

Dear Member

Dig the Park – Saturday 3 December, 10am-1pm

Under the guidance of Ric Glenn, the Head Gardener, December's Dig the Park will involve coppicing in the Village Copse (near the Francis Peek Centre). Coppicing means cutting back the willows that have grown disproportionately since the planting of the copse some five years ago. The prime role for volunteers will be to help process the felled branches for storing (they are useful to the park's gardeners). There will also be some lighter general pruning alongside the path through the copse. If you are able to join us, please meet at the Francis Peek Centre at 10am or join us in the copse. Bring gardening gloves if you have some.

Clearing the rivulet – stage one completed

As intended (as per our last newsletter), on 15 November - a mercifully sunny day - a volunteer group from the Royal Bank of Scotland helped begin the major task of clearing the rivulet of duckweed (pictures below). The bank also kindly funded the attendance of the lead team from the Trust for Urban Ecology, whilst our friends at the Dulwich Society funded the eighteen tons of chalk placed in the water (this has the natural effect of suppressing re-growth). As for shifting the chalk, that involved state of the art technology - spades, wheelbarrows and sheer physical effort!



Outdoor gym equipment

Several park users have reported broken pieces of gym equipment. Although the park staff inspect the equipment regularly, they may not spot a problem as quickly as you do – so feel free to report defects to the park office on 8693 8635, or direct to the park manager, Paul Highman, on 8693 0614.

Appointment of new park staff



Craig Evans (left) works for the principal park maintenance contractor, Quadron. He has recently been promoted to lead the team of four whose primary role is maintenance (as opposed to horticulture), including the conservation areas, mowing and strimming and the hard surfaces within the park.

The new Park Liaison Officer is **Ciro DeLucia** (right). **Ciro** started working for Southwark as a park warden, then become a street warden, and is now delighted to be a dedicated full-time officer in Dulwich Park. **Ciro** can be contacted for help in the park for any reason – lost children, nuisance dogs, anti-social behaviour and the like. His number is 07908 767784.

Tree of the month

Swamp Cypress (Cupressaceae) - Taxodium distichum

As a new feature we should like to draw your attention to some of the special trees in the park. Our first candidate is the swamp cypress. The magnificent specimen pictured left is about two hundred metres into the park if you enter at College Gate, in the open space on the right. If you catch it soon, you will see it in its golden autumn glory.

Head Gardener Ric Glenn tells us: "This tree originated in the south-eastern US. As the name suggests, it grows in moist soils. Unusually for a conifer, the leaf turns golden brown then drops for winter, revealing the fine formal structure of the tree. Another unusual feature is the aerial 'knee roots', called pneumatophores, that sprout above ground some distance from the trunk. Originally thought to help waterlogged roots to breathe, recent research has shown that the knee roots have no lenticels and are therefore not involved in gaseous exchange. Only one of Dulwich Park's swamp cypresses has developed knee roots and they are not visible to the public. Anyone interested in seeing this botanical oddity should contact Trevor, who will let me know".



Help support free football sessions at JAGS sportsground

Those of you present at the last Dulwich Community Council meeting will remember the presentation by Richard White and others about the football sessions run by Millwall every Friday night from 7.30pm to 9pm on the astroturf pitch at JAGS sportsground. These sessions are open to all young people aged 13-19 and typically attract up to 80 keen participants - some of whom have gone on to qualify for coaching certificates or even to play for football clubs.

However, in these economically uncertain times, the sessions are at risk of ending at Christmas as Southwark cannot guarantee funding. If you would like to support this admirable work in your community, donations can be made by cheque payable to Millwall Community Scheme and sent to Millwall Community Scheme (Friday night Dulwich JAGS football sessions), The Den, Zampa Road, London SE16 3LN.

As always, feel free to contact me at any time on park-related issues.

Regards

Trevor Moore

Chair, Dulwich Park Friends

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