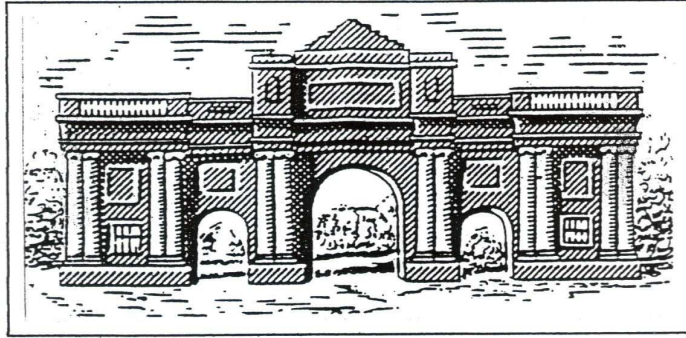


FRIENDS OF BIRKENHEAD PARK



NEWSLETTER No 46

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

To be held in the

**VISITORS CENTRE
BIRKENHEAD PARK**

at 2 pm Saturday 30th Jan 2010

AGENDA

1. Friends' Reports
2. Park Manager's Report

COME AND FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE PARK!!!

Robert Lee (Chairman)
(652-8534)

Mike Fox (Treasurer)
(652-1266)

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE

www.friendsofbirkenheadpark.org.uk

OFFER YOUR COMMENTS

MINUTES OF MEETING on 17.10.09 at the Park Visitors Centre

Present: 18 (Pauline Beecham, Pat Boswell, Heather Bradshaw, Beatrice Bunnell, Michael Dooley, Mike Fox, Margaret Griffith, Glyn Holden, Georgina Keena, Ian Lea, Robert Lee, J. H. Leighton, Esther Lewis, Norman Marsh, Fraser Robertson, Marion Russell, Mr & Mrs D. R. Way) plus Park Manager Adam King and 1 HLF Project staff (Sally Dobbing)

Apologies: 3

I. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

i. Planning Applications include:

- upgrading a bus stop on Park Road North - no problem

SUMMARY

- i. Planning applications included the option to amalgamate Cole Street and Cathcart Street Schools to a new site on the Park Road East edge of the Park.
- ii. Proposals to privatise the care of the Park as well as its staff were discussed with special attention to the way those then responsible could be influenced if they underperformed or over economised.
- iii. Creation of allotments on the edge of Lower Park has been approved. It is hoped to have cctv cameras to cover this site as well as the adjacent tennis courts.
- iv. Plans for the Friends to take over the use of the Grand Entrance (South Lodge) are progressing. The Friends will start monthly committee meetings there in November.
- v. The website www.friendsofbirkenheadpark.org.uk is expanding rapidly. Comments are welcome.
- vi. A 5ft tall model penguin will come to the Visitors Centre as part of the Winters Tale initiative in Liverpool/Wirral.
- vii. The Park Roots Project and volunteering are continuing to support the Park Staff to promote the use of the Park and maintain its upkeep at a high level.

- recognising the use of the Italian Lodge as business offices (as has been the case without planning approval for several years, we are told). The meeting recognised that the Lodge had been well looked after and that there are other non-residential properties round the Park, but believed that business use is not what the Park housing is all about. Application opposed.

- unification of Cole Street and Cathcart Street schools is proposed because of falling numbers of pupils in the area and a new site has been applied for on the edge of the Park on Park Road East near the Gothic Lodge. This is becoming an issue as Park High School is also likely to be amalgamated onto a different site leaving another abandoned building!! The meeting felt that the Park would not benefit from these changes although the new school might benefit from immediate access for its pupils to the Park. Application opposed looking for a better alternative.

ii. Privatisation of Parks is going on in both the Wirral and Liverpool. Prof Lee indicated a number of theoretical reasons why this could be to the benefit of the Council and reassured us that the current Park Roots funding would be protected what ever happened. The current staff would be employed by the Company that got the contract to run the Park. Currently a company called Capeta Symons was favourite to take on the project. The meeting felt we could not predict any benefit from this change especially when we were so pleased by current efforts. Liverpool Parks had been privatised when the Council was having problems with the trades unions but this was not relevant to Birkenhead Park. The view of the meeting was "If it ain't broke don't fix it" and that we had more to lose than to gain if it went ahead. We were also concerned to find a way to influence the company that took over especially if it under performed or seemed to be cutting the budget.

