

Committee Report to members of Friends of Broomfield Park 2018

Once again, the past year has been a very productive one with teams of volunteers working tirelessly to preserve and enhance our beautiful park. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them all; without them our committee would be without purpose.

The Friends continue to have on-going support from the Borough and we have continued to work closely with ward councillors, especially those from Southgate Green and Winchmore Hill.

Our park would not be as attractive as it is without the dedication and work of our two gardeners, Bernadette and Mischa. Thank you to them both.

Throughout this report you will read about the vast numbers of volunteers giving their time to the various areas within the park and the diversity of the work which they carry out on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. They do a magnificent job. We welcome everyone and value all contributions.

Conservatory Report from January 2018 Geraldine Anwar

It has been an exciting year in the Conservatory. The Conservatory Group have been trying for several years to get the Council to carry out essential repairs. The woodwork was rotting, in particular one of the doors and some of the windows. After intervention by Councillor Dinah Barry, Keith Milne, Principal Surveyor, visited the Conservatory and arranged a full survey. The Council agreed that the Conservatory would be completely refurbished. This meant it had to be closed to the public for two months from 16th April. The volunteers had access to care for the plants during this time and the contractors were very accommodating. The Conservatory reopened on time on 17th June. The volunteers worked hard to get the planting looking good again. The Banana Plant decided to flower whilst we were closed but did not suffer any harm and the bananas are now ripening. Hopefully, The Greenery will be serving home grown Banana cake again this year.

Despite the disruption, the Conservatory Group managed a full programme of events. The first event was a children's activity – 'Plant a Bean'. We have held our usual range of Plant Sales. Jean gave a talk on the Carnivorous Plant Collection. Elizabeth, also kindly, opened her Garden to the public again this year. Marc Harris entertained us with his music.

Apiary Broomfield Orchard 2018. Kim Lumley

The bee year starts in early spring when the bees start to come out of their winter cluster and this year we started with several priorities. The first was the continued recovery of colonies after infection with European Foul Brood three years ago; this is a notifiable disease, which is becoming increasingly prevalent in our region. We had been given the 'all clear' by the Bee Inspector from the National Bee Unit last year but unfortunately this year had a recurrent if mild infection in two hives. We were able to manage this without destroying any bee colonies but it meant a lot of work and expenditure re-hiving in sterilised hives with new frames and wax foundation, and strict antisepsis procedures. At present, all are looking healthy and we have four colonies and a reserve nucleus that we will nurture through the next winter. One consequence of this is that we have a much-reduced honey yield of around 100lbs, which we will start to sell in the Orchard and Greenery café in October. We were able to recover the costs with insurance through the British Beekeeping Association.

Last year we had very troublesome episodes of vandalism particularly in the orchard but also in the Park in general. There have been attempts to knock hives off their stands in the past. Over the winter we replaced the hive stands with heavy-duty stands, on a concrete foundation, to which we are able to fix the hive bases. Fortunately, so far this year there has been no intrusion or damage in the apiary.

Another important issue has been the bad behavior of some of our bees. After some years with the same queen or replacement queens – that are her daughters - the bees can start to revert to 'wild-type' characteristics. They can be very aggressive when we inspect the hives, determined to sting and often getting through our protection, worst of all is a tendency for the guard bees to follow us after inspections with the expressed aim of stinging once we've taken our bee suits off. The way we

improve this is to 're-queen' with queen bees that are bred to have certain characteristics, one of which is to be gentle and tolerant when disturbed, this is particularly important with the apiary being close to public areas. We have invested in two German Buckfast queens as well as breeding some new queens from calmer colonies and at present this seems to have been effective with all colonies seeming quite calm. We are hopeful that some of these problems are now behind us and that we will have a good year in 2019 with higher honey yields.

Report on Wetlands proposal for Broomfield Park for AGM Sue Younger and Ivor Evans

At the Friends' last AGM in May 2017 there was a joint presentation given by Thames 21 and Enfield Council about a proposal to create a wetlands area in Broomfield Park. Subsequently Enfield organised a public consultation about the Wetlands proposal which involved distribution of a short booklet explaining the need for a wetlands area in Broomfield with details of the proposed site in the park (southern end, adjacent to Powys Lane and west of the walled garden). A survey form was available for completion by local residents and a stall was set up in the park on separate days in July and August and at the Palmers Green festival in early September. The consultation closed on 15th September and the results showed a large majority in favor of the proposal.

