

Parklife



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

Issue 12 • Summer 2015

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New Heritage Fun for the Flower Garden

We'll soon be able to enjoy our glorious Flower Garden again. The Grand Opening will be on 18th July. Meanwhile, the Friends and Lambeth Council have been very busy spending the Heritage Lottery Fund grant on your Garden. We're improving the layout, making new access points, installing better seating and improving sight lines. In all this activity, a key job is to enhance and promote the Garden's heritage by renovating original elements, such as the pergola and pond. Soon we'll be launching some exciting heritage events and a schools' education programme. To oversee this, we're delighted to announce that Stephen Lawlor has joined us to be our new part-time Heritage Activities Manager.

Stephen started the job in January. He lives in Loughborough Junction and has worked on a number of lottery-funded heritage projects in Lambeth, including at Brockwell Lido, and Brixton Windmill where he also ... *continued on p6*

If you fancy joining the team, come along and meet Stephen in the Park Café on Saturday 30th May at 2pm for a coffee, so you can join in the chat!



Meet Stephen Lawlor (left), our Heritage Activities Manager. He's planning lots of fun events to get local people involved once the Garden reopens. If you see him in the park, come and say hello – and tell him your ideas!

This is Kennington Park: all change!

There's so much work going on in and around the park at the moment! Along with what's happening in the Flower Garden, many other familiar spots are changing.

The Northern Line Extension project has taken over the old dog area. And the Old Park Keeper's Lodge – recently home to Bee Urban – will be demolished to make way for a perma-

nent ventilation shaft for the new line: work is scheduled to go on until 2019. After public consultation, a new temporary dog area was created near the Brixton Gate: undergrowth was cleared, the tree canopy raised, and benches moved, so dog owners can enjoy sunshine or the shade of the trees. Bee Urban have been rehoused in a brand new building ... *continued on p2*

IN THIS ISSUE • Culture 2020 cuts p2 • In & around the park | Sport for all | Midnight Path makeover | New Green Link gates p2 • New Adventure Playground and Stay & Play open p3 • Local heroes honoured p4 • Buy a ticket for the Big Red Bus p4 • Sculptor Sam's sundial p5 • Flowers, birds & bees | Bee-location | The Prophecy of Bees | Dig gardening p6 • New Fitness Trail p7 • Park contacts p8

... continued from p1

near the Green Link, funded by TfL. The well-used Fitness Trail, funded by the Friends in 2006, was past its best: so it's out with the old, and in with new fitness equipment, funded by Lambeth Council. The Midnight Path has been widened, straightened and resurfaced. On St Agnes Place, the new Stay & Play and Adventure Playground are up and running, and the new housing should be completed this year. And you can't have failed to notice that outside the park, TfL are busy with roadworks all around the area to make cycling safer.

It's a shame it's all happening at once. But we hope the park will benefit in the long term. Our whole purpose is to see the park improved, and we will continue to work hard to mitigate the impact of works in progress on park users.



Bee Urban's new home (top right), the new temporary dog area and roadworks galore: just some of the changes happening in and around the park

Culture 2020 consultation

Lambeth Council are being forced to make deep cuts in expenditure on Cultural Services, which include Parks and Sports. Proposals in their recent public consultation show that the park's budget will be halved. Lambeth want Friends' groups or other 'social enterprises' to take on the financial and management responsibility for running their parks, and to give the public a greater say in setting priorities.

We don't agree. The Friends of Kennington Park don't have the skills or the resources to run the park or the complex range of services it offers to users. Our aim is to represent the views of users and to help Lambeth by raising funds for improvements. Over the last ten

years we have raised over £1m from outside sources. In awarding the park a Green Flag for the fourth consecutive year, the Judges commended the partnership between Lambeth, their contractor, Veolia, and the Friends.

As part of our campaign against the budget cuts, the Friends sent Lambeth a detailed response to their proposals and urged local people and park users to send in their own views.

The Council have yet to analyze the responses or to announce how they will proceed. A decision is expected later in the year. Let's hope they see our beautiful park as an outstanding community asset which needs to be protected for the future of all park users.

We set up our stall at Oval Farmers' Market to encourage shoppers and passers-by to respond to Lambeth's Culture 2020 proposals



We're open, so come and play!

The new Kennington Park Centre opened last autumn in St Agnes Place. With an Arts and Community Centre, a Stay & Play Club and an Adventure Playground, it's got something for everyone!

