

# Parklife



The Friends of Kennington Park Newsletter Working together to create a better park

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## Kennington 1848 – our year of Chartist cheer

This year Kennington Park came alive as we celebrated the 170th anniversary of the 1848 ‘monster’ Chartist Rally on Kennington Common – a landmark in progress towards British democracy.

The Friends of Kennington Park were involved right from the start, working in partnership with the Kennington Chartist Project (KCP), set up by local residents to publicise, commemorate and celebrate the park’s place in history. The Friends were on the Steering Committee which successfully bid for grants to fund the project: £2,000 from the Lipman-Miliband Trust and £36,000 from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund. And we contributed many voluntary hours planning and running events to mark the anniversary.

### Day of workshops, participation and action

On 7th July, hundreds of people came out for a fantastic day in the park, with banners, poetry,

printmaking, debate and local history. This day was a culmination of the outreach and youth workshops that KCP had been running in and around Kennington.

Young poets from *Poetic Unity* treated us to a blistering ‘Personal Political’ set. There was a colourful display of handmade ... continued on p6



## The Masterplan – a park for everyone

This July Lambeth Council told the Friends, somewhat belatedly, about the updated Masterplan for Kennington Park. Since then, we’ve been working with senior parks staff to ensure that our priorities are incorporated. We want to make sure the park is the best it can be. And we’re focused on two key issues:

- maintenance of facilities and infrastructure;
- improvement and development of play and fitness areas.

There’s a lot of common ground with the Council, but we also have some disagreements. We think Lambeth’s Masterplan gives undue emphasis to developments which support income generation rather than improvements which would be good for park users.

We also have concerns about funding. There is no capital spending budget yet, despite being six months into the financial year. ... continued on p2

Young poets from *Poetic Unity* (left) took centre stage at our Chartist Day in the park. And students from Southside Young Leaders Academy (above) made inspirational screen-prints to take home

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The Friends wanted reassurance that the £800k from the sale of the old Park Keeper's Lodge to TfL would be ring-fenced for the park as previously promised. We want the money to be used for essential work on toilets, paths and drains. But now the Council say that because the £11m allocated to the Lambeth Parks capital programme several years ago has already been spent, there is no money for a capital programme for Kennington Park. The Friends are looking for ways we can challenge this and get investment in your park.

### Our priorities

- Modernising and extending the childrens' play area
  - Creating a Youth Activity Zone alongside the table tennis tables – a space sadly under-utilised
  - Phase Two of the fitness equipment – adding more Kenguru kit
  - Turning the wooden shelter near the Flower Garden into
- an information site highlighting the history of the park
- Restoration of the skate-bowl – an example of modern history, being one of the first in London
  - Enhancing the park extension to ensure it can support both football and cricket teams
  - Better signs and more bins

We know that's an expensive shopping list. It isn't going to be possible to do all these things immediately. All require careful planning and consultation with park users, not to mention funding. What we're looking for from Lambeth is a prioritised and costed plan, which better reflects the needs of the park and its users.

We are anxious about public spaces like Kennington Park increasingly being used to support commercial activity. We were surprised at some of the suggestions in the Masterplan: widening the gates and pathways to enable larger vehicles to service even larger events; the idea of a bandstand so that money could be made from wed-

dings and concerts, and the suggestion that rugby replace cricket on the park extension.

We hope the recent decision to combine Lambeth Parks, Events and Sport into a single department will create a more balanced approach. And we're delighted that Kevin Crook has been appointed Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods, allowing us to continue our good relationship with him.

The Friends will continue to work with the Council to ensure that the park remains a place of play, sport and relaxation for local people rather than a money-raising events venue.

### How you can get involved

- Tell us what you want to see in the park: What are your priorities, short- and long-term?
- Help us identify community grants and funding bodies, and put together applications
- Suggest businesses who might be interested in supporting the park, generally or with a particular project like the Youth Activity Zone.

We would welcome any help you can give. Email us at [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)

## Centenary Fields

**K**ennington Park is one of Lambeth's three Centenary Fields recently dedicated to mark the 100th anniversary of the First World War. Lambeth Council nominated the park to Fields in Trust, who are partners of the Royal British Legion.

The Legion is asking people to say 'thank you' to the Great War generation that fought

## New lease of life for Park Café

**G**reat news! The Park Café has new tenants – it might even be open again before the year is out.

Brother and sister Dominic and Charlotte Hockett-Joseph, co-owners of the Sugar Pot just across the road, will soon take over the building and start work on their new venture.

