

FRIENDS OF MILL HILL PARK

Autumn 2011

Circular No 24

Lottery grant for playground

If you have been out and about at all you will probably have realised that our application to the lottery to fund development in the playground has been successful. For the past few weeks contractors have been hard at work there, and it is anticipated that work will be completed next month.

With this newsletter you should receive two copies of a leaflet that gives essential information about the Lottery and our project. One of the conditions of receiving the grant is that we undertake to publicise our achievement, and at the same time promote the lottery – thereby encouraging other groups to apply. We would, therefore, be very glad if you could pass the second leaflet on to a friend or neighbour. If you don't feel able to do this, then please post it in someone's letter box! As you will see, the leaflet contains a membership application form. We hope that this will encourage people to join, as we must continue to renew our membership if we are to carry on representing the interests of park users. We must also do our best to ensure the future of the park.

Key stages since the Spring Newsletter

April Clare Zinkin and Cara Demetriades collated the results of the consultation involving parents and children. Following this, the scheme was substantially revised.

June After detailed work on technical, legal and commercial aspects of the bid by the project team and council officers, the second stage of the application was submitted - on time.

August At the end of the month we were notified that our bid had been successful, and a formal offer of a grant was made.

September Tendering procedures were completed and approved by the lottery; other requirements were met and the grant formally confirmed. Work began on the site on 22nd September.

Present stage

Progress is being monitored by Clare Zinkin, who agreed to act as project manager on our behalf when we were at stage II of our application. This is a most responsible position that requires considerable time and effort, and we are very grateful to her for undertaking this. She has been helped by Cara Demetriades, who has been overseeing some of the technical and financial aspects. Without their combined efforts we could not have completed our application, much less been successful! Work is expected to be complete in November, when an independent landscape architect appointed by us (another requirement of the lottery) will inspect and issue the necessary certificates. His fees will be paid out of the grant.

The new playground

The playground will be extended, some fences will be moved and there will be some reconfiguration of equipment. The wooden animals in the grassy area were rotting and have now been removed and this area will be utilised for new equipment. An extension will be added to the existing multi-play unit which will be safer for younger children to use. Changes include additional work carried out by Barnet Council using money obtained from a fund set up to benefit disabled children – *Aiming High*. This is independent of the lottery and our scheme, although the work is being carried out at the same time. This equipment is being installed in the existing *Playbuilder* area. In this process that area is being rearranged and very much improved.

Other matters

Trees. Our Tree Officer, Pamela Holt has to make regular safety checks on the trees in the park. Recently she saw children playing on a Goat Willow at the top end of the zig zag path that leads from the subway to The Rise. One of the large branches was cracked and to prevent an accident, she arranged for the dead branches on two Willows to be cut off and for a third tree to be entirely removed because it was dead. In order to rejuvenate these trees, she had the branches cut back. They look strange as present but new branches will spring out before long.

Wise Lane fence. More gaps have appeared in this fence, near to the Parkside entrance. We have asked the Council to close them, particularly to stop dogs running out on to the road. We have also asked them to consider replacing that section with metal fencing, the same as was installed when the new entrance gate was fitted.

Email address. We are amending our membership application and renewal slips to include space for members' email addresses, but must stress that this is entirely optional. It would enable us to contact members faster if events or information need to be communicated urgently in between newsletters. If you would like to be included, please email us at J24MR@Hotmail.co.uk. Anyone wishing to receive future newsletters by email, please make a specific request.

Committee Members

John Smith (Chairman)	8959 7138	Cara Demetriades, Peter Keeley, Chelle
Jean Smith (Secretary)	8959 7138	Paice, Sue Platt, Liz Reid, Philippa Welch
Ingrid McKeown (Treasurer)		

Subscriptions: *renewal forms are attached, only for those members whose subscriptions were due in April 2011*