Stay & Play is at 12:30 - 3:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 10am - 1pm on Wednesdays, all year round. It's open to children from 0 - 5 years with their parents/carers and is a lovely place to come to make friends and have a chat. Children can play with a range of stimulating toys and games, and join in fun activities led by supportive and experienced staff.

The Adventure Playground is open every Wednesday from 3:30 - 6:30pm in term time and from 10am - 4:30pm throughout the holidays (except bank holidays) for children aged 6-16. As well as the exciting new playground equipment, young people also get to take part in arts, music and sports activities, supported by a great team of experienced play workers.

Throughout the week there is an exciting range of activities for all ages, including capoeira classes (Brazilian martial arts, dance, acrobatics and music), yoga, pilates, music club, djembe drumming, samba dance and much more. The venue is also available for local community groups to hire.

It's all happening at 40 St Agnes Place! For more information email: kenningtonparkcentre@gmail.com or call 07739 973 890.



To find out what's on or to arrange hire, contact **Kennington Park Centre** 40 St Agnes Place email: kenningtonparkcentre@gmail.com or call 07739 973 890

© Photos by Kojo Essuman & Chloe Thomas

In and around the park ...

Sport for all

Weekend football is very popular with the four or five clubs who play on the park extension, east of St Agnes Place. In 2013, Surrey County Cricket Club funded the repair of the football pitches, but recently the pitches have taken such a beating that the football teams have moved onto the cricket pitch.

Of course football causes severe wear and tear on the cricket pitch, which has become too dangerous

to play on. That means the cricket teams who signed up with Lambeth Council to play this season will have to wait, or find another venue. Thankfully, for the second year running, Surrey CC have once more stepped in to improve the pitch, so we hope that cricket will once again be



played this season.

With such a big area, there should be room for all, if playing times and pitches were assigned properly. The Friends of Kennington Park are continuing to work with Lambeth Council in the hope that some sort of booking procedure can be arranged.



Makeover for the Midnight Path

The Midnight Path is in the middle of the park. It is owned by Lambeth Highways, so isn't actually a part of the Park. But it has always been popular, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to cut across the park at all hours. There has been a 'right of way' across Kennington Park at least since the 1890s – possibly since the days of Kennington Common. Now it has had a much needed makeover.

After a spate of muggings five years ago, the Council and the police considered closing the path at dusk.

But the Friends campaigned successfully against this, and better lighting and mirrors were installed. This year, after consultation showed strong public support, the Council received funds from the Mayor's Safer Cycling budget to widen and straighten the path. Work started in March and should be finished soon.

The realigned path has a new high-viz surface to help separate pedestrians and cyclists, which will make it even safer for all to use, at whatever hour they are crossing the park.

New gates for the Green Link

The Green Link leads from the park to St Agnes Place and the park extension. It's an important entry point to the park. Now it has some beautiful new gates, thanks to designer Naomi Leake, who has created a wonderful vision of foliage, birds and bees.

The developers of St Agnes Place, London and Quadrant, have paid for the gates, as part of their undertaking to improve the area. They are due to complete 58 new houses in St Agnes Place this year,

ten years after Lambeth Council cleared the site and made the decision to realign the road.



Local heroes honoured

Over the next few years, we are commemorating the centenary of the Great War. In July 2014, the Friends of Kennington Park and the Parish of St Agnes, Kennington held a re-dedication service for the park's war memorial to coincide with the 90th anniversary of its unveiling in July 1924. The memorial commemorates all local casualties, but particularly remembers the men of the 24th London Battalion, The Queen's, whose headquarters were in nearby Braganza Street. The battalion's history put their World War One casualties at 42 officers and 853 men, but the



Lance Corporal Leonard James Keyworth (right) fought heroically at the Battle of Givenchy on May 25th 1915, and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery



Children from Keyworth school (top right) attended the service. They painted poppy fields (above) as part of a school project on the centenary of the Great War

actual figure was probably even higher.

One of the 24th London's World War One heroes was Lance Corporal Leonard James Keyworth VC, who was awarded the Victoria Cross. One hundred years ago, on the night of 25th May 1915, fifty-eight men out of a total of seventy-five from the 24th Battalion fell, at the battle of Givenchy. But during a very fierce encounter, Lance Corporal Keyworth, who was just 21 years old, stood fighting on top of the parapet for two hours, fully exposed to the



enemy only a few yards away. Nearby Keyworth Street, and Keyworth Primary School, just around the corner from Kennington Park, are named in his honour. In November, FoKP member Marietta Crichton Stuart visited the school to run a series of Great War workshops, a highlight of which was a look

at the different types of military salutes of our armed services and those of foreign armies.

