

# PARKLIFE



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## KENNINGTON PARK WINS GREEN FLAG

It's official – Kennington Park is an excellent park. That was the decision of the judges whose inspection of the park in May led them to award it a coveted Green Flag.

This is a nationally recognised award that indicates excellence in public open space. It's like the Blue Flag that beaches get, and is just as highly prized.

The award demonstrates the major turnaround in the park's fortunes in the last few years and has long been an objective of the Friends group.

In raising the flag at a well attended ceremony in October, Kate Hoey MP, acknowledged the team effort needed to win the award and thanked Lambeth's park staff, the gardeners from their contractor Veolia and the Friends for their tireless work.

### The process begins

In 2008, after the Friends requested a mock assessment, Kennington Park failed by a large margin. Although not unexpected, it raised awareness of the scale of the task in hand.

Helped by Terry Channell, a member with planning expertise, the Friends worked with Lambeth Council to devise and implement an action plan to make good the shortcomings.

The aim was to be ready by 2011. Our expectations were modest; many parks fail on their first attempt. There were also major cuts in Lambeth's spending to contend with, and cuts to the number of parks' staff working in the park.

### Pulling together

Many Friends members, well wishers and park users pitched in to weed flower beds, borders and paths, collect rubbish, prune shrubs and trees and plant new plants. Pathways were swept and swept again, notice boards polished, the café given a new lick of paint and its furniture oiled.

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© Photos by Suzanne Jansen

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But it was worth it; on the day of the inspection the park was looking better than it ever had in the last fifty years.

### Red letter day

On 25 July, we learnt officially that a Green Flag had been awarded to Kennington Park.

Several other Lambeth parks were also awarded the flag, but these were all renewals. In 2011, Kennington Park was the only one to get it for the first time. And at the first attempt too.

The Friends have been inundated with congratulations from councillors, members, supporters and park users.

'This is a significant milestone for Kennington Park,' said Gordon Johnston, Chairman of the Friends.

'Although Green Flag brings no money with it, charitable funders know that a Green Flag park is worthy of their support. And it also sends out a positive message to people about their local park – and that they should take pride in it.'

'I'd like to say a very big thank you to all who helped us get the Green Flag – Lambeth's Parks' staff, Veolia and members of the Friends and their supporters.'

Parks' Officer Lee Hills, and Iain Boulton, Parks Project Officer, both experienced Green Flag judges (but not for Lambeth parks!) were also delighted with the news.

'You can make a park look clean and well presented, but if there's no community involvement then there's nobody there to help reach or maintain that standard, or take the park in the directions it must go to meet the needs of those who use it.'



A young supporter marks the spot for bulb planting

'The Friends of Kennington Park have worked closely with the council to keep us focused on making the park both look good and serve its customers, and have been instrumental in securing the funds – and new audiences – so that it's always going forward.'

'The Friends should be rightly proud of what they've done to get us to this point, and we're sure they will continue to work with the council to keep Kennington Park as one of the very best public open spaces in London and the United Kingdom as a whole.'

### Onwards and upwards

The award is not the end of the process – just a platform to build upon in the future.

We are setting up gardening groups to help maintain the park's appearance and developing plans to restore and replant the Flower Garden. The goal is to ensure we retain the Green Flag next year. After that, we need to focus on the park extension.

The high level of community involvement played a big part in securing the Green Flag for the park – so please join the Friends or renew your membership. Simply complete the form at the back of this newsletter or sign up at [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org)

The rates haven't changed since the Friends group first started 9 years ago – £2 (concessions) £4 (adult waged) £6 (family/household). As the Friends group now has charitable status, we can claim the tax back on any donations. So if you're a UK income tax payer, complete a Gift Aid declaration form and we can claim the tax back – boosting your contribution by 25%.

© Photo by Suzanne Jansen

## FLOWER POWER MAKES ITS MARK

A Friends appeal for £6,000 has transformed the park's flower beds into an oasis of colour.

