FRIENDS OF GREENWICH PARK
NEWSLETTER

Spring 2021 Registered Charity No: 1029933 Number 87

Greenwich Park Revealed - Friends Pledge £50,000

Spring in Greenwich, with Flamsteed House visible again after work on the slope below

Photo by Jonathan Chandler

Despite a delay of 12 months due to Covid 19, and a revision of the budget, the project is now set to move forward this year. The £8m project has secured £5.5 million in support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other grant funders. The Royal Parks is seeking additional donations to support the project as a whole. The Friends are offering £50,000 from our reserves as a significant contribution towards this endeavour.

We have waited years for this opportunity and it is finally here. The project includes new community facilities for volunteers and local groups, a new learning centre and a new community garden and café at the Vanbrugh Gate entrance. There will be improvements to biodiversity through better grassland management and creation of new scrub habitats, restoration of the major avenues of trees and a total revamp of the General Wolfe Statue area and viewpoint. There will be improved facilities for volunteers, enhanced views of the deer and a restoration of the Grand Ascent, improving the landscaping and stopping soil erosion. It is intended that our £50,000 will be dedicated to a specific project the details of which are under discussion with The Royal Parks. If any individual Friends would like to make their own donation this would be very welcome, please contact *support@theroyalparks.org.uk* for more details.

The revised timetable for the project is shown overleaf. Much of the construction works will not be seen on the ground until 2022 but a lot of preparatory work will be under way this year. A team to take all this forward is being recruited and tenders will be sought for the building works. Graham Dear, our Park Manager will become the full time Programme Manager for the four years from now until completion and Michael Loughnane becomes Park Manager for the duration. We are all going to be busy!

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Deer Get a Holiday

One thing that will be noticeable is that the deer will be going away to Bushy and Richmond Parks for a holiday while works are carried out at the Vanbrugh Lodge and in the deer enclosure. When they come back they will have a much better and more varied space in which to live. They will be away from September 2021 to April or June 2023 as they can be moved only at certain times (avoiding the rutting season and pregnancies mainly). We will miss them, but we know they will have better accommodation when they get back.

The Greenwich Park Timetable

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
• Recruit Team • Technical Design • Tenders • Tree Planting • Grassland management & habitat creation • Bandstand concerts & Tramshed theatre	• One Tree Hill • V'brugh Lodge Cafe, Community Garden & facilities • Pavilion Cafe & Store • Flower Garden Lake • Bandstand • Tree planting • Grassland management & Habitat creation • Activity programme	• Parterre Banks & Grand Ascent • Wilderness Learning Centre • Learning Trails & Natural Play • Tree planting • Grassland management & habitat creation • Activity programme	• Wolfe and Kiosks • Blackheath Gate • Greenwich Fayre • Tree planting • Grassland management & habitat creation • Activity programme	• Completion • Evaluation • Celebration • Share Learning

Annual Lecture 2 June 2021

Graham Dear, Programme Manager, Greenwich Park Revealed, and Jane Pelly, The Royal Parks' Head of Landscape, will give our Annual Lecture this year. They will be giving a detailed account of the Lottery Fund bid and how it will impact on the Park over the next few years. The lecture will be held via Zoom and will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 2 June.

If you would like to attend this virtual lecture which is free of charge please email *info@friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk* by Tuesday, 25 May 2021, so that a link can be sent to you.

Park to Remain Traffic-Free for a Further Period

The Royal Parks' trial closure of Greenwich Park to through traffic will continue for a further year. This is to ensure they have a clear picture of the impact of the schemes before determining whether the closure should be made permanent.

The Birds of Greenwich Park

The book has sold really well and nearly 800 of the 1000 copies have gone. Many of the copies were hand delivered and it is estimated that Cindy Sheehan walked over 120 miles in so doing. The reaction has been very positive, and many people having bought one book package initially have come back for additional copies as gifts for others. So here it is again as the 'Spring Package'. We are keeping the price at a minimum donation of £8 despite the postal increase and hope we can find homes for a few more books. Application form enclosed.