Children from Keyworth School attended the July service. In brilliant sunshine, Father Paul Ensor processed across the park with a large group of parishioners from St Agnes' Church. The service attracted a large crowd, including the Mayor of Lambeth, Simon Hughes MP, the Royal British Legion, the Old Comrades Association, Territorials from Flodden Road Depot and local army cadets and schools. With prayers, hymns, bagpipers playing *Amazing Grace* and buglers sounding *The Last Post*, it was a moving occasion. FoKP Chairman Gordon Johnston laid a poppy wreath on behalf of the local community.

Photo of L.J. Keyworth © The Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association

Sculptor Sam shares his Sundial secrets

Sam Flintham is busy carving a new sundial for the Flower Garden from a slab of Welsh slate. We commissioned Sam from a shortlist of four students on the Historic Stone Carving Course at City & Guilds of London Art School.

Sam's tutor, Martin Frith, talked to him for **Parklife** about the challenges the project posed.

Martin: How did you cope with the mathematical challenge of plotting a sundial?

Sam: I've always been interested in astronomy and the solar system. And I learned the techniques of delineating a sundial from lectures here at the college. Thankfully, my own calculations and my tutors' were exactly the same.

Martin: What elements became evident in the design process?

Sam: I love creating things that have a practical purpose. I started by researching the established tradition and ornamentation of sundials: the theme of the sunburst kept coming up again and again. I tried various alternatives with the ornamentation. But then I found, when the ornamentation was stripped away, the design was clearer, and easier for the viewer to understand. So – practicality and aesthetics combined.

Martin: Have you been surprised by the material?

Sam: Slate has a dense, fine consistency, so you can achieve a high level of precision: I like that. You're working with machinery, turning the circle from a square piece of slate and making the large chamfer. And working to tolerances of less than 0.5mm, so it was like an engineering project. I was happy with that: it seemed so similar to the precision of clocks. Which is what a sundial is, of course!

Martin: What do you feel you've learned from the stages of production?

Sam: I've learned that early design decisions can be re-evaluated and further refined later. This fine-tuning of aesthetic decisions at each stage



“The shaping and polishing of the slate has been a big job. It looks so clean and tactile now ...”
Sam Flintham, sculptor



of production brings so much more definition to the physical object.

Martin: Now you're ready to start carving the sundial face, how do you feel?

Sam: Apprehensive – and excited! The shaping and polishing of the slate has been a big job. It looks so clean and tactile now, I'm eager to do it the best justice I possibly can. The material requires a lot of discipline to produce the sundial face with total accuracy. I want to create an object of precision and clarity.

City&Guilds
of London
Art School

Buy a ticket for the Big Red Bus!

Do you come to the playground? Do you want to see improvements to it? A group of local parents are keen to make this popular feature of Kennington Park better for all.

Since it was completed in 2008, with money the Friends raised from the Lottery and other charities, the playground has had heavy and continuous use. But now it needs uplift. Some immediate repairs are in the pipeline, but one much-loved feature – the big

red bus – really needs complete replacement; the Green Flag judges recommended that last year.

But big red buses don't come off the shelf, or cheap! It will cost at least £5k to have one made. So the Friends are launching an exciting new appeal. We'll be selling £10 Bus Tickets to raise funds for a new Bus. You can donate online at our website: www.kenningtonpark.org. Please mark your donation 'bus ticket'. Will you buy one – or a few – £10 Bus Tickets? Tell all your friends



Buy a £10 bus ticket and help to fund a new Red Bus for the playground!

and other playground users. Maybe help sell some tickets? Let's make sure our kids can play in style!

A new bus is only the start. The Playground user group (on Facebook at **The Kennington Park Playground Users Group**) have ambitious plans for major improvements, and Lambeth Council have logged the project in their capital investment programme. But carrying it out depends on raising money; the Friends are looking for someone to take charge of this initiative. Can you help? Contact us at friends@kenningtonpark.org. We'd love to hear from you!

... continued from p1

works part-time. Stephen trained as an Art and Design teacher in Ireland and has found that creative activities are a fantastic way to engage children with heritage and local history, particularly for projects with an architectural or visual starting point, which is ideal at Kennington Park's Flower Garden.

What's the plan?

Stephen is developing an exhibition of images that tells the story of the Garden's history and highlights the social context at the time of its original design. The exhibition will also show changes during the restoration works, including the new sundial, paid for by the Friends of Kennington Park and designed by local sculptor, Sam Flintham. You can see this exciting show in local libraries, churches and in the Park itself over the next few months. Make sure you don't miss it!

