

FRIENDS OF LORDSHIP REC

Annual Report 2021-22



2021-22 was our 20th anniversary year, and a very busy and positive one for the Friends and the Park despite the continuing Covid epidemic.

Involving people Our monthly open meetings continued, mainly on zoom but more recently we resumed in-person meetings. The central core of the Friends has remained pretty static for many years and we have been discussing ways to get more people involved. We created a volunteer questionnaire for our website, sending out a link through a members' newsletter. This has been very successful and more volunteers signed up, some of whom have got involved in Friends' activities. We also invited more active members to join a new Core Coordination email list (now 20 people) to get more people involved in decision making and the coordination of the Friends work. Over 1,000 people use our facebook page, and we have around 1,400 members who get our email updates.

We have continued to facilitate several volunteer groups around the park for managing the woodland, orchard and spinney, and we continue to help manage the lake, river, meadows and many of the trees generally. We have also added a thriving litter-picking group, and supported the revival of the Shell Performing Arts Collective to extend public use of the Shell Theatre for events and performances. In addition, there is a new skateboarding/bmx group in development in the free style area, and we've supported the initiative for setting up a weekly Park Run.

The work in the Rec done by these groups has been impressive:

The woodland group held sessions on 2nd Saturday of each month (publicised through the woodland group's own email list of volunteers), plus sometimes extra sessions if there was a big task like relaying woodchip on the path. Volunteers from our partners, The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), support this work as well as cutting invasive dog wood. In March 2021 they dug a new pond to replace the original one in an attempt to control streaming water and planted grasses and flowers around it. Another pond was dug and planted with willow whips. Frogs are using the ponds to spawn (but they didn't survive). Official investigations into the underground source of the excessive water are ongoing, especially as it has flooded across the path's main path. Vegetation has been cut back along the grass verges to allow existing bulbs to flourish and families helped to plant more native bulbs. The group also litter-pick at each volunteer session. The Friends' again got an annual Green Flag Community Award for our efforts.

The Orchard group has had a good year and there are now a wide variety of fruit trees in the orchard field. There have been regular volunteer sessions. There were also several well-attended skill-sharing workshops for pruning and grafting, and also coppicing of the Hazel trees - the cut wood was used to make bean poles and protective cages for the fruit trees. During Covid our annual Apple Day and Wassail events could not happen but there was an online tree quiz and individual families decorated trees they had planted. A map of the orchard has been created showing where all 100 trees are and they are all numbered and named so people can identify the trees. 15 have been planted in the past year. The trees have been named and tended by local families.



Above: Tree planting in the orchard

The orchard's harvest of plums, apples and pears was really good this year and people enjoyed picking the hazel nuts and blackberries. The soft fruit border on Freedom Road has been added to, extending the biodiversity of the orchard. A tree ID and invertebrate walk was organised, identifying 20 different insects. In Total 96 work days happened in the past year including 91 different people, 50 of whom were local nursery children who planted bulbs. The orchard group has its own whatsapp and email list.

The Spinney. This area on the east side of the Rec has continued to be looked after and has been mapped for the Conservation Action Plan. TCV carried out three volunteer days to do dead hedging, tree coppicing, woodchipping of paths, and maintaining a glade.



Above:
Lordship Litterpickers

The Lordship Litterpickers have been meeting regularly on the first and third Wednesday of the month and has a number of regular members who communicate via a WhatsApp group. They mainly litterpick in the more wild places that the regular Council workers don't get to.

The lake group keep an eye on the lake and do occasional litter-picking and netting of debris. This year we had a meeting with the Council's Conservation Officer to discuss the possibility of increasing biodiversity in and around the lake, and making repairs and improvements to the lake island. It has been agreed that we continue to work together to develop a plan.

The Moselle The Friends have been keeping in contact with the Council and river contractors to expedite the continuation of the river maintenance contract which should include clearing the grille at the east end of the channel and cutting vegetation along the channel to allow easier water flow. We have been working closely with the Haringey Rivers Forum and Thames 21 to lobby for cleaning up the upstream pollution that is adversely affecting water quality, and to support Haringey Rivers Forum to set up a separate trained volunteer group - the Haringey Water Squad - to work in liaison with the contractors.

The Shell Performing Arts Collective has not been very active for some time but in 2021 a theatre organisation organised a Fringe Theatre event in the Rec, using the Shell and Hub which was very successful despite the rain and will be held again in an extended form this year. The organisers of Blockorama, the theatre group and a developing skate park users group have got together to revive the SPAC and bring the Shell back into more regular use as a performance and music space. They have raised funds to have the Shell repainted by a professional muralist and the design has been consulted on, agreed and approved for action soon. A member of the Friends tries to make sure the freestyle area is swept regularly and free of glass debris and also keeps up the pressure on the Council to get necessary repairs to the surface done.



The grass meadows and bushy areas in the main field These are overseen by a small group and a cutting regime is continually updated and monitored with the Council. Creeping thistles continue to be a problem in some areas and many hours have been spent pulling them out by hand in addition to the regular mechanical cutting. A few years back the Friends planted some bushy areas – these have now matured to the point where we've just taken away the protective fencing around them.

