

We are very pleased that a Councillor who lives in the area and will be familiar with the local parks is a member of the Parks Scrutiny Panel and are grateful for your request for our input to help inform you in the process.

Over the last year the FoBP have been actively involved in many areas of Broomfield Park and these were reported on at our recent AGM. This is in a year where we have contributed to and co-curated the exhibition in Enfield museum 'Hidden Treasures – Revealing Broomfield House and Park'.

Our members have worked to achieve major improvements in the Conservatory and Memorial Garden supported by Councillors and the Council. The Conservatory has recently reopened after major repairs and is quite stunning to visit with an almost 'Kew-like' feel to the planting, which is much appreciated by the local park community and visitors. The Remembrance Garden has now been fully restored thanks to a grant from the War Memorials Trust and Council support. The addition of remade stained-glass windows, restored reflective pool, fountain and League of Nations birdbath have made it ready for the annual Remembrance Service in November.

The Community Orchard and Apiary are well supported by volunteers and the local park community and play an active role in the park events program as well as hosting Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers and over the summer a weekly visit of a group of young adults with severe learning difficulties from the Enfield Mencap Centre who take part in gardening activities. We host and actively take part in regular school visits to the Park, such as the Hazelwood Year 2 and Tottenham infant school, with introductions to the history of the park, natural and managed green spaces, local nature and diversity of habitats, wildlife pond-life and beekeeping (including a taste of Broomfield honey).

This year Enfield in Bloom have given three awards to FoBP projects: Gold for the Conservatory, Silver for the Community Orchard and Silver for the new Wildlife Pond.

Many significant and relevant organisations are calling for and supporting the maintenance and development of green spaces, new wildlife habitat and the pursuance of clean air and clean water systems in our parks. They commonly cite the benefits not only in terms of enjoyment and pleasure but also in terms of benefit to wellbeing, mental and physical health across socio-economic and age strata. I would include in these the London Mayor's Parks and Green Spaces policy; the National Park City initiative; Fields in Trust and Chris Packham's recent appeal in the Evening Standard for wildlife spaces and flowers in our city parks.

The FoBP with volunteers have contributed to natural and diverse wildlife in the park in the creation of a wildlife pond; growing space; wild flower garden; flowerbed maintenance and bulb planting. We have planted native hedgerow, in association with the Woodland Trust, around the park perimeter to help provide a clean air environment and reduce road noise. We have worked with Thames 21 to create reed beds in the upper two lakes to improve the water quality and cleanliness both in the lakes and the outflow into Pymmes Brook which is subject to its own campaign to combat water pollution.

The FoBP have supported the proposal, put forward by Thames21 and the London Borough of Enfield, and helped facilitate the consultation process for a Wetlands area in Broomfield Park.

Through the year the FoBP have supported and benefitted from events, which are both hugely popular and successful in the local and wider community including the Palmers Green Festival, Blues in the Park and Talkies film events.

1.0 Areas of Principal Concern to FoBP

In terms of concerns we would like you to consider in relation to Broomfield Park in the Parks and Open Spaces scrutiny we have identified two areas of priority for urgent improvement or development.

- The state of the boating pond
- The need to improve the children's playground

1.1 A big part of our difficulty in dealing with these problems is common to other more minor issues and lie in the difficulty we have in communicating and getting response from the relevant officers or teams within the Council. A lot of the time our attempts to engage in processes of clear benefit to the park, appear to reach a block at a higher but unspecified level or we simply are not given information as to what the preventing factors are. There often does not seem to be a process to look at ways in which we as Friends and volunteers can contribute with our local information gathering, time, expertise or financial support from our fundraising activities.

You have already received a submission on the children's playground from Helen Blairman who is a FoBP committee member and a member of the playground group, so I will not repeat this.

1.2 Boating Pond

The condition of the boating pond has deteriorated over the last few years to an extent that it can no longer be used for its purpose of boating. Instead of being an outstanding and historically renowned feature it has become a constant mess less than half full of water and containing dense green algae, silt and other debris including a dead tree trunk and encouraging unconcerned people to deposit litter. It is also a health hazard. In the Enfield Museum exhibition there are photographs and video clips that show not only what a lovely presence the pond, boats and boaters were in times gone by but the extraordinary attraction it was to visitors and the range of events that took place around or in it.

Park users regularly complain about its current state. Representations have been made to the Council and Councillors by the FoBP, the Palmers Green Festival and the now almost despondent Model Boat Club members, some of whom have been supporting the park for more than 25 years. The problems are several fold but the critical issue is that the freshwater supply pipe from the artesian well in the park is obstructed and the borehole pump needs to be maintained. The water that partly fills the pond includes contaminated road wash-off and overflow water from a surface-water drains, which is rich in pollutants that encourage algal growth. Secondary problems from this occur in the drainage of this polluted water through the three lakes and then into Pymmes Brook. This is very much a current issue with Thames21 and other groups concerned with the pollution of Pymmes Brook and river Lea.

