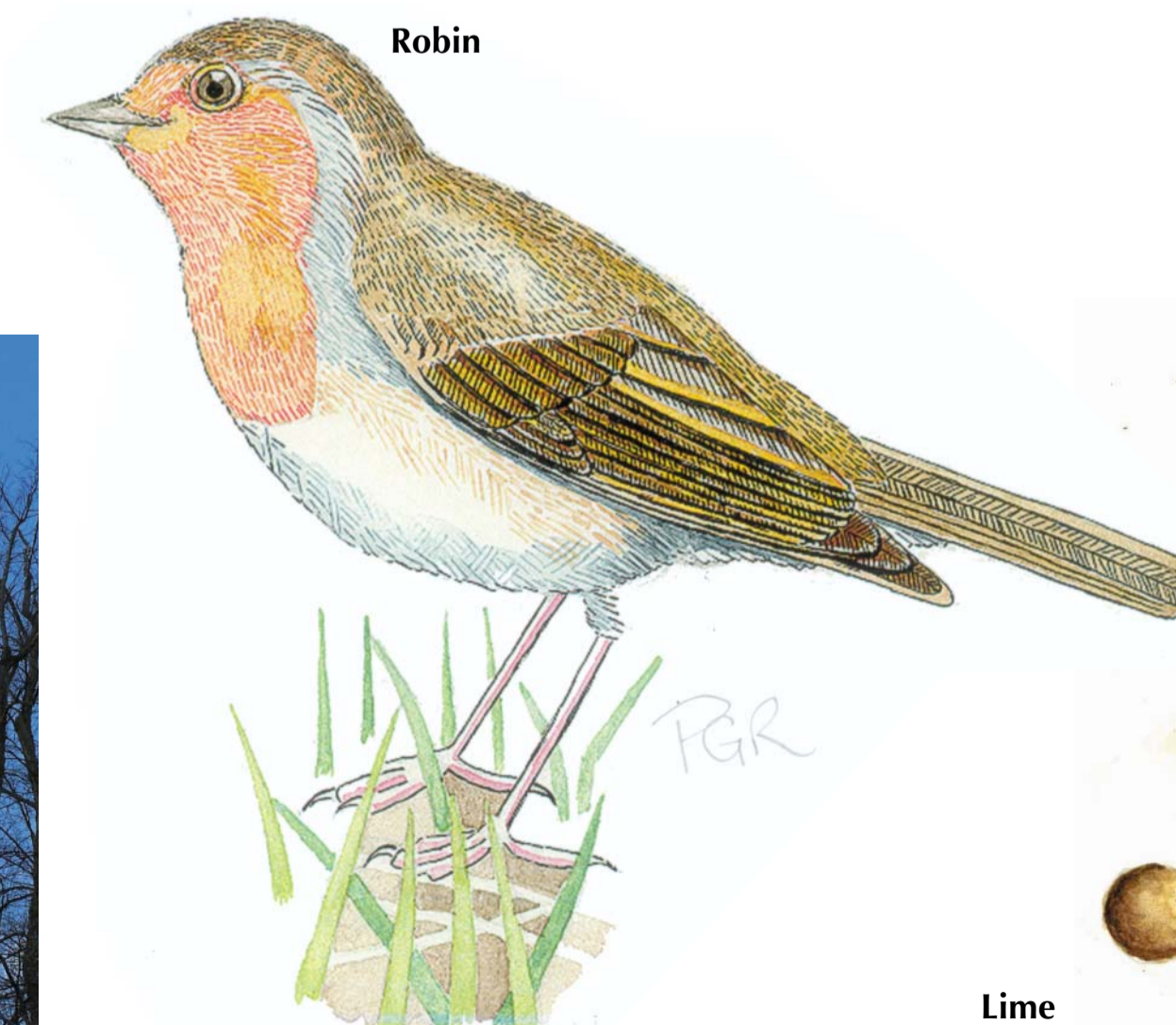
Grey squirrel



Knapweed and Buttercups

Autumn brings the misty mornings with spiders' webs glistening with dew. The leaves start to turn golden. Berries and nuts ripen.

Winter comes and the leaves fall, animals shelter from the cold. There will always be more to see if you move quietly and slowly, and what about the life you cannot see underground or when it's dark.



Robin



Lime