The Harmony Gardens The food-growing gardens around the Broadwater Centre, run by the Friends of Harmony Gardens, continues to go from Strength to Strength with more volunteers having joined during the





Left: Harmony Gardens flourishes

Covid pandemic and finding the work very therapeutic. A work day was organised to clear up the Children's Garden and a group is being sought to care for and use this area for after school clubs and other adult sessions. The group has obtained a grant to enable them to employ 3 people, an After-School Club leader, A Sunday Gardener and a general coordinator. A small amount will go towards demolishing the old shed and buying some plants and equipment. They have been donated a Cob oven so hope to hold some community cooking sessions.

Other Friends' activities:

20th Birthday We celebrated our 20th Anniversary in June by joining together with the Council's launch event for their People Need Parks summer parks programme. We focused on activities in and around the Hub. It was a great success and enjoyed by over 2,000 local people (see the youtube video) who had led restricted lives for so long due to Covid. As part of our anniversary celebrations we produced special material, including a timeline - handed out and on display in the Hub café. This helped publicise the incredible journey over the last 20 yrs, in which we and others, along with the parks service, have together transformed a neglected, semi-derelict and poorly used park into the vibrant and inspiring place it now is. We look forward to the next 20 years!

Tottenham Flower and Produce Show We were again able to organise this popular annual event in 2021 and it returned bigger and better – with great entries, displays, stalls and prizes.

Lordship Hub The Hub has survived the covid pandemic lockdowns, closure and financial crisis – thanks to public support and donations, and over 50 volunteers. It is now fully operational again. The Friends, having led on the development of the Hub Co-operative in 2013, have continued to support various community events and activities there and run holiday art workshops for children. We continue to have a representative of the Friends on the Hub board.



Above: A Flower Show winner gets an award

The Hub and *eN10ergy*, supported by the Friends, are collaborating to add new solar panels to the Hub roof, develop an educational weather station, and to celebrate in November the 250th anniversary of local resident Luke Howard, the 'namer of clouds'.

Interpretation Boards We are seeking to replace the Friends'-designed interpretation boards around the Rec, most of which are now missing or in a sorry state - eg. for the lake, woodland, Model Traffic Area and river. If we can get a grant we would also like to add new ones, eg for the orchard, a history/heritage one, and one about clouds.



Park Run We are very pleased to report that this popular weekly event on Saturday mornings across the UK is going to be held in Lordship Rec. With our support, the administration of the group is being organised and funds have been raised so that it should start in the spring/summer of 2022.

Ongoing issues at Main gate We have continued to work with the Council and Atlas House Residents to find solutions to some inappropriate behaviour in this area. 2 benches were removed and will be replaced further into the Park in a new location away from the flats.

Conservation Action Plan We have had ongoing meetings and communication with TCV and the Council's Conservation Officer about the development of an updated plan for increasing and supporting biodiversity in the Rec. In addition, in the light of all the Friends' efforts to increase biodiversity in the Rec, we have called for Lordship Rec to be upgraded from its current status as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation of Local interest to one of Borough-wide importance. This would help us in accessing new funds for the Rec.

Friends Social Media and website We have been developing a good following for our social media outlets and have much more participation from park users, especially through our Facebook group (over 1,000 people). We continue to post on our website and send out newsletters to our 1,400 email list membership. We also update and manage the park's noticeboards.

Rockstone Bike Hub continues to operate a flourishing bike sale, hire and maintenance hub. They also run the brakethru bike club for people with disabilities in the Multi Use Games Area.

Other user groups As well as the Friends' working groups and the other groups mentioned above there are at least a dozen other community groups based in the Rec – almost all relying on local volunteers. This includes the Broadwater United youth football teams who manage the enclosed sports field, the Lordship Sports and Activities Consortium who organise an annual Youth Fest in the Rec, Tottenham BMX Club, 5 walking groups, Silverfit, Wheelytots and others. Most have their own media. We salute their activities and commitment!

Lordship Rec Users Forum (LRUF) We continue to host regular practical 'stakeholder' coordination meetings, where repairs and maintenance issues are addressed with the park's depot staff, Council officers and others. The Council has had some personnel changes, but we continue to lead the LRUF coordination, and liaise closely with the Council through the meetings, phone calls, walkabouts and other site visits.

Haringey Friends of Parks Forum We've continued to be heavily involved in helping coordinate the Forum to discuss and take forward a range of issues of importance to Friends Groups across Haringey, including engaging in consultation for the Council's next 15 yr Strategy for Parks in the borough.

London and beyond Lordship Rec continues to be cited across Haringey, London and the UK as a beacon of good practice for successful community-led regeneration and community/Council partnership-working. We successfully completed our Parks Community UK lottery-funded project promoting greenspace community empowerment across the country. We passed on the project and its website to the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces to run it over the coming years.

Our Chair continues to be the chair of the National Federation – the umbrella organisation for the movement of over 7,000 local Friends Groups – and our Secretary and Treasurer, as well as Paul from Parks Community UK, have also contributed their skills to the Federation..

Joan and Dave, March 2022