The fresh water supply needs to be re-instated. It seems extraordinary that with today's technology the pipe cannot be relined or repaired. The pond needs to be drained and cleared. The Council have reportedly been quoted very large sums for simply clearing the silted contents of the pond. Up until 6 or 7 years ago an engineer from the council came down in March and drained the pond and volunteers from the Model Boat Club cleared the silt, which was then put under nearby trees by the Council to compost.

I have had discussions with members of the Model Boat Club who are all too ready to continue this clearing; combined with FoBP volunteers we could raise a workforce of more than 20 and provide the equipment and tools to do the job. We could help with composting the waste in areas in the park away from the public. The boat club members have also spoken of their enthusiasm to contribute to engaging the young in boating and boat making skills, whether at the pond side or in workshops where they can put their engineering and woodworking skills to use. They also feel they can contribute to 'around pond' events and engage an older group and help with problems

such as loneliness where people feel they can casually engage while the regular activity takes place. I think there could be a lot of positive outcomes for the Council and local Councillors, as well as the park community.

I have recently spoken to Loretta Hoy (LBE) who says she plans to revisit the problem with an engineer from the works department of the Council, but also said that the costs of clearing were prohibitive. I sincerely hope this bears fruit but feel it is likely that a huge effort from many directions will be required to find a long-term solution.

2.0 Other areas that we would like you to be aware of

2.1 Anti-social Behaviour and Vandalism

Over the last year some areas in the park have suffered from a marked increase in adverse events.

- The Community Orchard has been a regular night time venue for groups who leave evidence of drug/substance inhalation, general rubbish and varying degrees of vandalism. Broken benches, multiple fruit trees destroyed, damage to pot planting, fire setting (repeated fire brigade call-outs) and human faeces/soiled paper at shed entrances. There have been regular rough sleepers and daytime drug users (one overdose taken away by ambulance).
- The Greenery café has had repeated damage and break-ins / attempts.
- The Remembrance Garden and area outside has been subject to damage to wreaths, crosses, plant pots and the new birdbath. Rough sleepers with general mess and damage to benches.
- In May there was a non-fatal but serious stabbing of a 16yr old boy.
- A serious fire in the cottages in the stable yard with destruction of the roof and floors.

We have reported episodes to the police and the council. The police increased their presence after the stabbing and an episode of indecent exposure but have not been able to help with other episodes of AS behaviour. We have requested meetings with the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team when the vandalism was occurring on a regular basis but had no response.

2.2 Events

We had expressed our deep concerns over the Parks Events Strategy designating Broomfield Park as suitable for 'major' events and the lack of notice or consultation on booked events that might have an adverse impact on the local/park community. After a well-supported and successful campaign by residents called 4not24, to protest against the imposition of a 24-day fair, we have joined to form an Events Sub-group under the auspices of the FoBP. We are working to survey opinion and work with the Council's Park Events officers with the common aim of facilitating events that are both acceptable to and in the interests of the local park community as well as the Council.

We are awaiting the review of the Parks Events Strategy and the FoBP Co-chair, Chris Kaufman, will be making an advance submission to this process separately on behalf of FoBP.

2.3 Burger Van

The FoBP were not consulted about the issuing of a licence for this apparently long-term franchise. To have a service advertising burgers and chips at a site positioned to attract the interest of children and young people would seem a direct contradiction of the Enfield Food Strategy on healthy eating. The van is placed at the top of the slope leading down to the children's playground. It was initially powered throughout the day by a diesel generator pumping out low level fumes, which would roll down the slope towards the playground. Astonishing you might think, with the concerns and awareness of air pollution on the health of our young. This has

now been converted to an electrical supply after sustained complaints. Last week the van was taken away and a mains cable with bare wires (presumably not switched on) was left projecting from a broken paving slab in footpath path along which children are walking and playing. There are also regular reports of commercial waste being left in the immediate vicinity.

2.4 Clubhouse and lower bowling green

The FoBP, Palmers Green Festival and the North London Netball league submitted a joint proposal for the use of the building to LBE in June last year, but officers never progressed this. We are pleased that the building is being underpinned and the brickwork repaired.

There is considerable local interest / concern about the future use and availability of this valuable resource for events and supporting the actions of FoBP.

I apologise for the length of the letter but we are very grateful for your interest. We would welcome the opportunity to meet you and show you round the various areas of the park. The leader of the Council, Cllr.Caliskan is to visit on Nov. 21st at 10.00 and it would be great if you could join us then or at another time.

Kim Lumley (Co-Chair of FoBP)