Stephen will be encouraging local schools to display our exhibition in classrooms. And planning fun creative projects for them. You'll be able to see the results in our historical exhi-

We're busy planning lots of fun things to do (right) in and around the new Flower Garden in the coming months: there'll be music, dancing and dressing up, parades and painting. So come and join in the fun!



bition in Kennington Park over the summer. On top of this, the students will have the opportunity to visit the garden, once the restoration is complete, to hold their own miniature opening ceremonies! Soon, we'll be launching a whole programme of activities, from flower shows to olive festivals, special talks, bat walks and Halloween and Easter family fun.

Get involved!

We're keen to create a team of volunteers to develop these activities and support the project. Stephen is holding an initial meeting for anybody who might be interested in joining the team, on Saturday 30th May at 2.00pm in the Park Café. If you'd like to help your Park, then please do come along, have a cup of tea and join in the chat! Or if you can't make it, send Stephen an email at stephen@kenningtonpark.org. If you see him out and about in the Park, just come and say hello! And look out for more about the Grand Opening on park noticeboards in the coming months.

© Photos courtesy of Brixton Windmill by Owen Llewellyn & Richard Chambray

Fitness fun for all

There will soon be a brand new Kennington Park Fitness Trail in the north east area of the park. A steering group of fitness equipment users, the Friends of Kennington Park and Lambeth Council produced a plan to combine existing equipment and new modern equipment from Kenguru and Fenlend Leisure. A more inclusive outdoor fitness area will bring experienced users and beginners together. Accessible equipment will be sited closest to the pathways. And equipment will be closer together, so it isn't hidden behind trees or the toilet block. Benches will be repaired and reinstalled. And the children's tyre challenge will be replaced with fun, new balance beams.

Contractors have fenced off the area and started work: the new Fitness Trail should be ready by early June. While work is in progress, you

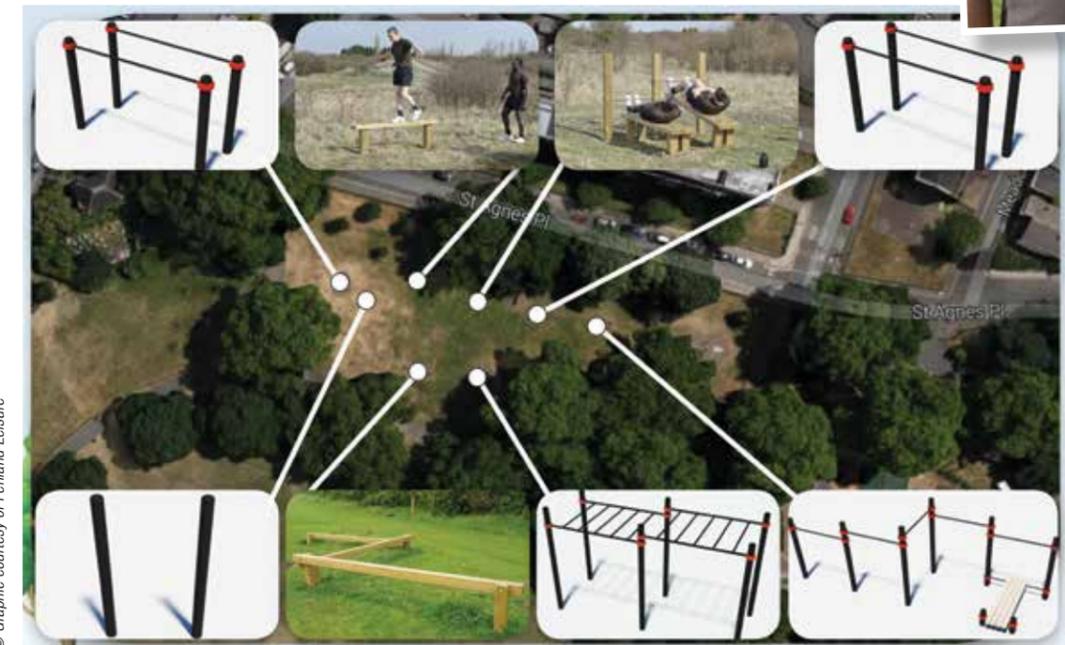
can use the new outdoor gym recently installed in Kennington Open Space, in the south corner of the park extension, near the junction of John Ruskin Street and Camberwell New Road.