They were born, raised and still live in the area. They've always supported the Friends by displaying our leaflets – they even provided free pastries for the early-morning volunteers at our Chartist Day on 7th July.

The last few months have been frustrating for everybody involved. We all wanted the Café to be open during the summer. But there were unexpected repairs, and Dominic and Charlotte's plans require formal planning permission. Everybody is hoping for a speedy outcome.

'We're delighted to have signed the lease at last,' Dominic told us. 'We're grateful for all the fantastic support we've had from the local community, residents and businesses. We very

much hope Lambeth will approve our plans so we can create something special.'

'Sugar Pot is a vibrant, family-run coffee shop,' he says. 'We're passionate about recreating the same vibe in the park – so people feel welcome and nourished.'

'We're hoping to open by late winter or early spring – we know how important the Café is to park users and the local community.'

Look out for the latest news via our Friends' updates and through Instagram [sugarpotkennington](https://www.instagram.com/sugarpotkennington) or Twitter [@sugarpotcafe](https://twitter.com/sugarpotcafe) or visit the Sugar Pot website at [www.sugarpotcafe.co.uk](http://www.sugarpotcafe.co.uk)



New café tenants Dominic (above) and Charlotte of the Sugar Pot are looking forward to joining the Kennington Park community

© Café photo by Suzanne Jansen

Trees for Cities staff warm up for their thrice-weekly table tennis tournament (right). We hear it's become an unofficial part of the induction process: they're even considering including it in interviews!

## In and around the park

### Tree types take table tennis to heart

**Our table tennis tables** are enriching the lives of hundreds of players each year. And none more so than the hard-working staff at Trees for Cities (TfC).

The charity, which aims to improve lives by creating greener cities, has its headquarters in Kennington Park. Jonathan Dean started the whole thing going in 2014. 'I felt it was important to practice what we

preach at TfC, and spend time outside amongst the trees,' he says. Since then, staff have been holding a weekly table tennis tournament. And it's become so popular it now happens three times a week, every week, every month, without exception. Only howling winds or driving rain can keep the players away.

Adam Rose, Finance Coordinator at TfC told us:



'At the last count, 41 people had tried their hand on the tables. Some of us simply can't imagine lunchtimes without it!'

Adam gives the game a ringing endorsement. 'Table tennis is a great way to de-clutter the brain and sharpen mental agility. It's a

fun way to forge new bonds with your co-workers. And it's great for your health and well-being to be out in the fresh air – definitely a plus for staff morale. Getting outside shouldn't just be a summer activity – it can be so invigorating in winter! We heartily recommend it!'

© Photo by Ginny Tym

the war and rebuilt our world a century ago. Every day during the centenary of the Hundred Days Offensive from early August until 11th November, one of the chosen Centenary Fields will be featured. Kennington Park's day was on Sunday 21st October.

The park has a wealth of WWI connections, including the war memorial to the 900 men of the 24th Battalion of the London Regiment, whose Drill Hall was close by and who often used the park for drills and exercises.

A Victoria Cross memorial paving stone, unveiled in the park in 2017, commemorates Corporal George Jarratt VC, who was born in Kennington and worked as a clerk in a local distillery. 25-year-old Corporal Jarratt (right) was posthumously awarded the VC for an act of self-sacrifice, when he shielded his wounded comrades from a live grenade which exploded in their dug-out.



### Dogs lead to Facebook friends

**You may have noticed** the little community of regular dog walkers in the park. One of them, Patrick Healy, told us their story:

'We've been around for a long time, but recently we – the owners rather than the dogs – took advantage of technology and formed our own Facebook group: **Dogs in Kennington Park**. Now there are almost 250 people in the group, and more than 1000 pictures of dogs and matters doggy on the page.

The initial idea, for a group to make friends and talk about dogs, has delivered on both counts. It's become a way to keep in touch, and an information point for good news (Christmas drinks) and bad news (park closures) for dog owners in the area.

Walking our dogs in the park has broadened friendships across all ages and backgrounds and formed a community – that's not so easy to come by in London. The long loop of the walk

around the paths is just the right length to catch up with friends, and often the chatting group snowballs as it circulates – picking up new walkers and their dogs on its way around the park.

On Saturday mornings we often end up at the Sugar Pot, with a dozen or more people and dogs of all shapes, colours and sizes. Why not come and join us? You'd be most welcome!



