

Friends of Lowndes Park

Newsletter VII—June 2008

Introduction from the chairman

When planning a newsletter (particularly our seventh) most groups begin to struggle for content. So I was beginning to wonder

if we would have enough items to make it worthwhile. As it turned out I needn't have worried, other than how to fit it all

in. This just goes to show how busy we are as an organisation, and I am afraid that we are about to get busier



Walkers led by Andrew Clark

Friends' Walk

Our grateful thanks go to Andrew Clark who has taken on the mantle of the Friends' Walk Coordinator and Joan Clark who

brings up the rear and makes sure that we don't lose any stragglers. Andrew took us on a beautiful autumn walk last year so

we were keen to repeat the experience in spring. This is how we found ourselves collecting as usual by the church gates in the park.

Andrew had warned us that we should dress for wet weather but as we set off from home it was quite sunny and I was reassured when Andrew said that he thought that we might get round in the dry. What I hadn't realised was that just because Andrew is a brilliant walk leader it doesn't necessarily make him a brilliant meteorologist. We set off towards Chesham Bois with Andrew pointing out various historic points of interest, including the horse and cart track that would have led into Chesham avoiding the steep hill. Inevitably the heavens opened and everyone in the group withdrew waterproofs and umbrellas. Everyone that is but yours truly, who clearly was the only one not to have heeded Andrew's warning. However our intrepid group was not to be put off by a few showers and we cheerfully made our way through woods, across fields and back into Chesham and more importantly the coffee shop.

It was a really enjoyable way to spend the afternoon and I can heartily recommend Andrew's walks. Our next walk takes us further afield and the details of how to join us can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, and don't forget your wet weather gear, just in case. •

Friends' Picnic

The annual Friends' Picnic will take place on Sunday 7 September at 2pm and will be held on the Barrow mound at the top of the park overlooking Chesham. If you have difficulty getting up there due to age or disability please let me know as we

Work Parties

We have finally started our park work parties and my thanks and admiration to those of you who turned out to remove some of the damaged and misshaped oak saplings from the upper park. We worked alongside the Environmental Group in what I hope will become a regular partnership.

The weather was kind and it was remarkable how much we managed to achieve in just two hours.

Our next work session was not so blessed by the weather but with an impending visit by the Green Flag judges that couldn't put off our intrepid band of volunteers. This time we made a good start on the scented garden which has been cared for by Sheila, Collette and Lorraine but now needed more hands to make the work light. Sadly rain stopped play so we didn't manage the full two hours but again there was a spirit of camaraderie and the feel of a job well done.

One week later another group of volunteers carried out even more work so that by the time the judges appeared everything was looking spic and span.

The work parties are bit of a misnomer as they are all about work and precious little to do with a party but if you would like to volunteer please get in touch and we will add your name to the list so that we can build up a list of people who might be able to help. This is not to say that you will be expected to show up at every work party and in fact some volunteers arranged to work on the scented garden in mid week as that was more convenient.

To everyone who gave up time and rolled up sleeves a big thank you and to anyone who is considering joining us please get in touch, there is a great sense of achievement and of course, you can skip the gym. •

Green Flag

The Green Flag judges' visit was in sharp contrast to last year. We walked around the park in glorious sunshine unlike the previous year when we expected to meet Noah putting the finishing touches to his arc. I personally love the green flag visit as everyone pulls together to get the park to look as good as it possibly can.

We had a list of reasons for not winning a Green Flag last year and we were determined to show the judges the improvements and the fact that we had acted on their comments from the previous year.

Again my thanks to those of you who took part in a last minute litter pick—the park looked resplendent. We will get to hear if we have been successful towards the end of June / beginning of July, but certainly the judges were very complimentary which I hope is a good sign. •

have a footpath cut from the upper gate and we can organise people to help carry bags and chairs. Last year's picnic was great fun although it was



largely about eating; it was no worse for that. To join in bring chairs or picnic rugs and some food and a drink of your choice and enjoy the view (and the company of course). •

Heritage Lottery Fund

Just as we got over the visit by the Green Flag judges we have now discovered that we are to be visited by two people from the Heritage Lottery Fund in order to grill us over the lottery bid.

This is our opportunity to impress on HLF that we, rather than some other park, deserve this bid. HLF are com-

ing on June the 3rd so again anything that you can do to make the park look good would be a great help. Six of us will be meeting two officers from HLF and will be working our socks off to make the case. This will not be easy as I am told that competition is fierce as the funding programme closes in Sep-

tember so we are the penultimate batch of applicants and a lot of parks are rushing to get their entries in. If we are successful there are still more hurdles to overcome but this is the big one so finger crossed. •