Graham Campbell (Senior Engineer- Structures and Watercourses) from Enfield Council has been our contact and the full detailed proposal was put before the planning committee in the Spring. As Broomfield is a listed park the proposals have to be shown to Historic England and other conservation groups and we are still awaiting final approval.

In the meantime, Graham Campbell and Thames 21 managed to obtain a small grant from the GLA to alleviate the problem of pollution of the water by planting reed beds in the lakes (but not the boating pond). On 11 July a group from the Friends' committee spent the day with Ben Fenton from Thames 21 and Graham clearing out and then planting reed beds at the edge of the top lake. Ben gave us a safety briefing and we had to put on wellington boots, yellow jackets and 2 pairs of gloves before starting work in the lake. The work was supervised by Ben and it was physically demanding but it was an enjoyable, team-building task and we managed to plant a lot of reed beds (see photos). Contractors completed the task by planting reed beds in deeper water in the top lake and more reeds in the middle lake (overlooked by the Conservatory).

Once the wetlands proposals have been approved the Friends will be looking for volunteers to help create the wetland area. All equipment will be provided by Thames 21 who will supervise the project and there will be different types of work which would suit a range of ages from children to senior citizens.

Report on the Remembrance Garden for AGM Sue Younger

In March 2017 the War Memorials Trust finally gave approval for a grant of £63,000 towards the restoration of the Remembrance Garden in Broomfield Park. The Garden was first constructed in 1929 to commemorate those who had died fighting in the First World War and extended after the Second World War to include the names of those who died in that war (civilians also included in WW2 plaques).

In order for the grant application to succeed a conservation architect had to be consulted and it took over 3 years of hard work by Graham Deal (previously the Public Realm Information officer at Enfield Council) and myself (representing the Friends) with Andrew McMaster of the WMT to come up with an application that was acceptable to all parties. The work, which had to be done according to strict conservation standards, started in May 2017 and was finished in time for the Remembrance Service on November 10th. The service included a rededication of the war memorial by Rev.Chrichton Limbert, Vicar of Christ Church, Southgate (see photos).

The key feature of the Remembrance Garden is the war memorial temple and its three stained glass windows (depicting fortitude, sacrifice and victory) which were reinstated based on designs shown in a 1950s colour film about Broomfield Park. The reflective pool was repaired and its bowl and fountain restored to full working order and the water-lilies (that were looked after very well by the gardeners while the pool was drained) replaced back in the water. The original bird bath, which was donated by the local branch of the League of Nations in 1929, was also restored with a new concrete bowl designed to look like the original. Other essential repairs were carried out to the memorial roof, the cairn of stones and the paved terrace and steps in front of the memorial temple.

Finally, it was decided to put up handrails next to the steps to improve access for disabled and elderly visitors.

The annual Remembrance Service will be held on Friday 9th November at 10.45am and the Greenery café will be open afterwards for refreshments – this year will be the centenary of the ending of the First World War in 1918.

The Remembrance Garden gates are kept open during the main park opening hours but visitors are asked to kindly respect the quiet and reflective nature of the Garden and to not ride bikes or scooters within its walls.

The Community Orchard David March

We have had several successful events in the orchard this year, including Wassailing, a Big Dig Day, and the Summer Picnic. The next planned event is Apple Day on the 21st October.

Some of the funds raised at these events has been used to replace the nine trees lost through vandalism earlier in the year. There had been a continuing problem with rough sleeping, anti-social behaviour, arson and vandalism.