Annual General Meeting 2021

The 28th AGM to cover 2019 and 2020 will take place on Monday, 10 May at 7.30 p.m. via Zoom. Copies of the Chairman's Report, Financial Report, minutes of 2019 meeting and agenda are enclosed with this Newsletter. Officers and committee members proposed and seconded for the coming year are:

Chairman: Richard Jones, 65 Hervey Road, SE3 8BX

Vice-Chairman: Sue Yates, 34 Hyde Vale, SE10 8QH

Committee Members: Tony Butler, Tina Challacombe, Brian Starkey stand for re-election. Cliff Wilkinson and Cindy Sheehan stand for election. Jonathan Chandler, Clive Corlett and Lesley Jones continue to serve. Sophie Spencer stood down due to ill health in 2020. Liz Coyle is standing down at this AGM due to ill health.

The committee confirms the appointments of Christine Bevan as Secretary, Julie Punter as Treasurer and Fran Tyler as Membership Secretary.

If you would like to attend this virtual meeting please email *info@friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk* to reserve a place. There are 100 spaces.

Park People: Graham Dear, Park Manager and now Programme Manager for Greenwich Park Revealed

Graham Dear's name will be familiar to most of our members - he has been Park Manager for eleven years, attends and addresses our AGMs and has been writing a regular column for our Newsletter. However, since 1 February he no longer holds that job. Instead, he has been seconded by the Royal Parks to become, for the next three years, the Programme Manager responsible for implementing the huge Greenwich Park Revealed project. While he is away on these duties (but still here in person, occupying his existing room in the Park Office), Michael Loughnane moves up from Assistant Manager to become Park Manager. So, what was Graham's route to Greenwich Park?

"I'm an Essex lad who studied botany at Southampton University, then worked at Oxford Botanical Gardens, Kew Gardens (where I obtained my diploma in botanical gardening) and for various local authorities, and then spent 15 years heading up the Kent County Council's Country Parks Service."

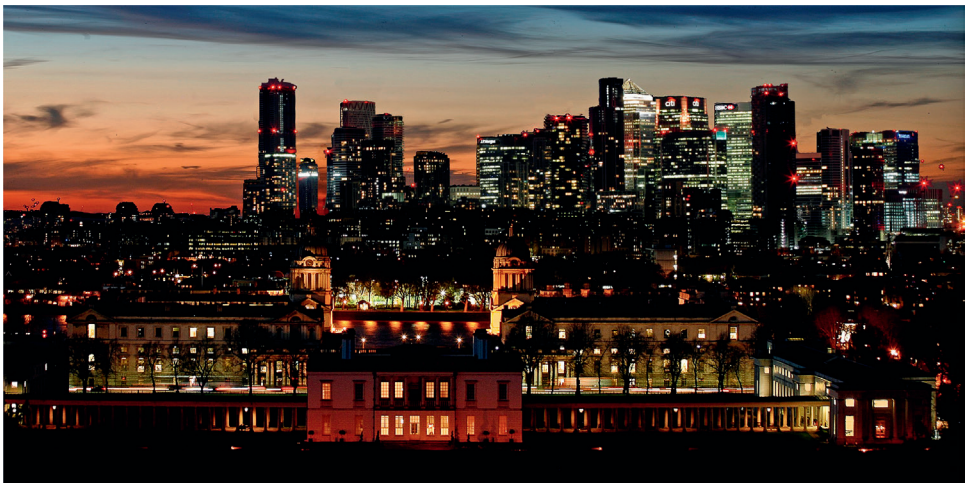
Since arriving here in 2009, Graham has had overall responsibility for a large number of important projects in the Park, including the equestrian events in the 2012 Olympics, the creation of the Queen's Orchard garden, the landscaping and design of the St Mary's Gate cafe, the herbaceous border in front of the Queen's House, the extension and modernisation of the Playground, the improved access to the deer enclosure, the new Blackheath Gate, the archaeological digs around the site of the Old Keeper's Cottage (which led to the formation of the Greenwich Park History Group) and, of course, ten London Marathons. Which of those gave him the most satisfaction? *"Oh, it has to be the playground. We have replaced a worn out, poor quality facility with an amazing new space for kids, with more play value, that looks great too."*

But the biggest and the most challenging of all has to be the Greenwich Park Revealed project. Graham began work on this four years ago, with a team putting together the plans and proposals for two successive grant applications, culminating in the Park winning the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Now with the job of implementing those plans, Graham describes working on the project as *"the crowning glory of my career."* In addition to all the projects within the Greenwich Park Revealed programme, what other improvements would he like to see in the Park? *"Top of my list would be the re-design and re-planting of the Rose Garden and turning the Boating Pool into a proper small lake. But those will depend on further funding becoming available."* Finally, what are Graham's favourite parts of the Park? *"I love the combination of views and avenues of trees."* And the best time of year? *"April and May: when everything comes into leaf and the avenue of cherry blossom is out."*

We wish Graham and Michael all the best in their new roles.