Exit & entry—your opinions sought

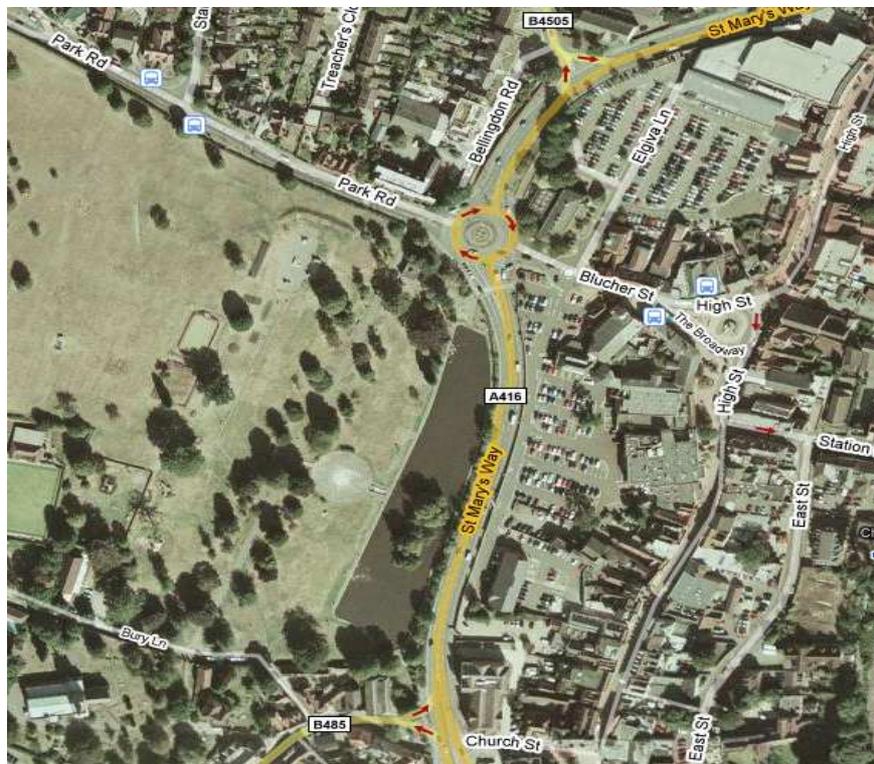
Just an idea, but what do you think?

At a meeting to discuss the park a few months ago the conversation centred on the exit leaving the park towards Sainsbury's. It was felt that the zebra crossing was made dangerous by the blind spot for drivers and the speed at which cars approach. Tales of near misses abounded as did a variety of potential schemes that had been thought up and come to nought.

However in a conversation with the Green Flag Judges the issue was raised about the possibility of closing the gate and making the main entrance the one near the toilets. The immediate thought is that it couldn't be done and even if it could would it have the desired effect.

On the other hand would it make for an improved and safer entrance to the park? This has not been discussed by the town council or anyone else for that matter. It is just an idea floated by the green flag judges, but I would be very interested to know what you think.

Is this something that we should be considering? Has it been tried before and it didn't work? Is there a better solution? Should the Friends be pushing for such a scheme? It is time to make your views known.



You can contact the chair of FOLP Michael Rowan on 01494 785146 or michael.rowan@ntlworld.com

Should the Friends be pushing for such a scheme?

Friends Committee

Michael Rowan (Chair)

Javad Malik (Secretary)

Phil Folly
(Treasurer)

Merrin Molesworth
(Newsletter Layout)

Janet Rodhouse
(Fundraising Form Filler)

Phone: 01494 785146

Email: michael.rowan@ntlworld.com

Friends of Lowndes Park AGM

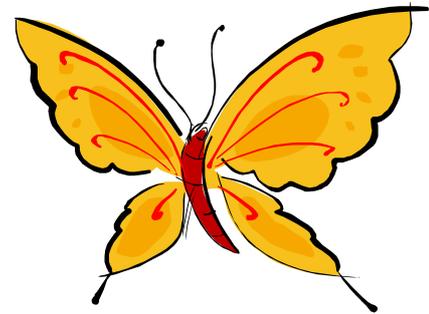
The annual general meeting will take place on Wednesday 25 June at 7.30pm in the Town Hall. We need you to come a long and let us know what you think. How have

we done in our first year and what should we be tackling next? I promise that we will not take much more than an hour but we do need to have enough people there to make

the meeting quorate (plus it is very embarrassing speaking to an empty room for an hour).

Corporate members

- *Lucia's Delicatessen*
- *the Bucks Examiner*
- *Chesham Environmental Group*
- *the Lowndes Park Model Boat Club*
- *the Chesham Society*



Friend's summer walk - Flora and Fauna

The walks led by Andrew Clark are proving very successful and a great way to take some exercise without really noticing. Not only that but they offer an opportunity to meet some new people.

The next walk will take place on Sunday, June 22 and is approximately four and a half miles with two steep hills. Meet at 9.30am in

the Star Yard Car Park to try to use as few cars as possible.

The walk will include visits to Dancer end and Aston Clinton Ragpits nature reserves where we hope to see many types of orchids and butterflies. Andrew will lead the walk and Richard Tomlin will be guiding us through the reserves. If you prefer you can meet at the

café in the woods in Wendover woods at 10am. Car Parking is £2.

Please let Michael Rowan know if you wish to stay for lunch as we will need to alert the café. I really hope that you can make it as this promises to be a very interesting walk. •