iii. Friends Website

In the capable hands of Fraser Robertson our website (www.friendsofbirkenheadpark.org.uk) is justifying its worldwide (www) descriptions with 200 people entering it in September from countries as far apart as Australia, Argentina, Canada, Japan and several European countries. The site is still being added to and all comments are welcome.

iv. BBC4 to Visit the Park

The BBC4 visit will be on October 19th - they are looking for a family who have three generations who still live in this area and have all used the Park. Amazingly we have a least one who are members of the Friends i.e. Esther Lewis and Heather Bradshaw (and child) who were at this meeting. They are also looking for Victorian photographs Any offers?

v. Allotment Creation

A draft lease has been agreed (with the able help of the lawyers, Kirwan - Thank you!!). Cctv are to be installed which would also cover the adjacent tennis courts which are to be restored.

vi. Occupation of South Lodge of Grand Entrance

Preparations are progressing with the installation of telephone and broadband facilities and a variety of items have been purchased or donated such as furniture, cooking facilities and crockery- even an awning has been donated by the Sea Cadets to shelter the rear courtyard.

There was a recent "open" weekend in the Park that attracted 200 visitors to look round the South Lodge.

vii. Official Report on the Park

A copy of this 49 page report called "Birkenhead Park Conservation and Management Plan" is lodged in the Friends archive but is available for anyone to view. It has been prepared for Wirral Metropolitan Borough of Wirral and is in two sections - "Appraisal of the Park" and "Management Plan". One can only do justice to such a detailed report by including a copy of its list of contents - see APPENDIX.

Regretfully it does not seem to have a summary of conclusions relevant to us and indeed, as far as I can tell, has only one reference to us (p13 referring to the Park Roots Project) or what it thinks we could achieve.

II. PARK MANAGEMENT REPORT

Adam King, the Park Manager, reported the huge number of activities his staff had worked on - in conjunction with the volunteers and the Park Roots staff and remarked on the increasing demands on management time to keep such a large body of people coordinated - but it is worth it!

He estimated that the **Festival of Transport attracted over 25,000** people over 2 days in September!!

As an example, 11 activities have been organised for the coming schools half-term. All are free except the "Ghost Walk" which is organised by Claire House and costs £3. Others include health activities (on foot or bicycle or in

prams), National Play Day and woodcraft experiences. To do more justice to this program I include a list of autumn events copied from the official Birkenhead Park News (it is also on the website www.wirral.gov.uk/er/birkpark.htm)

A 5 ft tall penguin statue will be coming to the Visitors Centre as part of a "Winter's Trail" in Liverpool and the Wirral.

The Lakes have been restocked with tench, bream and 100 barbel - more bailiffs are needed and will be organised by the anglers' club AWAC. The Third Lake platform which helps schools carry out their pond-dipping visits to the Park is now complete.

Meadow management continues on the edge of Park Road East with the planting of cornflower seeds. Tree pruning in winter will include the aim of improving sight lines on paths in the Park to reduce the feeling of insecurity some users have (hopefully not spoiling the visual quality of the healthy shrubs growing in the Park). It was hoped that users will go where they feel happy anyway as **there are many such places in our well-run park**. The group "Tranmere Together" helped us, showing great skill, by **removing white lines that vandals had painted** on the road in places