The beds to the south of Prince Consort Lodge were planted up in October 2010, thanks to the generosity of Friends members and supporters. The beds to the north of the Lodge got their makeover in March, with the help of funds from the Oval Ward Purse and the enthusiasm and know how of Veolia, Friends members and staff and trainees from Roots & Shoots.

Designed by landscape gardener Helen Sales, the beds are now a horticultural highlight of the park, offering year round colour and improved biodiversity.

'The new beds are a wonderful asset to the park,' says FoKP Chairman, Gordon Johnston. 'Thanks to Helen's design skill, the beds will brighten the park whatever the season. The reaction from park users so far has been tremendous.'



Bloomin' lovely – the flower beds get a new lease of life



Photos courtesy of Jill Johnston and Linsey Fryatt

### Your park needs you

Winning the Green Flag was the result of a lot of effort from park users, council officers and contractors and the Friends. Making sure we keep the Green Flag next year will take even more of the same.

We are setting up a gardening task force to help keep the park looking its best.

The goal is get a pool of volunteers together one day a month (probably a Sunday) to do a two hour stint around



the park. It could be weeding the flower beds, trimming the edges, picking up

litter, pruning shrubs or anything else that needs doing.

It's a great way of meeting people and of getting to know your park. No gardening experience or skills are necessary and you don't need your own tools.

**Why not get involved? Send your contact details to [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org) and we'll let you know when the sessions are taking place.**

## FLOWER GARDEN TO BLOOM ONCE MORE

Since it was first laid out in the 1930s, the Flower Garden has been one of the park's highlights.

Its design, with rustic brickwork, pergola, sundial and formal flower beds, is typical of many Old English flower gardens created in London parks in the early twentieth century.

But time has taken its toll. Despite some repairs over the years, the donation of commemorative benches and the love and attention of the parks' staff, the Flower Garden needs a makeover.

The Friends plan to raise funds to restore the garden to its former glory and to open up the back of it so that it joins up with the

Green Link – making the garden a through route rather than a dead end for anti-social behaviour.

This is an ambitious, long-term project that requires cooperation with Lambeth council and significant amounts of money. Nothing will be done without consultation so watch out for updates in Parklife, posters in the park and at [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org)



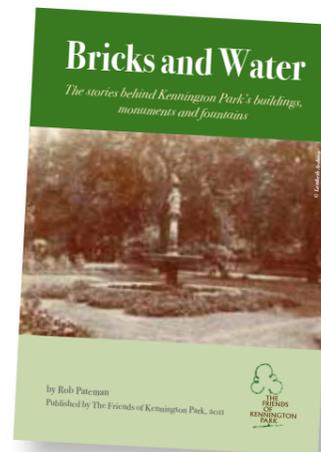
## THE LAST WORD A HUGE SUCCESS

The Friends' latest booklet on the park's history is the last one in the series – and is proving to be one of the most popular.

**Bricks and Water** by FoKP committee member Rob Pateman, explores the stories behind the park's buildings, monuments and fountains. Launched with a talk at the Durning Library in May, the booklet has seen strong demand from the café, libraries, Kennington bookshop, the Friends' table at the Kennington fete and from the Friends' website.

'It seems to have really connected with people,' says Rob Pateman. 'Perhaps it's because the park's buildings and monuments are so familiar to us all as park users and yet also rather unknown.'

**Bricks and Water** is the last in the series. 'We've covered sport and leisure, horticulture, the Chartists, the air raid shelter tragedy and now the buildings and statuary. There isn't really anything else to cover so it's good to finish on such a high note.'



© Photos by Suzanne Jansen

## KEEP FIT KIDS

With the adult fitness trail such a success – and heavily used by children too small to do so properly – keep fit enthusiast and park user Darren White approached the Friends about installing some equipment specifically for children.

