

Newsletter

March 2015



Editorial

The plight of our public parks is highlighted in this month's Ramblers magazine. Last year the Heritage Lottery Fund (Renaissance to Risk?) found that 86% of park managers have had budgets cut since 2010 and 45% of local authorities are considering selling parks and green spaces or transferring their management to others. You have possibly heard of Bromley Council's plans to build a primary school on Havelock Recreation Ground.

Bromley Council are well on the way to transferring management of their green spaces including Jubilee Country Park to a landscaping company. Friends groups all over the borough are uniting and working to ensure that this will not be detrimental to the condition and care of their own green spaces. A number of our group attended a consultation meeting on the future of the parks service at the Civic Centre. This was lead by Dan Jones, the Assistant Director of Streetscene and Greenspace at the London Borough of Bromley. There was a free and frank exchange of views and a formal response was sent to Dan Jones and also to Councillor Colin Smith.

It is important that the work of our volunteers is not hampered by any change and that the conservation of our park for the community and for wildlife is effectively continued. In answer to a specific question Dan Jones assured us that we would continue to be supervised and guided by experienced staff although these would be employed by the contracted company. A controversial issue is that the proposal includes the transfer of existing countryside officers for Bromley Council to the proposed contractor. Good news for us if we have continuity and the officers concerned do not lose out on their terms and conditions.

We support and volunteer to help the community enjoy the unique resource of a country park on London's doorstep. We do not work for the council or its contractors. It is important that we continue to fight to ensure we do not lose our park through neglect. To this end we are uniting with other Friends groups in giving a unified response through the Forum and encouraging everyone to take an active interest in keeping the park a valued resource.

Kate Conto, senior policy officer for the Ramblers says "Parks and green spaces are historically rooted in improving people's health and wellbeing" and Terry Howard, chair of Sheffield Ramblers, adds: "There's a calming effect in just being in a green space...".

Let us continue to fight for our health, wellbeing and calm, whoever owns and manages the park.

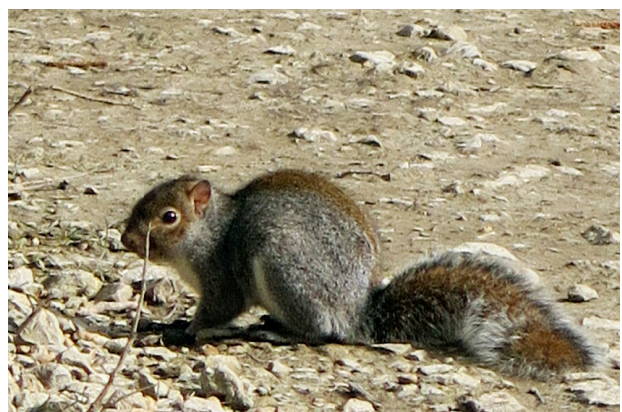
The council will be voting on the decision in March.

We still need help - **meet the volunteers** at an open meeting on the evening of 17th March. Drop in between 7:00 p.m. and 9 p.m. for a chat with the team and working party, to find out what we do and think about how and whether you can help.

Susan Folkes



New season's frogspawn in the park -



*and - a young squirrel on the path at Bob's Land
(the robin flew away!)*

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Neil Cook, Fred O'Hare, Marcus Jordan, Sally Morris, Ian Pannett, Ted Putland and Tony Ruffle for leading walks in the Park this year and Susan Folkes for her illustrated talk on underwater critters. Also we take this opportunity to thank Marian Clarke and Margaret Harrington for their help on our event evenings and at the May Fayre, Sarah Coulbert for all her efforts with the Facebook pages, and Chrissie Hudson for help in publicising the events programme.

