



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013

REPORTS – MARCH 2013

Chairman's Report – March 2013

1. Thank you to all those Friends who called into Waitrose, Bromley South and put their green tokens into the Community Matters collection box for the Friends of Jubilee Country Park in August. As a result of this, Waitrose has kindly donated £340 to our group.
2. The History Board on the Gun Site which was vandalised over the summer has been replaced with a new one, funded by the Friends, made from an environmentally friendly material.
3. The speed humps on the approach to Thornet Wood Car Park have been painted at last. It took Bromley Council eighteen months to do this, despite regular complaints from the Friends about the potential danger to pedestrians, cyclists and drivers as a result of the fact that the speed humps were not visible. It is shameful that it was not until we took our concerns to the Head of Parks & Green Spaces that anything was done about it.
4. In 2006, the Friends were criticised in Bromley Council's People for Parks competition about the lack of signage at the rear of Bromley High School indicating that Jubilee Country Park can be accessed via the narrow lane beyond Thornet Wood Road. The Friends have been lobbying Bromley Council ever since to provide a brown country park sign in the locality. Disgracefully, it took six and a half years for them to get around to putting the sign up. Unfortunately, it was initially set up on the wrong pole, but we have sorted that out ourselves. We couldn't wait another six and a half years for the Council to get around to putting it in the right place!
5. I have had many complaints about the shocking state of both Thornet Wood and Blackbrook Lane Car Parks, both of which have huge potholes. I understand that these are scheduled to be worked on before the end of March 2013.
6. The path from Blackbrook Lane which runs parallel to Bromley High School has been waterlogged and impassable for anyone not wearing wellies for several months. There are no funds available from Bromley Council to rectify this. The Friends are going to consider funding some work on these paths, but anticipate the costs could be significant. I will advise you as to the progress of this matter in our next newsletter.
7. I am sad to report that Margaret, wife of John Swain from our weekly work party, passed away during the autumn last year. Our sincere sympathy goes to John and his family.
8. Two members of the current Friends Committee have decided to stand down. I would like to offer our sincere thanks to both of them.

Rosemary Cox has been a Committee Member for several years, helping out with refreshments at meetings and attending promotional events. For several years, she has very kindly allowed the Committee to meet in her home.

Jackie Lewis has been on the Committee since it commenced, serving firstly as Treasurer and more recently as Membership Secretary. She has done an enormous amount of work behind the scenes on behalf of the Friends and has been a great support to me too.

9. In view of the above resignations, the Committee has an urgent need to find additional Committee members. We only have two Committee meetings a year, so it will not take up a great deal of your time. If you would like to consider joining the Committee, you are welcome to attend our next Committee meeting in Petts Wood on Thursday 29th August at 7.30pm. Please call/email me if you would like to join us.
10. Many congratulations to our Sue Folkes, who runs our web site, on her engagement to Brian Thompson. Wedding bells will be ringing for them on July 13th!
11. Bob Land from the Friends has handmade a limited number of high quality wooden bird boxes, perfect for use in gardens. 100% of the funds raised from the sale of these boxes goes to the Friends of Jubilee Country Park. These are priced at £11.99 each and can be purchased by calling 07840-542261 or emailing jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk
12. Many thanks to Donald Wilson for independently examining the accounts for us.
13. To report a problem in Jubilee Country Park please contact Bromley Council on 020-8313-4471 or e-mail landscape.helpdesk@bromley.gov.uk. To report a fire or call an ambulance dial 999. To report an emergency to the Police call 999. To report a non-emergency issue to the Police call 101.
14. Remember, if you have any good ideas about walks, talks or outings the Friends could arrange, or thoughts about projects in the park which we might be able to consider, do let us know.

Jennie Randall, Chairmam. 07840-542261 or email jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk

Butterflies 2012

Apart from a record number of Meadow Browns the butterflies seen on our transects in 2012 continued the decline of 2011. The transect involves walking the same set route in the park covering different habitats and is undertaken weekly for 26 weeks between April and September.

1570 Meadow Browns were recorded in 2012 against 906 in 2011, which in itself were the highest seen in recent years. However, the remaining species only accounted for 758 butterflies against 1095 in 2011 and 1898 in 2010.

Dramatic declines have been witnessed in the numbers of Common Blues (303 in 2010 to 33 in 2012), Ringlets (261 to 18) and Six-spot Moths (329 to 9). In addition most other species were in decline, Comma from 26 in 2010 to 10 in 2012, Peacock 18 to 3, Speckled Wood 121 to 96, Holly Blue 30 to 11, Skippers 163 to 119, Whites 76 to 44 and Orange Tip 20 to 11 over the same period.