The Friends raised over £4,000 from Grassroots Grants and Capital Community Foundation to install a horizontal ladder, wobble board and tyre challenge. Kate Hoey MP, officially opened the equipment, saying ‘The Friends of Kennington Park have done a great job in raising the money for the equipment and it is a valuable addition to the facilities in this wonderful park.’

Personal trainer Niron Noel then put 100 pupils from Crampton, Henry Fawcett and St John the Divine primary schools through their paces. The children also ventured out with an Activity Pack each to make the most of the Nature Trail and Wildlife Area. The kids loved looking for bugs and the teachers said how great it was to have such a wonderful resource on their doorstep.



Photos courtesy of Jill Johnston

## NORTHERN LINE EXTENSION

Plans for the extension to the Northern Line from Kennington to Battersea could have an impact on Kennington Park.

Earlier this year, following consultation on the route options in 2010, those living near the preferred route were consulted about the works involved.

The project requires a ventilation shaft in or near the park, either in the dog area or within the shell of the Old Park Keeper's Lodge.

Lambeth Parks and the Friends' committee had little doubt that, given this narrow choice, using the Old Park Keeper's Lodge was the better solution. It involves no permanent loss of public open space and the shaft could be built within the footprint of the lodge – which has lain empty and unused for many years.

The public consultation on construction sites and ventilation shafts along the extension is still ongoing. It is likely that the majority of the public responses will support the choice the committee made.

The project should generate funds from the developer that could be used to finance improvements in the park. There are still a number of political and operational hurdles to cross, but the work should begin in 2014.



## REPORTING DANGEROUS DOGS

Kennington Park attracts many dog owners and their pets. Most of dog owners are considerate to other park users and keep their dogs under control.

But there have been a number of serious attacks on dogs by other dogs whose owners have failed to bring them under control.

Several trees in the park have also been damaged by irresponsible dog owners who let their pets strip bark from the trunks – ultimately killing the tree.

You can help stop the attacks.

If you feel that you are being immediately threatened or intimidated and believe a dog is seriously out of control, contact the Lambeth Borough Police on 0300 123 1212. If it is an emergency and a person is in immediate danger, call 999.

If another park user or their dog is causing you nuisance or annoyance, report it on the Anti-Social Behaviour line – 020 7926 4000. This operates 9 am -6 pm Monday – Friday, but messages can be left on voicemail outside these hours. Please give the time and full description of the incident. Your report can be made anonymously.

© Photo by Suzanne Jansen

## Renew your membership

The more members the Friends have the more clout we have with the council. And having as many people as possible on board ensures that we meet the various needs of the area's diverse communities.

Just as importantly, the membership subscriptions are not only vital for running costs, they also provide the flexible funding that enables us to invest resources where they are needed most. We couldn't have achieved what we have without the support of our members so if you haven't joined, or need to renew your membership, please complete the form at the back of this newsletter or sign up at [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org)

The rates are still an absolute bargain and haven't changed since the Friends group first started 9 years ago – £2 (concessions) £4 (adult waged) £6 (family/household). As the Friends group now has charitable status, we can claim the tax back on any donations. So if you're a UK income tax payer, complete a Gift Aid declaration form and we can claim the tax back – boosting your contribution by 25%.



## 19TH CENTURY SHOW HOME ON SHOW ONCE MORE

Prince Consort Lodge threw open its doors to the public for the first time in 160 years as part of Open House Weekend.

More than 200 people visited on the day and took one of the many tours. These explained the building's history as a prototype for exemplary homes for the poor, its architectural and technological innovations – and the similarities and differences with a contemporary social housing project in Brixton.

The scheme, fabrik, built by Skanska and the Notting Hill Housing Group, was also open to the public on the day, and visitors to each site were encouraged to visit the other.

'The idea was to show how the problems of providing affordable social housing were tackled by reformers in 1851, and housing developers in 2011,' says Eleanor Purser, who conceived and curated the project.