© Photo by Lucy Reeve

## Stepping up to the bar

Kennington Park is now definitely *the* place to go for fabulous fitness fun.

The original wooden fitness equipment, installed by the Friends in 2005, proved so popular most of it wore out. So we worked with a dedicated group of fitness enthusiasts to identify more robust equipment. They chose new apparatus made by Kenguru, which was funded and installed by Lambeth in 2015.

One regular user is Garvin Gabriel. If you've ever seen someone using a skipping rope at high speed on the wooden balance bar, that's Garvin in action. 'My mother named me Garvin after a Welsh boxer on TV. Maybe an ability to skip comes with the name!'

Garvin is passionate about calisthenics. He told us the word comes from the Greek: 'kallos,' which means 'beauty' or 'beautiful,' and 'sthenos,' meaning 'strength.'

'It emphasises the movement of muscle groups, rather than power and effort – a reliance on body weight and gravity to create resistance,' he explains. 'Cross-fit, yoga, and parkour enthusiasts all use the technique as a

core part of their sport. Martial arts practitioners use calisthenics for conditioning, to protect them from injury in competition.'

Garvin lives close to the park and has been training since he was a teenager. With fellow enthusiasts, he set up Calisthenics Street League UK. They organised a big event in the park in July, attracting more than 150 competitors. Check out their moves on Instagram: [calisthenics\\_street\\_league](https://www.instagram.com/calisthenics_street_league)

You'll see people of all ages using the Fitness Trail, ranging from



© Photos by Haris Finazzi - www.hfviz.com

The Kennington Kenguru bars are the place to be if, like local enthusiast Garvin Gabriel (right), you're into calisthenics. Fancy having a go? 'Don't be shy,' says Garvin. 'Not everyone is an expert. But people in the park help each other out'

Rasha Damjanovic (on the right, below) and Dr Iain Boulton of Lambeth Landscapes were delighted with the Flower Garden's Gold Medal. Kevin Crooks, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods at Lambeth said 'It's a fantastic testament to all the hard work of the Friends – and the only Gold in the walled garden category south of the river!'

## Prize winning park!

It's official – Kennington Park is a prize winner. We've retained our Green Flag for the eighth consecutive year. And we've won Gold and Silver Gilt Medals from London in Bloom!

The Green Flag is a national standard of excellence for parks and green spaces. The judges said 'Kennington Park is a very busy, well-maintained park offering a range of activities for those seeking an active lifestyle, as well as tranquil areas for quiet contemplation. The gardening staff take pride in their park, and the site team are enthusiastic and knowledgeable.'

'Numerous publications and booklets and a very professional web presence inform visitors about what's on offer,' they said. 'The park's history is well-documented. Significant areas

are managed in a naturalistic way – wildflower areas, bird and bat boxes abound. The presence of Bee Urban at the heart of the site brings yet more sustainable living projects into the park and further involves the wider community.'

In September, we were thrilled to learn that the London in Bloom judges had awarded a Gold Medal for the Flower Garden – in spite of the hot, dry summer – and Silver Gilt, again, for the park as a whole.

The judges were impressed with the colour and variety in the Flower Garden, the good working relationship between Lambeth Landscapes and the volunteers, the range of users and activities and the 'feelgood' nature of a much-loved park.

age 12 to a youthful 65. Most users are local, like our new Friends' Committee Treasurer, Vilde Aagenaes, who uses the bars to keep fit. And Kennington Park's fitness equipment is famous on social media – people come from all over London to use it. The July event attracted people from across London and further afield – as far away as Birmingham and Manchester!

Garvin is a huge fan of the Kenguru bars. 'They're the ones used in international competitions and have a great feel,' he says. He's keen to see more installed and has been collecting signatures on a petition to persuade the Council to complete the promised Phase Two improvement: Floor bars for press-ups, high bars with ropes and parallel bars for dips are

just some of the pieces that would make a good fit with what is already in place. And the Friends will continue working with the fitness users to ensure that happens.

Never been to that part of the park? Come along and watch, or even have a go yourself.

Everybody is welcome. 'Not everyone is an expert,' says Garvin, 'but people in the park help each other out.'

## Valued volunteers

We've had lots of support from some super volunteers in the park this year – and not just from the wonderful band of regulars who turn out for the monthly gardening sessions with Amanda and Marietta. But more about them later ...