What the Conservation Work Party have been doing

After a long dry spell of weather at the end of October the new pond, built to alleviate some of the floodwater issues in Bob's Land, was dug by contractors using heavy machinery and successfully completed without damage to the surrounding land. Right on cue the rain fell filling the pond



overnight. The arrival of rain did mean that the Friends work party in the weeks following struggled in thick muddy clay to erect a post and rail fence around the pond for the safety of passersby and the protection of wildlife. This area is always prone to flooding but so far this winter the path from Blackbrook Lane car park has remained passable without the need to wear wellies and we have the benefit of a natural unlined seasonal pond - invaluable to wildlife. This new pond, funded by the Friends, has been named as **“Jennie’s Pond”** to acknowledge the sterling efforts Jennie Randall has put into making it happen.

The Tent Peg Lane car park now has a height restriction barrier installed and we are currently replacing the worn out perimeter post and rail fence, (we are becoming experts!)

We are deeply concerned about the possible loss of supervision of the Friends work parties at Jubilee following Bromley Council’s proposals for a private contractor to take over the maintenance of Bromley’s parks and green spaces.

On a positive note a new member has recently joined the Monday work party and as always we welcome volunteers who can spare a few hours helping with any task whether large or small. Our meeting place varies each week and can be found on the website under “volunteers”, and posters on the notice boards around the park.



Workday in Ray’s Pond - a cold November morning thinning out the vegetation

Other projects we have funded this year include

- A new boardwalk on the nature trail at Jesse's steps in Bob's Land
- A new interpretation board for Blackbrook Lane car park
- Improvements to Alan's path and the path beside the new pond. This needs more work in the coming year.

Interpretation board



Boardwalk

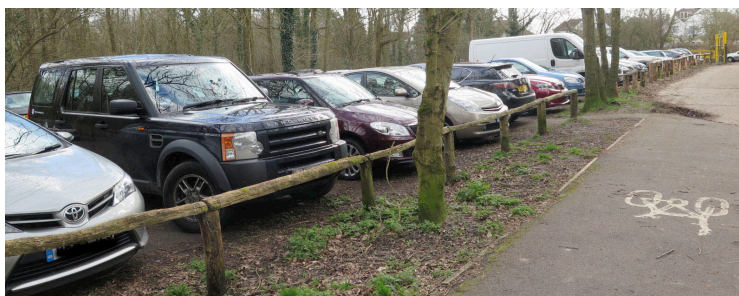


In 2015 we had hoped to upgrade & resurface much of the London Loop path between the Gun Site & St James's entrance but this is going to cost in excess of £3000 and we cannot commit to spending this amount at this stage.

Tent Peg Lane Car Park

Following numerous complaints from users of the park that Tent Peg Lane car park is regularly full on a weekday, the Council are considering imposing parking restrictions to discourage commuter parking.

Following consultation with Friends in the working party it has been suggested that the proposal is modified, allowing "4 hours free parking, no return within - say - 2 hours". This would cause minimal disruption to legitimate park users such as dog walkers and parents walking children to and from school.



Any restrictions imposed would apply only to Tent Peg Lane car park because of its proximity to the station. The other car parks at Thornet Wood & Blackbrook Lane will be totally unaffected. Drivers who wish to use Jubilee Park for longer than 4 hours could still use these car parks. Alternatively, on-road parking is possible after 10.00am. Any comments on this should be addressed to our local councillor email Colin.Smith@bromley.gov.uk or write to him c/o Bromley Civic Centre.

Events this year

We continued to have a number of successful walks and talks since September although attendance at the winter walks has been poor. Below is a review, by Sally Morris, of our "Dog Talk" last month. Robert Alleyne was a very entertaining speaker and appreciated by dog owners and non dog owners alike.

Review of talk given by Robert Alleyne, Canine Behavioural Trainer: “Ensuring Dogs are a pleasure in the Park”

I think we all thought we were going to be lectured on the need to ‘pick up poos’ in the Park. Our speaker, however, had come to advise us on the importance of keeping our dogs under control at all times. Apparently the law has tightened considerably of late and we are living in an increasingly litigious culture. This means that some people are only too happy to take us to Court if our pet is deemed to be ‘out of control’ in any way. There have been some very sad and extremely unfair cases recently where dogs have had to be put down simply because they have ‘frightened’ people! Rob warned us of the risk of using extender leads. If some child or frail adult has the misfortune to come between you and your enthusiastic but friendly pooch and is knocked over - we must realise that this could lead to a case for compensation. We all enjoyed Rob’s talk very much but returned home somewhat more conscious of the responsibility involved in walking our exuberant pets.