Members of the Friends group helped organise and host the event, and conducted the tours.

The Lodge hasn't been open to the public since it first moved to Kennington Park from the Great Exhibition in 1852. It has



Welcome home: Open House visitors take a tour of the Lodge

been used for housing the park keeper, storing park equipment and as dressing rooms for sports teams.

Since 2002 it has been used as the offices for the charity Trees for Cities. 'We are always getting people knocking on the door

**1 Open House London 17-18 Sept 2011**

### Prince Consort Lodge

**160 years of social housing** Welcome to Prince Consort Lodge. For Open House London, the building is teamed with fabrik, Chadstone Lane, a new social housing development by Notting Hill Housing Group in partnership with Skanska. Together the buildings show changes and similarities in the pre-occupations of social housing developers over the last 160 years.

**The need for change** From 1841 to 1851 the population of England and Wales grew by 12.6%. London grew by 26% with a population of approximately 2,300,000. Reformers thought had housing was a threat to the health and moral decency of society. They recommended separate bedrooms for children of opposite sexes and parents.

**Inspiring solutions** Prince Albert, President of the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes (SICLC), commissioned the Society's honorary architect, Henry Roberts, to design cost-effective but high quality model housing. Albert secured a site for it at the 1851 Great Exhibition. It cost £428 (approximately £1,000 today).

In 1853, the building was relocated to the newly created Kennington Park. In 1856 it became the first 'cottage' in the park when the park keeper gave permission to build a small porch to the rear from which his wife could ginger beer, lemonade, soda water, biscuits, fruit and sweetmeats. The outside staircase was reworked in 1881.

The building is now home to the charity Trees for Cities.

**Carbon Footprint** Prince Consort Lodge has a carbon footprint of 10.5 tonnes CO2e per year.

**Local** Located at an original location in Kennington Park.

**SKANSKA**

**Trees for Cities**

**Information board © Marrie Searchwell**

asking if they can look around,' says Ginny Tym of Trees for Cities. 'It was wonderful to finally be able to say come on in! The response has been so fantastic we will almost certainly be doing it again for Open House next year.'

Many thanks to all those who made the event possible, including Trees for Cities, Notting Hill Housing Group, Skanska and the Homes and Communities Agency.

## KENNINGTON PARK GOES DIGITAL

People all around the world – or just around the corner – can now keep up to speed with the latest developments in the park, thanks to our new website. And just so you really don't miss anything, you can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

Launched in the Spring, [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org) doubles up as the source of info on the park's facilities, news, opening times and contacts, and gives the low down on the Friends group too.

You can find out about the work we do and our latest projects, download back copies of the newsletter and a variety

of booklets and guides, as well as joining or renewing your membership or making a donation.



Made possible by the generosity of a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, the website has been getting plenty of hits and has transformed the admin associated with membership.

'It gives us greater flexibility,' says FoKP committee member, Rob Pateman, 'and allows us to report news and publicise projects in between issues of Parklife.'

So for all things Kennington Park head for [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org)

## ST AGNES PLACE: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BEGINS

Building is underway on the site of the Rastafarian temple on St Agnes, with the Green Link being used as a temporary builders' yard.

Plans for 18 new dwellings were approved by Lambeth Planning earlier this year. The Friends were not consulted.

Work on the 55 houses to be built by London and Quadrant is due to start next Spring. This will involve the realignment of St Agnes Place and the re-provision of the One O'clock Club and Adventure

Playground along the southern boundary of the Green Link. There will be a small net gain of public open space to the park.

The Friends lobbied successfully for more external space for the One O'clock Club and Adventure Playground and insisted that they be re-provided in the first stage of construction, so that local parents and youngsters would not be without play facilities. This too was accepted by the Planning Committee.

Work should be completed by Spring 2014.

## FRIENDS SEEK FUTURE CHAIR



Dear Friends,

At the next AGM in May 2012 I will have been chairman for five years, following two years as vice-chair.