Goodgym, a local fitness group that combines fitness and good deeds, visited the park twice this year. Their 25 volunteers only stay a short while but they bring lots of people, energy and enthusiasm to gardening and litter-picking. They do a 30-minute run to reach us, work for half-an-hour and then run back. Their first visit was just before the Green Flag inspection, which made their input even more valuable.

Volunteers from FLO, the people building the Northern Line Extension, made an excellent job of cleaning up the Air Raid Memorial Stone. We provided them with ladders, brushes and buckets of warm soapy water. It wasn't an easy task: it took some effort to scrub away the lichen. And they weren't allowed to scrub into the grooves of the letters, because the dirt makes the inscription easier to read!

We were all delighted with the result – it's good to be able to see the inscription clearly once again. Thanks to local sculptor Richard Kindersley, who designed and created the beautiful memorial, for

his advice on how best to clean it.

We're grateful to Iain Boulton, Environmental Compliance Officer at Lambeth Council, who organises the corporate volunteer sessions. We're expecting visits soon by volunteers from Ofcom, Network Rail and Skanska Construction.

Over the past year we've had over 240 hours of help with dead-heading, clipping hedges, watering young trees, tackling bindweed and picking up litter. And we look forward to welcoming more volunteers

to the park to keep it looking beautiful.

Do you work for a business in north Lambeth, or near Kennington Park? Want to get involved? Just email [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)



On a sunny afternoon, the volunteers from FLO did a fantastic job cleaning up the Air Raid Memorial. And they had fun too – they've promised to come back to do more work in the park soon



Massive thanks to the Lambeth Landscapes gardening team for all their hard work in the park and the Flower Garden. And of course to all our dedicated FoKP volunteers, members and supporters.

... continued from p1



**“ I think the ambitious programme of activities we’ve organised throughout the year has made a significant impact on local people’s awareness of this important event. The project has drawn on the skills and enthusiasm of local volunteers and workshop leaders, and attracted the interest and support of historians nationwide. The vital element for me was that through our local history we were able to prompt meaningful reflections on the world we live in today’**

Local artist Richard Galpin, KCP Project Manager

banners, and a lively debate about the legacy of Chartism today with journalist Paul Mason, Gail Cartmail of Unite union and Dr Katrina Navickas of the University of Hertfordshire.

There was a chance to print your own poster of the famous engraving of the 1848 Rally. And it was great to see all the young people from Southside Young Leaders Academy learning about black Chartist leader and orator William Cuffay. A big thank you to the 28 event volunteers who worked so hard on the day to make it all possible!

### Project launch on the 170th anniversary

The project launched on 10th April, with a commemoration of the Rally in the park. Four flag bearers symbolically recreated the 1848 march of the four divisions of London Chartists: from Russell Square, Clerkenwell Green, Stepney Green and Peckham Fields to Kennington Common. Our flag bearers carried banners emblazoned with Chartist slogans and declarations of solidarity with campaigns for under-represented people today. Actor Tom Collins gave a rousing rendition of Feargus O’Connor’s famous 1848 speech, and local historian S I (Steve) Martin spoke about William Cuffay’s involvement in London Chartism.

### Workshops, walks and talks

The KCP workshops team spent a fantastic few days working with ninety children from local primary schools as part of the ‘Rights and Respect Agenda’ programme. Students from St Josephs, Ashmole, Wyvil, Vauxhall and Herbert Morrison used archival material to write their own charters, speeches and songs. Then they made beautiful banners and sang their songs, using the slogans they had devised.

In all, we had eight guided walks – several led by Marietta Crichton Stuart, historian and chair of the Friends (through scrupulous research, she’s become an expert on the 1848 Rally) – and six illustrated talks on the Kennington Chartists this year. Walks by radical printing project Past Tense and local artist/author Stefan Szczelkun brought other perspectives. Gardener/activist Carole Wright led a Black History Month walk – her own reflections on radical local history, including the Rastafarian temple on St Agnes Place. At St Mark’s Church, S I Martin enthused about William Cuffay; Katrina Navickas brought London Chartism alive for us; and Dave Steele analysed the famous daguerreotype photo of the 1848 Rally, comparing the size of the crowd to festival crowds today.

