

Welcome to the latest edition of the Beddington Park Newsletter

Read on for an update on the HLF project, what's been happening and what's to come.

## HLF Project Update



### Finishing Touches

The HLF project has allowed us to improve so many features within the park; including the new playground, the Lake and Stock pond restoration and



much more. Now there are just the last finishing touches to complete.

Durnell were our main contractor for the HLF project, but they ceased trading in July. Fortunately this was towards the end of the park improvements. Despite this set back, over the past few weeks we have removed the chestnut fencing, located around the park fields.

### New Project & Volunteer Coordinator

Dawn Fielding took over from Sarah Wheeldon in August. You might have seen her out and about; supporting the

Buddy Walk volunteers, Tree Wardens and Gardening Group. She is working hard to ensure that these wonderful volunteer opportunities and park events, such as the Bike Fest, continue to run once the HLF project is complete.

There will be a variety of events, talks and walks in 2020, to celebrate this final year of the Heritage Lottery Fund project!

## Get involved



### Park Life Health CHOIR

This amazing group meets every Wednesday at 11am until 12pm, inside the Pavilion café. They sing a variety of tunes and also learn breathing



techniques, to help improve both their singing and general health. There is a lot of research that shows singing in a group; strengthens the feeling of togetherness, regulates heart rate, reduces stress levels and depression and improves the feeling of social well-being, amongst many other benefits! The group only started in November and by Christmas they were brave enough to sing carols for charity outside Sainsburys, Wallington (see photo).

### Skateboarding Sessions

#### For 5-12 year olds

During 2019 SKOOT ran a number of subsidised skateboarding sessions at

Beddington Park enjoyed by 100 children. From March onwards we are planning a further 10 skateboarding and possibly scooter sessions which will be free! New dates will be added here



soon: <https://toyp.wildapricot.org/events>

### Run Talk Run

Run Talk Run is a weekly 5km jog. Before every run there is time to meet the other runners and say hello to the run leader. It's alright if you're a little anxious. The run is gentle and there is no pressure to keep up. You will find lots of support, as this really is a safe space to talk about how you're doing, meet new people and exercise for free! Meet every Friday outside Pavilion café at 9.45am for a 10am start.



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## What else has been happening in the park?



### Beddington Park reaps Awards!

Beddington Park has once again been awarded a **Green Flag Award**. This is a sign that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities. The park was also



awarded a **Gold standard in London in Bloom** which recognises the great planting beds and the hard work of volunteers, staff and the local community who help take care of our park.

### Rubbish in the Wandle

Over the previous 12 months, the **Wandle Trust** and their team of volunteers removed over 40 tonnes of



rubbish from the River Wandle. In September they added to this great achievement by clearing a section of the river behind Carew Manor. Their haul included plastic bags, wrappers and bottles, chicken wire fencing, a statue, a couple of tyres and even a kid's bike.

### Community Clean-ups

In October the **Rotary Club** organised a general clean-up and 40 volunteers helped with litter picking, cutting back thorny bramble from the wet meadow, as



well as clearing lots of tree branches from the river. Thanks to everyone who came to help!

**\*\*A date for your diaries – the Spring Rotary clean-up will be on Sunday 29th March, come and join us!**

What else has been happening in the park?



**The 'Dave Jones' Kingfisher Bank**



Kingfishers are one of our most recognisable birds with their bright, beautiful colours. They have been seen at Beddington Park for many years. We are hoping our brand new kingfisher nesting bank, on the lake island, will help to encourage them to breed in the park. The bank was built thanks to the hard work of volunteers



from the local community, the Wandle Trust and Sutton Nature Conservation Volunteers.

The artificial bank is a wooden box with nest holes, which was completely filled with sandy soil for the birds to burrow in. Alternatively they can use one of the nest boxes provided. Whilst we were building the bank, a kingfisher flew by checking it out! We hope they make use of this new home over the next few years.

**Dave Jones** who was key to getting the project underway, sadly passed away in January. He was a long standing volunteer with the Wandle Trust, helping to keep the Wandle litter free. We are dedicating the bank to his memory.



**Wildlife in the Stock Pond**



A pond dipping session at the newly restored Stock pond, took place in September. This was

organised as part of the Wandle fortnight, a series of brilliant events taking place along the River Wandle. A local ecologist and park users found screech beetles, water stick insects, water scorpions, lots of juvenile smooth newts (see photo) and dragonflies (both nymphs and adults).

This wildlife pond will be fenced, to prevent ongoing disturbance by dogs, who frequently chase the birds and swim in the pond.



## What else has been happening in the park?



### Tree Wardens in Action!

Our Beddington Park Tree Warden volunteers, work weekly in the park; planting, managing and surveying the trees. This winter they have also supported a community tree planting event. With the effects of climate change becoming more evident, lots more people want to do their bit to help the planet.

### New Orchard

In November they were joined by Sutton Tree Officers and members of the Tree Council to plant 15 fruit trees; apple, pear and plum. This is the second orchard to



be planted in the park over the past few years, and can be found to the south of Beddington Park Primary School, near the Beddington Lane entrance. In a few years you will be able to harvest the fruit!