It is time to think about bringing in new blood.

I am ready to stand for re-election next year, but I would like to bring onto the committee someone who might stand for election as chair a year or so after.

Looking back at my predecessor's job description in 2006, I have not delivered all the roles he set out, but it has proved a busy job. Ideally, the chair needs to have the time to attend meetings with Lambeth officers during the working week.

If you are interested, and think it might be a task you would feel ready to take on in a year or two, please let me know by emailing [johnston.methley@nujj.com](mailto:johnston.methley@nujj.com). I will be very happy to meet you.

Yours sincerely

*Gordon Johnston*

## RED BUS: RED AGAIN

The bus in the playground got a makeover recently thanks to a group of parents who volunteered to give it a lick of paint and make some small repairs.

The bus, exclusive to Kennington Park, has been a big hit with local youngsters – but its popularity brought inevitable wear and tear.

'It's a great feature in the playground,' says project leader Jonathan Dutton, 'so it was a shame to see it getting a bit faded and battered. Now it's as good as new – and just as popular as ever.'

FoKP would like to thank Jonathan and all the other volunteers for giving up their weekend – and M P Moran's for donating the paint.

*All aboard for a new look bus*



© Photo by Suzanne Jansen

Photos courtesy of Jill Johnston

## THE MIDNIGHT PATH

The Midnight Path running across the park from Kennington Park Road to St Agnes Place, was the first footpath to be illuminated in a public park.

It opened in 1899 after local residents lobbied for its construction, saying that it was too inconvenient to have to walk around the park, instead of across it.

In 1901 the Park Superintendent reported that the night walk 'has been a great success and advantage to thousands.'

One hundred and ten years later, the same can still be said.

But the path has also witnessed robberies, generally after dark, some quite recently. Even so, the Friends believe that with the re-opening of the café, the building of the playground and other improvements, the park is now safer than it has been for many years.

Lambeth community safety agreed that, rather than trying to close the Midnight Path warning notices should be put at either end, and mirrors at the corners of the path.

We hope these steps will deter criminals, but please take care when using the path.

## PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

The park now has two beautiful new trees – planted either side of the Guy's Gold roses in front of Prince Consort Lodge.

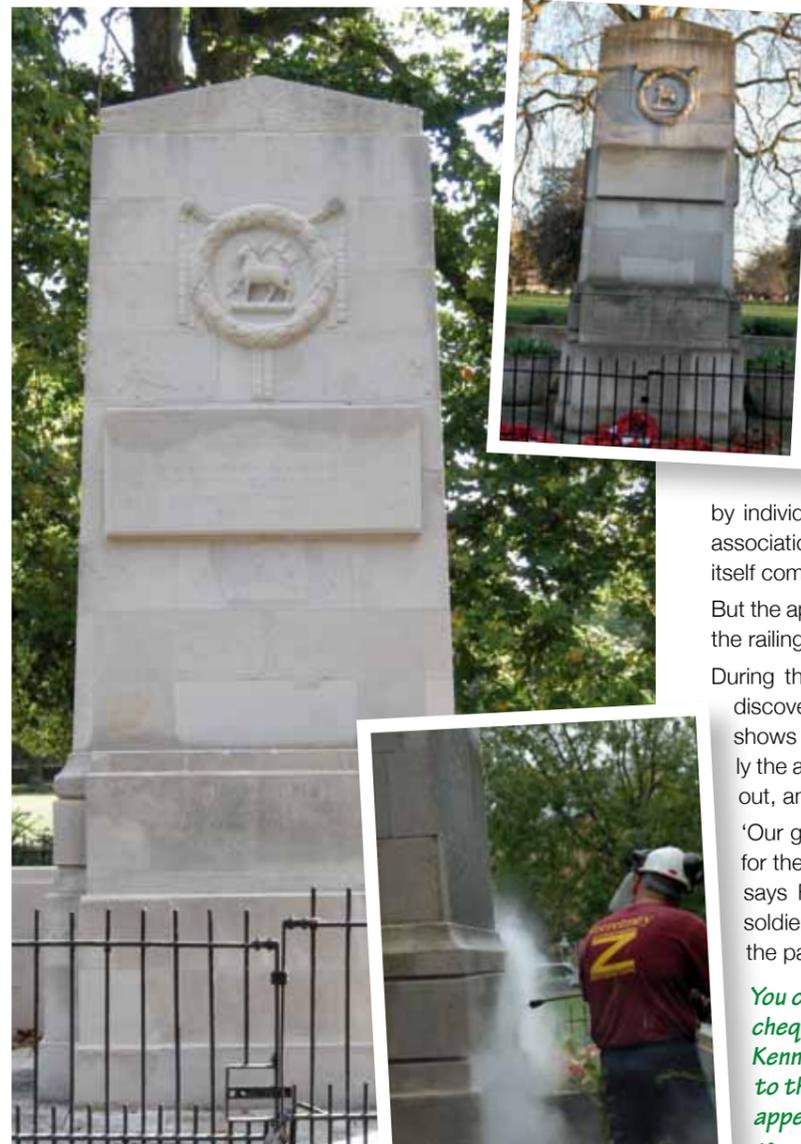
The winter flowering cherries are a gift from the family of Suzanne Jansen, a regular park user and long term friend to the Friends, to mark her 50th birthday.