### Researching local Chartists

Our volunteer research group has been delving into the Lambeth Archives, researching local people who paid into the Chartist Land Company, an 1840s lottery scheme to provide a plot of land and a cottage in the country for working people. Through the Land Plan, we’ve discovered local Chartists and their jobs, mapped where they lived, found out about their politics, what jobs they did and where they worked, and what became of them. Look out for the results on the KCP website: [www.kenningtonchartistproject.org](http://www.kenningtonchartistproject.org)

© Photos FoKP, Carole Wright



The project launched in April (above). Flag bearers arrived from points north, south, east and west. We heard Feargus O’Connor’s famous 1848 speech, and children made badges and stamps. At schools workshops in July (right), local students wrote their own charters and slogans, composed speeches and songs and created beautiful cut paper posters. Marietta (left) became an expert on the Chartists and led several walks across the year



Want to get involved? Contact the project at [mail@kenningtonchartistproject.org](mailto:mail@kenningtonchartistproject.org)

### See everything online

Throughout the project, KCP have been building up an online archive of all things Kennington and Chartist, to give access to historic documents and show how the ‘monster’ rally has been commemorated over the years. There are some iconic historic images, audio recordings of the talks, and a great short film. Check it out at [www.kenningtonchartistproject.org/archive](http://www.kenningtonchartistproject.org/archive)

© Photos Rachel Megawhat, FoKP, Richard Galpin



### Looking to the future

Forward to the 175th anniversary in 2023: KCP and the Friends are talking about how to commemorate the 1848 Rally in the future. Do we need to raise a permanent memorial in the park to this important part of our history? Responses will go on the KCP website and inform future plans. Email your ideas to: [opencall@kenningtonchartistproject.org](mailto:opencall@kenningtonchartistproject.org)

FoKP are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Lipman-Miliband Trust for making this project possible.



Featured on the badges are William Cuffay (below), black Chartist leader; and abolitionist, Chartist and women’s rights campaigner Anne Knight (bottom left)



We learned about William Cuffay from historian S I Martin (left). On Chartist Day in July, we had choirs, debate and beautiful banners (left), poetry and printmaking (below). KCP Open Call (below left) want your ideas for a permanent memorial to the Chartists. Email them to [opencall@kenningtonchartistproject.org](mailto:opencall@kenningtonchartistproject.org)





**Lambeth Parks Manager**  
Mike Penney, Friends' chair  
Marietta, Claire from Lambeth  
Events and Ellie from Friends-  
Fest survey the damage to  
the south field during their  
post-event site visit

## Keeping an eye on Events

**Y**ou've seen the news. Cash-strapped local authorities like Lambeth Council increasingly view their parks as a source of revenue.

The number of events in Lambeth parks is growing, to the detriment of the users and the fabric of the parks. This year, Lambeth Events had 42 days allocated to Kennington Park – that's an almost fifty percent increase over 2017! And it's unclear how much the park actually benefits financially from these events.

We think 42 days of events is far too much for our small park. Too often, we're left with worn-out grass, tyretracks and ruts, and fenced-off areas waiting for the grass to recover.

The Friends keep a watchful eye on the number and size of events the Council plans to hold in Kennington Park. We try to be present at site meetings, to check on what plans are in place to protect the park and park users during set-up, and to view any damage after the event

and make sure repairs are begun promptly.

We're happy for the park to host small-scale events. But we objected strongly to the plan last November to convert the north field into a 300-car parking lot for a film shoot. This year, we said 'no' to a fun run for 4000 people that would have taken over the whole of our small park with numerous marquees and gazebos.

With your help, we objected to this year's October FriendsFest, when a large part of the

south field was fenced off for over two weeks. Unfortunately, Lambeth didn't consult us until tickets were sold, so we were unable to stop it. But the organisers did respond to our objections: they agreed to close the bars earlier, and to make sure noise was kept to 'acceptable' levels. Sadly, the grass took a beating, but with the re-seeding and some rain, it should recover soon.

The Friends are determined to keep the park a peaceful place where people can relax and play.

## Massaria is a menace

**I**t's good to find a patch of cool shade when it's hot. And there were plenty of people enjoying the shade under the beautiful old trees in Kennington Park this summer.

In late August, the Lambeth Council Trees Team paid us a visit to have a close look at some of those trees. They were on the look-out for signs of Massaria infection.

Massaria is a disease that affects London plane trees. It's caused by the fungus *Splanchnonema platani*, and causes branches to die back and become prone to breaking off and falling. A pink strip appears on the upper surface of the branch which can be difficult

to see from the ground – that's why the Team brought their cherry-picker. The strip develops into a lesion which can extend many metres.