**The Tree Wardens meet on Tuesdays from 1-3pm. Why not come and give it a go?**

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### Community Tree Planting Day

In December we had a community tree planting day and volunteers planted over a hundred native trees to



extend the woodland along the northern boundary as well as

plant a new native hedgerow. The trees we planted included; hawthorn, hazel, crab apple, willow and downy birch. Thanks to



the Woodland Trust for these young trees (whips). The Woodland Trust provides free trees for schools and communities.

### The right tree, in the right place

Before planting any tree we first make sure that it is an appropriate place to plant a tree. We then consider which tree species is the best fit, as well as planning future watering and maintenance. This way the tree has the best chance of survival to maturity and delivers the intended benefits.



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What else has been happening in the park?



**Egyptian Geese at Beddington Park by Derek Coleman**

The native range of the Egyptian Goose is south of the Sahara desert and the Nile valley in Africa. A feral population became established in Norfolk in the 1800's and they remained restricted to East Anglia until the late 1990's when a population became established in SW London, from where they have spread out.



At Beddington Park, I first saw one in 2007 and they first bred in 2013. Unlike Canada Geese, which have a well-defined breeding season, Egyptian Geese can breed in almost any month. At

Beddington Park, they have bred in every month between February and June 2019. A pair has only one brood a year so the broods at Beddington Park will have been from different pairs. Between them, they produced 15 juveniles which may be the source of the current high numbers (22 on 2nd December) around Manor Pond.

In late summer, Egyptian Geese moult their flight feathers and cannot fly during this period and seek out larger water bodies, where they are safer from predators. In October I only saw one bird in Beddington Park, so they may have been moulting elsewhere and returned once they could fly again.



Rufous form



Grey form

You may have noticed that most birds have a chestnut patch around their eye but a few birds are missing this patch. In Egyptian Geese, you cannot distinguish between males from females on plumage but it does have two forms: rufous and grey with the former being much more numerous.



## Events – a highlight of upcoming activities & events



For more detailed information on any events or activities please contact [dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk) or telephone 0208 7706060

### Weekly Park Activities

#### Mondays

**FOREVER FIT:** Health walk plus optional gym session, followed by café stop. For over 50's. Meet outside Pavilion café at 10am. Free.

**WALKS FOR FUN:** Low level Social Walking Group. A gentle walk followed by a café stop. Meet opposite St Mary's Church at 10.30am. Free.

#### Tuesdays

**TREE WARDEN VOLS:** Tree planting, maintenance and surveying in the park. Weekly sessions from 1-3pm.

**GARDENING GROUP VOLS:** Carrying out pruning, weeding & planting. Twice monthly sessions from 10.30-12pm.

#### Wednesdays

**PARK LIFE CHOIR:** For people wanting to reap the health benefits of singing. Meet in the Pavilion café at 11am.

#### Thursdays

#### **BUDDY WALK VOLS**

Volunteers help push wheelchairs or provide a support arm for Care Home Residents, who love visiting the park.

Meet on various days during the warmer months from 11-12:30pm

#### Fridays

**MELANIES WALK:** Group walk around the park followed by a hot drink. Meet outside St. Mary's Church at 10am. Free.

**RUN TALK RUN:** A gentle 5km friendly jog & a safe space to chat, followed by a café stop. Meet outside Pavilion café at 9.45am for a 10am start. Free.

**NORDIC WALKING:** Sociable, fun outdoor exercise for better general fitness. Meet outside Pavilion café at 1pm. £3.

#### Saturdays

**BOOTCAMP CLASS:** Exercise class with interval and strength training. An Our Parks initiative. Under 16s welcome with adult. Booking required. £4.99 per month.

**CYCLE SKILLS FOR ADULTS:** Adult group cycling sessions for beginners and improvers. Bikes provided. Meet at 9.30 or 10.30am. Booking required. Free

**CTC BIKE CLUB:** Beginner's cycle ride through the park and surrounding area. Meet on the third Saturday of the month at 2pm, outside the Pavilion café. Free.

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### Feb Half Term Activities

#### Make a Pine cone bird feeder

Thursday 20 Feb, 11-2pm

Find us outside the Pavilion café. No need to book. Free.



#### Xplorer Fun Family Challenge

Friday 21 Feb, 1-3pm

Explore the park, find the markers and complete the challenge! Find us outside the Pavilion café. No need to book. Free.



### Guided Walks

#### Winter Tree Walk

Saturday 22 Feb, 10-12pm

Learn how to identify the giants of the park and discover some interesting facts along the way.

*Free, but booking is essential.*



#### Bat Walk

Saturday 16 May, 9-11pm

Join this guided walk with the Sutton Biodiversity Officer, to discover more about the bats in Beddington Park and see if you can spot some!



*Free, but booking is essential.*

#### Our Wonderful Wildflowers

Sunday 7 June, 2:30-4pm

If you have ever wanted to know more about local flora then here is your chance! Roy Vickery worked as a botanist at the Natural History Museum, London for over 30 years, and has published five books on plant folklore

*Free, but booking is essential.*