'When the sick trees outside Prince Consort Lodge were taken down, it left the area a bit exposed and barren. Once the yellow rose border was planted, I thought a couple of small trees on either side would complete it beautifully. The trees flower right from November to March so will brighten up the park and give road users coming down Kennington Road a lovely winter show!'

*If you would like to donate a tree or shrub please contact [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)*



© Photo by Suzanne Jansen



© Photos by Suzanne Jansen

*Before and after: the memorial scrubs up nicely*

## HELP RESTORE THE WAR MEMORIAL

The Friends have launched an appeal to restore the War Memorial at the Kennington Park Place gate.

The Memorial honours soldiers from the local regiment, the Queen's, who fell in two world wars.

Originally unveiled in 1924, its features were pretty much lost beneath layers of dirt, pollution and moss.

The response to the appeal so far has been incredible. In less than two weeks, enough was donated -

by individual members of the public and the Queens' regimental association – to get the cleaning and re-pointing of the memorial itself completed in September.

But the appeal for funds is still open to cover the costs of repainting the railings around the memorial and landscaping the flower beds.

During the course of the work on the memorial the contractors discovered that two side panels were dangerously loose. This shows the poor condition of parts of the memorial and how timely the appeal is. To make sure the rest of the work can be carried out, and secure the memorial for the future, please give now.

'Our goal is to get the main restoration work completed in time for the service held at the Memorial on Remembrance Sunday,' says Friends' chairman Gordon Johnston. 'It would give the soldiers a truly fitting memorial and make a big impact at one of the park's most well-used entrances.'

*You can donate at [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org) or send a cheque to FOKP Memorial Appeal, Prince Consort Lodge, Kennington Park SE11 4AS. Please make cheques payable to the Friends of Kennington Park and write 'memorial appeal' on the reverse.*

*If you are a UK tax payer, complete a Gift Aid declaration form and we can claim the tax back – boosting your contribution by 25%.*

## BUSY BEES

The community bee keeping project based in the garden of the Park Keeper's Lodge is going from strength to strength.

Led by Barnaby Shaw, Bee Urban is a hub for bee keeping activities and other community environmental projects.

Barnaby now provides teaching and training in all things bees in a new outbuilding that has just been erected in the garden. More details on future projects and Open Days are available from Barnaby Shaw.

tel: 07965 220277

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

[www.projectdirt.com/group/keeperslodge](http://www.projectdirt.com/group/keeperslodge)

And don't forget to pick up a pot of the delicious honey made by Barnaby's bees. In a taste test for the London Standard, it got 4 out of 5. It's on sale at the café with proceeds going to the Friends group. Sweet.