Birkenhead Park News	Autumn 2009	Page 4
Events Diary Weekly events Buggy Park Fitness - Monday at 10am. Cost is £1 per session. Health on Wheels - Monday at 10am Health Walk - Monday at 11am. Meet at the Visitor Centre. Restoration Volunteers - Wednesday at 10am. Meet at the Visitor Centre. Wheels For All - Thursday 10:30am - 2pm Buggy Park Fitness - Friday at 1:30pm. Cost is £1 per session. Friends of Birkenhead Park Volunteer Task- Saturday at 10am. Meet at the Visitor Centre.	Saturday 31st Halloween Walk with Claire House 4.30pm - 7pm Booking essential for this spooky walk for charity. Contact the Visitor Centre to book. November Thursday 5th Fireworks Night 6:30pm One of the best free firework displays in Wirral. The display will take place on the Night Pasture close to the Cole Street entrance of the Lower Park. Thursday 12th Guided Walk of Birkenhead Park, Flaybrick & Bidston Hill 10am - 3:30pm Join the rangers on a moderate walk from Birkenhead Park to Bidston Hill. Stout footwear essential. No need to book. Meet at Birkenhead Park Visitor Centre. Sunday 15th Celebrities of Birkenhead Park	1.30pm-3pm. A ranger led guided walk concentrating on the famous people who made and use the park, past and present. No need to book. Meet at the Visitor Centre. December Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th Christmas Craft Fair 11am-3pm To book a stall contact Rachel Boyd on 0151 512 8886 Sunday 13th Santa Fun Run 10am-12noon In aid of Claire House children's hospice. Contact Claire House on 0151 343 0883 for information. Saturday 19th Christmas Crafts 12noon -3pm Make your own seasonal decorations Sunday 20th Winter Walk 1.30pm-3pm Look for signs of winter on this ranger led walk. No need to book. Meet at the Visitor Centre.

- Thank you! - that's the way to treat vandalism!

Adam and his staff work tirelessly to make the Park an enjoyable place to be - Thank you all!!!

III. COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Much of Sally Dobbing's activities have involved with getting younger people to get involved with the sports facilities in the Park e.g. angling, bowls and golf (using plastic equipment) and raising money to facilitate this. Additional efforts involving activity included "messy play day" for under-5-year-olds with lots of sand and only minimal restrictions on what they were allowed to do with it (Who invents these ideas?) to face painting. It was mentioned that the churches round the Park had been contacted to encourage their greater involvement with the Park but had shown little response - it was suggested that a new approach might be needed to gain their interest - face painting and messy play days may not be their scene but their concern for the "community" might be interpreted in terms of some type of park activity.

Generally, Sally thought there might be a lull in activities organised for the winter but was optimistic for 2010.

APPENDIX MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTENTS

PART 1 - CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

- 1.0 LOCATION**
 - 1.1 Geographic Location
 - 1.2 Topography and Geology
 - 1.3 General Usage (e.g. residential)
 - 1.4 Conservation Area Boundary

- 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**
 - 2.1 Early History and Origins
 - 2.2 18th and 19th Century Development
 - 2.3 20th Century Growth and Expansion
 - 2.4 Archaeology

- 3.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISTAS**
 - 3.1 Setting and Relationship with the Surrounding Area
 - 3.2 Character and Relationship of Spaces
 - 3.3 Views and Vistas within the Area
 - 3.4 Green Spaces and Planting

- 4.0 TOWNSCAPE AND PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS**
 - 4.1 Grain, Scale, Repetition and Diversity
 - 4.2 Principal Buildings and Features
 - 4.3 Boundaries and Surfaces

- 5.0 ARCHITECTURE, MATERIALS AND DETAILS**
 - 5.1 Prominent Styles
 - 5.2 Known Architects and Designers
 - 5.3 Materials
 - 5.4 Typical Features and Details

- 6.0 NEGATIVE FACTORS**
 - 6.1 Overview
 - 6.2 Recent Development
 - 6.3 Unsympathetic Extensions
 - 6.4 Unsympathetic Alterations
 - 6.5 Loss and Development Pressures

PART 2 – CONSERVATION AREA

MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 1.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTER AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
- 2.0 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS
ENHANCEMENT
 - 2.1 New Development
 - 2.2 Reinstatement of Lost Features and Repairs
 - 2.3 Landscape and Streetscape
 - 2.4 Specific Project Areas, Possible Grants and
Other Management Tools
- 3.0 ISSUES AND POLICIES
 - 3.1 Alterations to Historic Building Fabric
 - 3.2 New Buildings
 - 3.3 Extension to Existing Buildings
 - 3.4 Specific Sites and Buildings
- 4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOUNDARY
AMENDMENTS AND PROVISION OF ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

APPENDICES

- Appendix A - Plan Showing Existing Boundary and Listed Buildings
- Appendix B - Plan Showing Relative Ages of Buildings
- Appendix C - Plan Showing Contribution of Buildings to Character of
- Appendix D Area
- Appendix E - Plan Showing Buildings Lost Since 1890
- Appendix F - Historic Plans
- Appendix G - Plan Showing Boundary Treatments
- Appendix H - Boundaries Gazetteer
- Building Descriptions