I asked Rob after the talk if he could advise me over the care of my ten year old poodle, Barni, who has Addison’s Disease, which makes him a little unpredictable. Barni has, recently, detected that Bill, my husband, is a little slower than he used to be. I daren’t let the two of them go for a walk together because Barni would nip anyone who comes close to Bill. He has appointed himself as Bill’s carer. Take it from me that Barni’s nips are not at all welcome. I wanted to know the position if someone comes to our home? Bill takes Barni on to his lap as ankles are the main target. My question was, what is the legal position if Barni were to bite someone in our home? Rob said that until last year we would have been legally protected but the law has changed and we’d have to be very careful in future. I asked, rather anxiously, what he thought I should do about it? He smiled and said very quietly **“Re-home your husband!”**.

Sally Morris

Social Media March 2015

We are disappointed with the number of members who have joined our Facebook page. If you get a chance please give us some feedback. Sarah Coulbert is publishing our events regularly and, if you join then emails can be automatically sent to remind you of events such as working party venues in a timely fashion.

The website is basically the place to see information about the Park, to check on an overall picture of events and to channel queries to the group.

It would be nice if we could include reports of the walks and talks taking place so if you have anything of interest then please send it through the site or to the email address below.

Susan Folkes

Treasurer’s Report

The financial accounts for 2014 are attached.

The Friends Forum - “Working together for Parks”

Open committee meetings are held regularly on the first Thursday in the month at Community House, South Street, Bromley. Usually these are at 10.00am but every third open committee meeting is being held in the evening in order to accommodate member groups who find it difficult to attend daytime meetings. The next evening meeting is in June.

More details on the Forum can be found on their website. <http://www.bromleyfriendsforum.org>

Contacts

The Friends work with the Council solely in a conservation and preservation role. To report any of the following, contact Bromley Council's Customer Service Centre by calling 0300 303 8658

or e-mail landscape.helpdesk@bromley.gov.uk

- Overflowing bins (both dog and rubbish)
- Fallen/dangerous trees
- Anti-social behaviour
- Vandalism/Graffiti
- Dog-related issues (such as dangerous dogs)
- Maintenance issues (such as uncut grass, damaged fencing, gates, dangerous paths etc.)
- Dumped rubbish

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

Contacts for the Friends of Jubilee Country Park

web address: www.jubileecountrypark.btck.co.uk

Facebook: Jubilee Country Park

email: jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk

Mobile/Text: 07976 409743 (Ian Pannett)

Your Management Team - Friends of Jubilee Country Park

March 2015

Friends of Jubilee Country Park Financial Accounts 2014

Balance as at 7 Jan 2014 **£6,147.92**

Money In:

Book Sales (Crooked Billet)	283.50
Book Sales (Jubilee Park)	180.00
Coasters	7.00
Donations	486.57
Fridge Magnets	20.00
LBB Survey	100.00
Pens	8.50
Plants	53.00
Subscriptions	875.00
	£2,013.57

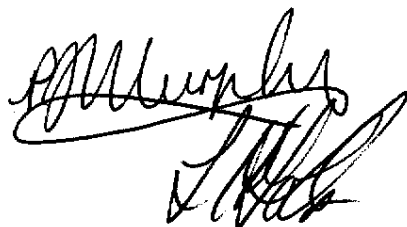
Money Out:

Event Costs	30.00
Hall Hire	169.00
New Pond & Path	3,840.00
Provisions	80.69
Speakers	470.00
Stationery	184.54
Thornet Wood Board	560.80
Tools+Equipment	784.95
	£6,119.98

Balance as at 7 Jan 2015 **£2,041.51**

Signatures:

Treasurer



Chairman

Accounts examined by