## ARE YOU GOOD WITH WORDS?

Have you got a way with words? Maybe you even have some experience drafting copy? If so, put your skills and enthusiasm to good use and help the Friends with their communications.

Each year we produce at least one issue of Parklife, various posters, leaflets and press releases as well as updates to our website. If you could help with some of this from time to time, it would be an enormous help to us.

*If you can help please email us at [friends@kenningtonpark.org](mailto:friends@kenningtonpark.org)*

## GARDENS EXPLORE PARK

Members of Kennington Gardens Society enjoyed a guided walk around the park in July. Conducted by Rob Pateman, the walk covered the park's buildings and fountains and horticultural history. After the tour everyone tucked into a delicious buffet at the café.

Jill Johnston, who organised the walk, said 'Rob brought it all alive! He packed so much fascinating detail into an hour's walk. His booklets provided lasting mementos of a happy evening.'

Given the interest and the feedback on the walk, there's a chance that more guided walks will take place in the future. So watch out for dates and details at [www.kenningtonpark.org](http://www.kenningtonpark.org)

## Who are the Friends of Kennington Park?

We are a group of local people working together to improve the park, and a voluntary organisation.

Anyone can join!

- We want people to enjoy the park and for it to enrich their lives
- We want park users to respect the park and each other

The park needs your support, energy and ideas. The best way to help is to become a Friend of the park by completing the form below. If you can help in any way please indicate below.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

I would like to join/renew\* my membership of the Friends of Kennington Park

\*(delete as applicable) Membership runs from April to April. Memberships taken out after December will be carried over to the following year.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership rates

Please tick the relevant box and enclose the appropriate amount. Cheques should be made payable to the Friends of Kennington Park.

- £2 Individual concessions       £4 Individual waged  
 £6 Single household  
 £10 Community Group member       £25 Business member  
 £100 Corporate sponsor (ask for details)

### I would like to make a donation

£5     £10     An amount of your choice £ \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed £ \_\_\_\_\_

I have a special interest in \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### I would be happy to help out /have expertise in

(e.g. administration, horticulture, events, first aid, public relations, sports, fund raising, leaflet distribution, 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

#### For office use:

Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date joined/renewed \_\_\_\_\_

# DIRECTORY

## The Friends of Kennington Park

Email: friends@kenningtonpark.org

## Area Parks Manager – Lee Hills

Tel: 020 7926 1000

Email: lhills@lambeth.gov.uk

## Lambeth Parks Dept

Tel: 020 7926 9000

Email: parks@lambeth.gov.uk

## Police – Oval Safer Neighbourhood Team

External Telephone 020 8721 3592

(in emergencies dial 999)

## Sports facilities bookings (Games Pitch and Tennis Courts) – Greenwich Leisure Ltd

Tel: 0845 130 8998

Bookings can be made seven days a week:

Monday to Friday – 9am to 6pm

Saturday to Sunday – 9am to 4pm

## Kennington Park Playproject:

### Adventure Playground & One O'Clock Club

Tel: 0207 735 7186

## Café in the Park

Tel: 020 7793 8886

Email: cafeinthepark@supanet.com

## Kennington United Cricket Club

Kennington Park extension

Contact: Tony Moody, 020 7820 5720

Email: kenningtonunitedcc@hotmail.com

## Trees for Cities

Tel: 020 7587 1320

Email: info@treesforcities.org

**PARKLIFE IS FREE – BUT  
DONATIONS ARE GRATEFULLY  
RECEIVED**

TO ADVERTISE IN PARKLIFE, CONTACT  
THE FRIENDS FOR INFORMATION:

Email: friends@kenningtonpark.org

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email: design@marniesearchwell.com • tel: 020 7735 1444

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