London planes are widely planted in towns and cities, so the disease can be a significant public safety issue for local authorities. The dead wood has to be removed before it becomes a serious hazard.

Heading up the Team, Lambeth Arboricultural Officer Ajay Joshi said: 'Our response to Massaria, like all tree risk management, is to take a balanced and proportionate approach to

risk, and avoid unnecessary pruning or felling.'

Thanks to the Trees Team for continuing to look after our beautiful old trees and keeping them – and us – safe.



**Lambeth Trees Officer** Ajay Joshi (centre) told us: 'This seems to be the worst affected Lambeth park, perhaps because there are a lot of plane trees close together. We think the hot weather this summer has been a factor. And maybe compaction of the ground, caused by the high usage of the park.'



## In and around the park

### Council cultivates community crowdfunding

Lambeth Council are big supporters of community projects. They've launched a new scheme to award £1,250 towards projects which meet their criteria. To qualify, the project must:

- Build stronger communities and encourage civic pride
- Improve the health and well-being of local people
- Improve access to parks and open spaces

- Meet one or more of the Borough Plan Priorities:
  - Inclusive growth
  - Reducing inequality
  - Strong and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Only organised groups can apply, for example community groups, residents' associations, local charities or schools. So the Friends of Kennington Park is eligible!

The Council will only consider funding if the project reaches 25% of

its fundraising target and will only release the funds once 100% of the funds are raised. Applicants must show they have strong local support through a vibrant crowdfunding campaign.

Interested in getting something started? If you have any ideas for projects for the park that meet these criteria and want to start crowdfunding it, please get in touch.

Email us at [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)

### Green plea wins bins

**You'll be amazed** to learn that all the rubbish collected in the park litter bins used to go straight to landfill. That included all the valuable recyclable aluminium cans, glass and plastic bottles. We've pleaded with Lambeth Council for years to install recycling bins, to try to make the park even greener.

So it's great to see that the Council have at last responded to our plea. The bins aren't necessarily pretty



(unless you like that sort of thing!) But they are large, green and obvious. So now there's no excuse not to recycle. Please use them – and encourage others to do so too!

### Prince Consort Lodge is a star

**Film maker** Chloe Thomas was an active member of the Friends of Kennington Park when she lived in SE11. Recently, she's been very busy directing the next series of *Victoria*. Chloe knows all about the park, so she squeezed in a little tribute to our very own Prince Consort Lodge.

Prince Albert was very concerned about the living conditions of working people, and he designed this prototype, displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851

in Hyde Park. The house provided four family dwellings, each with a living room, scullery, three bedrooms and – revolutionary in the 1800s – a flushing WC.

When the exhibition ended, the 'model dwelling' was dismantled and moved brick by brick to Kennington Park, where it is now the HQ of Trees for Cities.

Chloe sent us these stills of the Prince (Tom Hughes) looking at the plans. The new series of *Victoria* airs on ITV in the New Year.



can, when they can.

Oh – and we have fun!

'The Friends certainly added a new dimension to our lives – a grass roots movement that cares so much and makes such a difference

to their community. We had fun, learned a lot and made some lovely friends. We hope the Friends of Kennington Park continues to flourish – keeping one of London's great parks at its best for the whole community.'

Andrew Horsler has just joined the committee. What are his first impressions?

'It's amazing, the sheer range of matters the Friends cover,' he says. 'And the variety of activities in the park – and the diverse range of its users. With so much to do, it's no surprise there was such a full agenda at my first committee meeting!'



**The committee** is made up of a bunch of local people – we're not experts! But we love the park, and do what we can to make it better

## It's time for trees!

The park is full of amazing trees – and now, thanks to our Community Tree Planting Day, there are twenty more of them!

### Tree survey

In August 2017, the Friends donated £2,000 to fund a Trees for Cities (TfC) survey in the park. 35 volunteers from the local community surveyed all the park's trees – they counted an amazing 480 trees in all!

19% of the park's trees are mature London planes. They provide 58% of the canopy cover, and store 392 tonnes of carbon! But 37% of the tree population featured just ten species. So ...

### Our Community Tree Planting Day

... a few months later, in November, we planted twenty new trees. Now fruit trees, Italian Alder, Turkish Hazel, Golden Sycamore and Yellow Norway Maple are helping to diversify the park's flora.