The fitness equipment user group showed real effort and passion to kick start this project and push it forward. Special thanks are due to users Adam Matthews and Alice Becker, who played a pivotal role in securing the funding. The Friends are also grateful to local Councillors who supported the project, and to Caroline Streeks of Lambeth Council.

This success is a demonstration of the power of user groups, and the Friends hope to gain further insight and support from other specific user groups in future.



Key movers and shakers: Adam Matthews and Alice Becker (above) brought the fitness equipment users together and created an inclusive plan with the Friends and Lambeth Council. They were pivotal in securing funding for the new equipment



© Graphic courtesy of Fenlend Leisure

Flowers, birds and bees ...

Bee-location

Our local honeybees have moved. Bee Urban were in the Old Parkeeper's Lodge. But the lodge will be demolished to make way for a permanent ventilation shaft for the new underground line. So Lambeth Council offered Bee Urban a lease on a new building in the contractor's yard. The hives were moved in early March, and their fruit trees were

transplanted from the dog area to the Green Link close by. Transport for London paid £50,000 for the relocation.

An area of the park has been fenced off so that the hives can stand in sunlight – and they'll be nearer the Flower Garden, so the bees can take full advantage of all that lovely pollen when the restoration is complete. We're looking forward to enjoying more of their delicious honey!

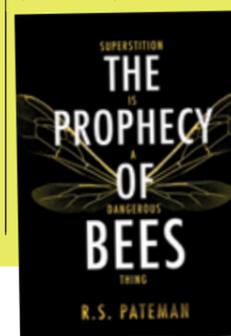


Prophecy of Bees

FoKP co-founder Rob Pateman had his second novel published last November. *The Prophecy of Bees* explores the dark power of superstition, magic and folklore when Lindy, a wealthy widow, and Izzy, her wayward daughter move into a remote manor house in the Cotswolds. It takes several Gothic themes – ghosts, strange villagers, sacrifice, mysterious codes, creepy churches, witches – and gives them a contempor-

ary twist. Add in a hive of bees that seem to be able to foretell disaster and Lindy and Izzy have to decide if they're in danger or not.

The Prophecy of Bees is published by Orion.



© Cover courtesy of Orion Books

Gardening is great!

We're called Dig it! and we are the Kennington Park gardening group. You don't have to be an expert gardener to join – just come along and have some fun! We do weeding, pruning, cutting back and planting bulbs. It's relaxed and chatty – and everyone is welcome. Best of all, because we're helping the Council, tools and gardening gloves are provided. We meet once a month, on a Sunday morning, but we also have week-

day sessions. We're always especially busy in the run-up to the inspection for the Green Flag, tidying up to make sure the flower beds look their best. If you're interested in coming along, please email us at friends@kenningtonpark.org





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 join online at:

www.kenningtonpark.org/join

If you'd like to pay annually by standing order, please email 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 _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

email _____

Membership rates

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

£4 Individual £6 Household £2 Concessions

I'd like to make a donation

£5 £10 Other £ _____

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, leaflet distribution, copywriting & editorial, design/web design):

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

Area Parks Manager

Lara Mifsud-Bonici • tel: 07958 028 275 (9am-5pm)
email: LMifsud-bonici@lambeth.gov.uk

Lambeth Parks Dept

tel: 020 7926 9000 • email: parks@lambeth.gov.uk

Police – Oval Safer Neighbourhood Team

tel: 020 8721 3592 • (in emergencies dial 999)

Animal Welfare Officer: Claire McMahon

email: CMcMahon@lambeth.gov.uk

Lambeth Events Team

tel: 0207 926 6207 • email: events@lambeth.gov.uk

Lambeth Events Calendar

www.lambeth.gov.uk/eventsinparks

Astroturf & Tennis Courts bookings

Greenwich Leisure Ltd • tel: 0845 130 8998

You can book seven days a week: Monday to Friday – 9am to 6pm; Saturday to Sunday – 9am to 4pm

Flower Garden Heritage Activities Manager

Stephen Lawlor

email: stephen@kenningtonpark.org

Café in the Park

Best to come into the café and speak to Chris

Or tel: 020 7793 8886

Or email: cafeinthepark@supanet.com

Bee Urban

Barnaby Shaw • tel: 07985 220 277

email: beeurbanlondon@gmail.com

Trees for Cities

tel: 020 7587 1320 • email: info@treesforcities.org

SCCC at the Kia Oval

tel: 0844 375 1845

email: enquiries@surreycricket.com

Stay & Play and Adventure Playground

Sarah Moltoni • tel: 07739 973 890

email: kenningtonparkcentre@gmail.com

Playground user group

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