A Photography Group for Greenwich Park

Many people take photos in Greenwich Park, which is not surprising given the vistas, trees, flowers, historic buildings and wildlife. So the Friends thought it might be helpful if photographers could meet up, zoom or otherwise, to share ideas and experiences. The direction the Group will take will be determined by those who take part. In due course there might be exhibitions, competitions, themed work and maybe eventually calendars and cards. If you are interested in learning more please make contact with Jonathan Chandler using the enclosed slip or through the FOGP website.



Night View from the Park. *Photo by Roger Stevens*

Receive your Newsletter by Email and sign up for Email News Bulletins

The Friends' Newsletter summarises the news of recent months and provides a convenient source of information on forthcoming developments and events. There are three editions each year - Spring, Summer and Winter and all members are entitled to receive a copy. Postage is a significant cost, and we rely on volunteers to distribute locally in South East London. Please consider receiving your newsletter by email and help us to save costs and the environment. Email news bulletins are sent out in between the three newsletters if there is significant news to be circulated to members.

Please go to our website and follow the link to the Members Mailing List page. Complete the form to receive your email news bulletins and to indicate whether you want to receive your Newsletter (three editions each year - Spring, Summer and Winter) by post or by email (email preferred).

If you already subscribe to our email news bulletins, follow the link 'update subscription preferences' which appears on the bottom of our email news bulletins, and then tick the box to receive the Newsletter by email.

Greenwich Park and Blackheath area Butterfly Training Courses

Greenwich Park and Blackheath form a large area of green space in a built-up environment. Taken together with nearby gardens, these habitats are an important refuge for wildlife, including many butterflies. 29 species – almost half the UK total – have been recorded since 2010. In order to increase local knowledge and appreciation of Greenwich Park's and Blackheath's butterflies and their habitats, to engage the community and inspire interest in nature, the Friends of Greenwich Park and the Blackheath Society have joined forces to support this initiative. The courses led by local naturalist, Joe Beale ACIEEM FBNA, will be: "Level 1 Butterfly ID and local habitats", and "Level 2 Butterfly transect survey training". These interactive courses will introduce you to the common butterflies occurring locally and give you a basic overview of how to do a butterfly transect. We will have a look at their life cycles, ecology, habitats, and status changes. For those who feel confident, we hope to recruit volunteers to undertake the Level 2 Butterfly transect survey training. The Level 1 butterfly ID course will be delivered via Zoom over two Saturdays, about 2.5 hours each. The Level 2 Butterfly Transect will be delivered via Zoom and outdoor guided walks. The courses will start in April and spaces are limited. Courses are free, but donations are welcomed. Please go to the Friends of Greenwich Park website for more details. An application form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Marbled white (Melanargia galathea) Photo by Charles J Sharp

Midsummer Jazz and Bandstand Concerts

Unfortunately for a second year our Midsummer Jazz is cancelled. The good news is that there will be Sunday afternoon concerts at the Bandstand on all the Sundays in July and August and on August Bank Holiday Monday. We look forward to seeing you all there. A flyer giving details of the bands involved is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Friends of Greenwich Park

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Wildlife Group: Sue Yates, 34 Hyde Vale, SE10 8QH, tel: 020 8692 1760

Secretary: Christine Bevan, 52 Greenwich Park Street, SE10 9LT, tel: 020 8853 2150

Membership Secretary: Fran Tyler, 51 Lock Chase, SE3 9HB, tel: 020 8852 9540 tylerfrantom@btinternet.com

Annual Subscription: UK £5; overseas £10. Cheques to Friends of Greenwich Park with sae please, and sent to the Membership Secretary, or pay online via PayPal at the Friends' website: www.friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk

Greenwich Park (Tel: 0300 061 2380) is one of London's eight Royal Parks. The others are Bushy Park, The Green Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, Richmond Park and St James's Park. All have links with former royal palaces or hunting grounds. Between them they cover 2083 ha. (5000 acres) of historic parkland. The Royal Parks also manages Brompton Cemetery. In Greenwich Park there are police phone boxes at St Mary's Gate and at Blackheath Gate. In an emergency dial 999; for other calls Tel: 020 7161 9740.

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