### School groups

With help from Zoe Thomson and her TfC team, local volunteers planted all the new trees. Three



groups came from local schools: Henry Fawcett and Charlotte Sharman Primaries and Kennington Park Academy. They nailed support straps to tree posts and mulched and watered the new saplings. They learned all about trees and the soil, sniffed the compost, and even found a few earthworms!

### So many volunteers!

The next day 36 local people, supported and supervised by the Urban Forests Team from Trees for Cities, planted seventeen more trees in the main park and on the park extension.

### Tree support

Big thanks to Western Riverside Fund and FLO for funding the survey, and to Lambeth Council Arboricultural Officers James Monteith and Ajay Joshi for their advice on the tree survey and the best locations for the new trees. TfC have a contract to maintain the trees over the next few years. Thanks to them, the new saplings are looking good – strong and healthy – after the long, hot summer.

36 lovely locals came to the cold, damp park to plant trees on our Community Tree Planting Day in November, ably assisted and advised by Sam Taylor, Seb Austin and Felix Mosley from Trees for Cities



© Photo by Hugh Kindred



Students from Kennington Park Academy and Charlotte Sharman and Henry Fawcett Primary Schools planted three trees in the park last November, learning about trees, and the soil, and compost in the process

## In and around the park

### Bye bye to the bus

With great sadness, we had to say goodbye to the lovely red bus that had pride of place in the playground. Always popular with young children, the bus was repeatedly vandalised. Irreparable damage meant it was unsafe. So parks staff had to remove it.

So – what should we do now? We could

commission another, much sturdier bus from a local

maker. Or we could buy a commercial product – a lot more costly, but potentially more resilient. Or we could put something else in its place. How about a tube train? Perhaps we could persuade TfL to get involved in funding and advice.

Whatever we do, we need the funds, and we need to make sure the new structure will be a good fit with the rest of the play area.

What do you think? Send your ideas for projects or funding to [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)

### TfL's ugly head house

Lambeth have given TfL the go-ahead for an ugly 'head house' for the Northern Line Extension in the north east corner of the park, despite numerous objections. The new building will house the ventilation and emergency access shaft.

The Friends and several local residents told the Council the design was wrong for a heritage park. We were hoping to have our say at a public meeting of Lambeth's Planning Committee, but they granted permission without a meeting and without inform-

ing objectors. Construction is due to start in early 2019.

The Friends think the design, size, material and colour of the new building are inappropriate for its location within a historic park. The site falls within the St Mark's Conservation Area, so the building should not be a glaring focal point from either the street or the park. It is not sufficient for TfL to try to hide it behind trees.

Meanwhile, the Friends are on the case with TfL about the future reinstatement of the dog walking



© Designs TfL

area. We want to see proper consultation with the users, and good landscaping, fencing, and new planting.

### Glorious gardening

In rain or snow or beautiful sunshine, you'll find the volunteer gardeners working hard in Kennington Park's Flower Garden, under the expert supervision of Amanda Rew. Thanks to the generous support of our anonymous donor, we've been able to keep these sessions going – they happen once a month.

We've done lots of work on the roses this year, dead-heading and cutting back. And bindweed was a major challenge – we've pulled up tons of the stuff!

The sessions are usually on a Sunday between noon and 4pm, but you can stay

for as short a time as you like. We provide tools and gardening gloves and you don't need to know anything about gardening, because Amanda knows everything there is to know about plants and herbs. We marvel as she cleans her hands with the soapy green leaves of *Saponaria officinalis*, commonly called 'soapwort.'

Special thanks go to Anne Dolan and Julie Page, who have adopted the war memorial beds and bowls and regularly weed and plant there; to those who worked extra gardening sessions before the park inspections;

and to Lambeth Landscapes' Kevin Wallace, Rasha Damjanovic and Reece Turner for all their hard work and support.

Fancy joining us one Sunday for a little light gardening? Email us at [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org) and we'll add you to the list and let you know when there's a session coming up. It's a great way to get some fresh air and a bit of gentle exercise. And to make new friends!



Amanda gives guidance to one of our younger gardening volunteers. Why not come and join us? It's a great way to relax and make new friends

© Photo by Hugh Kindred



## The Friends of Kennington Park

is a voluntary organisation of local people. We work together to improve the park. Our aim is to help people to enjoy the park, and for it to enrich their lives.

**The park needs your support, energy and ideas – so why not join us now?** It's easy to do it online at:

[www.kenningtonpark.org/join](http://www.kenningtonpark.org/join)

If you'd like to pay annually by standing order, please email [membership@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:membership@kenningtonpark.org) for a form.

