



Newsletter

Spring 2006

PO Box 16860, London SE21 7ZQ

Update on the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) works

Work has now started on repairing the worst damaged drains in the park and, in the next few weeks, special machines will be used to remove debris and avoid damaging tree roots so the water can flow again. This is very expensive (and not everything can be done within the budget) but it will leave the park with a working system and a good idea where extra work may be needed over the next few years.

Planting has finally begun by the lake now the goose-proof fence has been completed, including marginal aquatic plants [plants that live close to the water's edge] that we hope will improve the range of habitats and a reed bed that will help naturally filter the water and improve the water quality. Along the northern boundary of the park a native hedge has been planted, and in the American Garden lost ornamental species of rhododendron are being replaced. The bowling green has been re-turfed and we hope that it will survive the sprinkler ban this summer.

The carriage way resurfacing has started and complaints have increased with reports of very large vehicles driving at great speed through the park. These will be investigated by the council.

The two lake-side shelters are now being re-roofed with the rotten wood being replaced and repainted, while the area around the shelters levelled for wheelchair access and to stop people from tripping up.

There may be some delay in the site furniture and signs. Disappointingly, Southwark Council made a decision that its five major parks should all have uniform site furniture. The council's chosen design is, in our view, somewhat municipal with white lettering on a black background. The benches, however, have been copied from an early example in the park and are metal with wooden slats.



Resurfacing of carriage drive by College Gate

Safety in the park

At the Dulwich Community Council meeting on 6 March 2006, the police and various council agencies introduced a number of new measures to improve security in Dulwich. In future, there will be community police officers dedicated to each ward. Their priorities will be defined by a local forum which will include members of the public. Other agencies will be dealing with anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. The new regime will start in April. One result of this is that there will be street wardens or community police in the park at school-leaving time (when the park wardens are away closing other parks) which we believe is very important.

All the officers made it clear that their priorities will be dictated by public concern, so it is important that incidents in the park are reported to them or through us (at PO Box 16860, London SE21 7ZQ).

The Village Copse

Thanks to the generosity of the Dulwich Village Preservation Society who gave Dulwich Park Friends a grant of £10,000, we should soon have a new area of woodland in Dulwich Park. It is taking shape in the north-west corner of the park and is planned as a small traditional oak-and-bluebells mixed English woodland. It will have a winding path through it leading to a central grassy glade and a shorter path providing views from the glade towards the woods of Sydenham Hill.

The woodland will link up with tree belts near the centre of the village – hence its name ‘The Village Copse’. Design and planting is being overseen by the Trust for Urban Ecology, with a day for planting set aside for volunteers. Woodlands are among the best habitats for birds and butterflies so the copse should be good for wildlife as well as creating a type of landscape feature which the park currently lacks.



New planting by lake side

Free summer events

Dulwich Festival Fair: Sunday 14 May, 12-4pm Goose Green. Come and chat to us at the community stalls.

Dulwich Festival Teddy Bears' Picnic: Sunday 21 May, 12pm near the Rhododendron area, Dulwich Park. Aimed at children 0-5 years – bring your teddy and enjoy organised games as part of the Dulwich Festival.

Children's Victorian Fun Day: Saturday 22 July, 12-4pm by the playground in Dulwich. A celebration of the completion of the Heritage Lottery Fund works. There will be a Punch and Judy show and lots of traditional games organised by Dulwich Park Friends and the wardens. This has been funded by a £1,000 grant from the Dulwich Community Fund. Children can enter the fancy dress competition with prizes for the best Victorian costume.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Please come and join us at our AGM on Monday 24 April at 7pm in the room above the Crown and Greyhound pub (which they have very generously allowed us to use without charge). Our guest speaker will be Ted Burden from the London Wildcare Trust, which runs a 24-hour wild animal rescue service and the London Wildlife Hospital, Ecology centre and field centre in South London.

New Access and Interpretation Officer for Dulwich Park

Andrew Stibbs has been appointed by Southwark Council to set up community links with Dulwich Park, including working with schools to provide an education programme. This is a requirement of the HLF to ensure that the new facilities in the park are accessible to all.

Opening and closing times in Dulwich Park

The park gates are opened by Quadron, who run the park maintenance, around 7.30am. However, officially the park does not open until 8am – by which time the wardens have had time to carry out their safety checks. We have had many requests for earlier park opening times in the summer but that would require the wardens to work extremely long shifts and at the moment that is not feasible.

The park is closed by the wardens who are also responsible for closing a number of smaller parks. This has resulted in closing some of Dulwich Park gates half an hour earlier than the stated time and members of the public have complained. After consultation with the park manager and the wardens, each gate will now state a closing time with Court Lane and College Gate closing last.

Membership renewal

Our membership runs from 1 March-28 February so if you pay by cheque please complete the enclosed renewal form (new members will not be asked for a renewal until next year) and encourage others to join.

The Committee

Chair	Emily Montague	020 7501 9120
Vice Chair	Juliet Filose	020 8693 5336
Secretary	Averil Batchelor	020 8693 7025
Treasurer	Sigrid Collins	020 8693 1223
Members:	Stella Benwell, Christine Brandon, Robert Johnson, David Nicholson-Lord, Angela Wilkes	
Editor	Susie Schofield	

Please write to us at: PO Box 16860, London SE21 7ZQ.