There are many opportunities for volunteering in the orchard and growing space. During this summer we have had weekly visits from a group of young adults with learning disabilities from Enfield Mencap. We also work with volunteers doing the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

The Wildlife Pond and Community Growing Space David March and Ivor Evans

The Wildlife Pond is flourishing, and the hedgerow and marginal plants are now established. Dragonflies, damselflies, newts, tadpoles and a tiddler have been seen in and around the pond. A fence has been erected by the Council to protect the pond from damage by dogs and to make it safer for small children. It would be very helpful if dogwalkers could keep their dogs out of the pond, to avoid disturbance to the pond and its wildlife, and possible damage to the membrane. Park users are welcome to enter via the two latched gates and enjoy the peace and wildlife. We have plans to put up an interpretation board and position an attractive bench overlooking the pond, and to encourage school use of the site.

The new growing space is progressing well, with crops of herbs, runner beans, tomatoes, raspberries and strawberries. We are planning to build more raised beds this autumn and winter and are keen to get more people involved in growing soft fruit and vegetables.

Planting a native hedgerow around the park

This year volunteers planted over 750 whips as part of the long-term plan to plant a native hedgerow around the edge of the park. Some of the whips were donated by the Woodland Trust. We will be planting another 420 whips this winter after a successful application for more trees from the Woodland Trust.

The Bowls Clubhouse

LBE contractors completed the first stage of underpinning part of the building in July and in late September and early October will be rebuilding and/or repairing brickwork affected by the subsidence.

Broomfield House report Colin Younger

Broomfield House and the stable yard are being advertised through GVA, the largest independent commercial property agency in the UK, seeking privately funded options for the site. This is the last chance to find a way of restoring the house. By the AGM we should have an idea about the outcome. The Broomfield House Trust continues to press for rebuilding and restoration for the benefit of the community.

The joint Museum of Enfield, Broomfield House Trust, Friends of Broomfield Park exhibition "Hidden Treasures, Revealing Broomfield House and Park" opened on 28 July and runs until 6 January 2019. There is a programme of activities which accompanies the exhibition. The centerpiece of the exhibition is the restored Minerva panel from the Lanscroun murals. The restoration has been funded by the Trust. It shows what could be achieved on a larger scale if the funds were there.

There is more about the exhibition at www.dugdalecentre.co.uk, and a short film of the mural restoration at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URzSz3OK1X0>

Park Report 2018 Don Arthur

Waste.

The gardeners have been responsible till now for clearing the waste in the park, all this without a buggy. This has all changed; a man and buggy travels from Trent Park and spends the day collecting rubbish and depositing it in the service yard. This system worked well until he had a day off and the Sunday Blues waste waited a further day for collection.

Enfield have at long last supplied 27 new waste bins, and more recently an extra 11 large ground fitted stronger type bins.

Lakes.

That last two years have seen the Boating Pond not drained and cleaned out properly. Enfield provided a poor work party to remove the algae; this helped for a short period.

The other lakes have algae problems, which still go untreated. Thames 21 have planted reed beds in the top two lakes which will eventually help to solve the problem.

Repairs.

Enfield is carrying out necessary major works e.g. bowling green clubhouse, gate repairs etc.

When it comes to reporting normal every day repairs, the 10 day turn around has stopped.

Repairs reported last May remain not touched.

Toilets.

The team responsible for cleaning are agency workers who have been given notice as from 31st Sept 18. I have been told that parks staff are to undertake that task.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

This remains a significant problem. Damage has occurred mainly in the Orchard area, also benches have been destroyed in the "Aviary" and sensory garden location. They have been removed.

Trent Park Catering Co.

This van has been seen trading up till 9.30 pm. Although the company should be removing the rubbish, they seem to be walking almost to the boating lake bins to dispose of the day's waste. Cllr Anderson has been advised.

Awards 2018

Broomfield Conservatory was awarded Gold in the *Exceptional Horticultural Contribution to the Community - Small Displays* category. Silver for Broomfield Community Orchard in the *Exceptional Horticultural Contribution to the Community - Large Displays* category and Silver for the Broomfield Park Wildlife Pond in the *Best Environmental and Wildlife Garden* category.

Committee Members

Zahir Anwar- Treasurer, Donald Arthur, Helen Blairman, Sue Cook- Minutes, Ivor Evans, Chris Kaufman – Chair, Kim Lumley- Chair, Kate Mabey- Secretary, David March and Sue Younger