Or you can complete the form below.

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

I'd like to \*join/renew my membership \*(delete as applicable)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership rates (per year)

Please tick the relevant box. Cheques should be made payable to **The Friends of Kennington Park**

£6 Individual  £10 Household  £3 Concession

£15 Community group  £40 Business

£120 Corporate sponsor

#### I'd like to make a donation

£10  £20  £50  £100

Total enclosed £ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Gift Aid

To enable us to claim back the tax already paid on your donations, and add 25p to every £1 you give, please complete the Gift Aid declaration below.

I agree to all my gifts in the last four years and any future gifts being eligible for Gift Aid. I have paid tax at least equal to the value of tax to be reclaimed.

Yes  No, I am not a UK tax payer

No, I regret I am unable to help in this way

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**I'd be happy to help out/have expertise in** (eg admin, horticulture, events, first aid, sport, PR, fund raising, leafletting, journalism/editorial, design/web design, social media):

**Please return this form to:** Membership Secretary,  
The Friends of Kennington Park, c/o Prince Consort Lodge,  
Kennington Park, Kennington Park Place, London SE11 4AS

## PARK CONTACTS

### The Friends of Kennington Park

email [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)

### Lambeth Parks Dept

tel 020 7926 9000 • email [parks@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:parks@lambeth.gov.uk)

### Police – Oval Safer Neighbourhoods Team

@MPSOval • In an emergency dial 999  
email [SNTLX-Oval@met.police.uk](mailto:SNTLX-Oval@met.police.uk)

### Animal Welfare Officer • Claire McMahon-Adie

email [CMcMahonAdie@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:CMcMahonAdie@lambeth.gov.uk)

### Lambeth Events

tel 020 7926 6207 • email [events@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:events@lambeth.gov.uk)  
Events calendar [www.lambeth.gov.uk/events](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/events)

### Astroturf & Tennis Courts bookings

Better Leisure • Bookings tel 020 7091 0846,  
7 days a week: Mon-Fri 9am-6pm; Sat-Sun 9am-4pm  
Or online [www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/london/lambeth/kenningtonpark](http://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/london/lambeth/kenningtonpark)

### Flower Garden Expert Gardener & Herbalist

Amanda Rew • tel 07757 250 037  
email [amandarew@handsonherbs.com](mailto:amandarew@handsonherbs.com)

### Café in the Park Details coming soon!

### Bee Urban • Barnaby Shaw

tel 07985 220 277 • email [beurbanlondon@gmail.com](mailto:beurbanlondon@gmail.com)

### Trees for Cities

tel 020 7587 1320 • email [info@treesforcities.org](mailto:info@treesforcities.org)

### SCCC at the Kia Oval

tel 020 3946 0100  
email [enquiries@surreycricket.com](mailto:enquiries@surreycricket.com)

### Stay & Play and Adventure Playground

Sarah Moltoni • tel 07739 973 890  
email [kenningtonparkcentre@gmail.com](mailto:kenningtonparkcentre@gmail.com)

### Picassos in the Park (children's art classes)

email [picassosinthepark@gmail.com](mailto:picassosinthepark@gmail.com)

### Kennington Chartist Project

email [mail@kenningtonchartistproject.org](mailto:mail@kenningtonchartistproject.org)  
[www.kenningtonchartistproject.org](http://www.kenningtonchartistproject.org)

### Northern Line Extension - Transport for London

tel 0343 222 2424 (charges apply)  
email [NLE@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:NLE@tfl.gov.uk) • [www.tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/northern-line-extension](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/northern-line-extension)

### Lambeth Archives

tel 020 7926 6076 • email [archives@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:archives@lambeth.gov.uk)

### Other park contacts

[Kennington Park Playground Users Group](#)

[Dogs in Kennington Park](#)

**PARKLIFE IS FREE – BUT A DONATION WILL HELP TO MAKE THE PARK EVEN BETTER!**

#### Data Protection

The Friends of Kennington Park will store safely the information requested in this form, so we can keep in touch with you. We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. To read our Privacy Policy, go to [www.kenningtonpark.org/privacy-policy](http://www.kenningtonpark.org/privacy-policy)

We'll keep you informed by email about what's going on in the park. If you're not happy to get email updates from us, you can unsubscribe at any time

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WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE A BETTER PARK

[www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org)