Whilst these numbers might paint a depressing picture it should be said that in many of the species numbers had increased steadily up until 2009 and 2010 only to fall away in 2011 and 2012.

Marcus Jordan & Tony Ruffle

Bird Boxes

This will be my third spring assisting Derek McWalter (RSBP) with the bird box survey in Jubilee Country Park. Through the winter I have checked the boxes for wear and tear. Squirrels and woodpeckers can cause damage by gnawing large holes in the boxes, these are repaired with odd pieces of wood, not a particular work of art but the birds are happy with them.

The last two years, despite extremes of weather conditions, were very successful for blue tit and great tit fledglings. My hope is this year may see another species, perhaps nuthatch or treecreeper, take up residence in one or more of the boxes.

Ian Pannett

Website News February 2013

Over the six months from August we have averaged over 68 visitors per month at an average of 100 visits per month. This is a small reduction in visitors from the same period last year (80) - perhaps due to the bad weather. It may be that we need to change the site. Any thoughts on this would be welcome

The e-mailbox is well used and is more successful as a feedback device than the guest page that we had initially.

We need to submit events at least 6 weeks before they are due so we hope to put our whole schedule onto the site as soon as it is published. There also does not appear to be a facility to amend events once submitted without a call to the council. It will be interesting to hear if anyone uses the Bromley Council website for events instead of the Friends website.

I have added a link to our website from <http://www.visitwoods.com/>. This is an interesting site run by the Woodland Trust which allows you to relate and rate your experiences of walking in the many woodland areas in the UK. It also allows you to upload images. It would be good publicity for us if you look at the site and add some feedback on Jubilee Country Park. It currently has a rating of 4/5 from a total of 1 viewer.

Meanwhile - the usual plea: please let us have your thoughts for improvements, your photos, feedback on any of the walks led by volunteers from the Friends, stories about the history of the Park, local events you may like to publish.

Susan Folkes – Webmaster

web address: www.jubileecountrypark.btck.co.uk
email: jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk

Jubilee's Whistle-blower!

One bright sunny morning in 2007 I made my way to the Friends of Jubilee Country Park work session to see if I could help. I was warmly welcomed, given a pair of leather gloves and loppers and shown how to clear large semi circles of scrub either side of a pathway to improve a butterfly transect, placing off-cuts to form a protective corridor for small mammals. Oh how I enjoyed myself!

On other workdays since, I've been shown how to lay a living hedge, such as the one near St. James School. I've done coppicing to allow light to get to undergrowth for the wild flowers, helped make bonfires, cleared ponds, removed young oak saplings and ragwort from meadows and painted picnic tables and benches. I've also been shown where to find elf cups, a tiny fingernail sized bright jewelled fungi growing amongst the moss and a minute egg of the Purple Hairstreak butterfly on an oak branch.

There is always a happy murmur punctuated by bursts of laughter wherever the Friends are working. These latter months, since my shoulder and wrists started playing up, I accompany Paula to do litter picking, making friends with walkers and their dogs. Come 11.00 a.m. we hurry back to the gathering to prepare tea, coffee and chocolate biscuits. At 11.30am I blow my whistle for 15 minutes time out.

At the end of the work session some Friends make their way to a well known watering hole in Petts Wood. Me, oh no, I make my way home, flop in my chair and sleep for a couple of hours – well what would you expect from an 83 year old!

Do come and join us.

Jean Archer

Financial Accounts

A copy of the Financial Accounts for 2012 is attached.

Paula Murphy, Treasurer

Membership

The Friends of Jubilee Country Park are a thriving group with a healthy membership, steadily growing in numbers. Among the members are a hardy and cheerful group that meet on Monday mornings come rain or shine (although occasionally the weather does defeat us!) to maintain the park for the benefit of the flora and fauna, as well as for the enjoyment and safety of the members of the visiting public.

Recently a few of our long standing older members have “retired” and we are missing their contribution. We are a friendly bunch who welcomes new faces. No special skills are required and basic training for hand tools is given. There will always be a job to do that each of us is comfortable with. We meet at 10 a.m. at a pre arranged location in the park. Our work programme is displayed on our website or you can call 07840-542261 or email jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk for details.

So if you have spare time on a Monday, enjoy fresh air, a little exercise and a lot of laughter we will be pleased to see you.

*Ian Pannett, **Publicity***

*Lyn Ward - **Secretary to the Friends of Jubilee Country Park**
March 2013*