

FRIENDS OF MILL HILL PARK

Spring 2002

Circular No. 9

PAVILION REFURBISHMENT AND WCs

Good news! Councillors Wayne Casey and Jeremy Davies have been able to make funds available for use in the park. We hope that the Council's Cabinet will agree that these may be used to provide separate Ladies' and Gents' WCs and baby changing facilities. The money would also provide for external decoration including application of anti-climb paint to the roof and anti-graffiti paint on the walls. There would also be some internal decoration. The existing referees' changing rooms would be reconfigured to provide additional storage space and changing facilities. Ventilation ducts to the WC areas of the bowling pavilion would be installed to replace the rooftop extractor fans, which were removed for security reasons.

We have of course, if these plans are approved, to support measures for the availability of these facilities and the prevention of vandalism. The installation of internal and external CCTV cameras with external signs should act as a deterrent, along with passive infrared sensors for lighting.

We have been asking for these facilities for some years and are grateful to our Councillors that they are now in sight.

AUDIT OF PARK

Last December another of our now regular audits of the park was held, led by Councillor Wayne Casey, together with members of your committee, and of the bowling club, the new Green Spaces Division of Barnet Council, the Neighbourhood Management Services and the Park Keeper. Since the previous audit the following has been achieved:

- Café area planted with shrubs and ground cover
- Planters positioned on the paved area at the top of the bowling green
- The rose beds by the tennis courts refurbished
- Old post removed near Wise Lane entrance
- Black poplar in the same area regenerated after heavy canopy reduction
- Drain by the crazy golf has been dug out.

From April, when the new budget becomes available, the Council intends to proceed with the following:

- On the lower bowling green
 - Restoration of the seats
 - Handrail to be fitted to steps
 - Conifers round water tank to be topped
- New steel fencing on the top bowling green above the path alongside the rose bed
- Replanting of the rose and heather beds near the old toilet block
- In the main car park the knee high steel fencing will be extended round the perimeter
- Litter bins will be repaired where necessary and an additional poop scoop bin will be installed.

The following have also been noted for possible future action:

- The park seats to be cleaned and treated with preservative.
 - The weeds around the pavilion and tennis courts to be dealt with.
 - The notice board to be refurbished and made accessible to the Friends of the Park.
 - Provision of "Keep Clear" signs for the barrier gates to ensure access for emergency vehicles and delivery vans.
 - Repairs to the chestnut fencing along Wise Lane which is in poor condition.
 - The old WC building is generally sound and will be left until a decision can be made as to its future.
 - Treatment of the moss on the tennis courts.
 - The flooded area by tennis courts, where the mains water pipe is leaking constantly.
 - The playground and basketball shooting area needs redesigning to include a seating area. The hard surfaces could be marked out with hopscotch, draughts etc. The basketball post and net need re-positioning.
- An inspection of the outfield of the Hendon and Edgware cricket pitch showed that all is now well after weed spraying and poor germination.

CAFÉ

The same management expects to re-open the café when the weather improves.

NURSERY SCHOOL

The locks to the windows have been re-fitted. Work to comply with the Ofsted inspection has been completed and the Nursery School expects to open in the summer or autumn.

TREE PLANTING

Some of the Friends assisted the Mill Hill Preservation Society in planting another group of trees near the subway entrance in the main park. We need to watch that contractors do not cut these down as happened previously.

DOG FOULING

Three fixed penalty notices were issued at Mill Hill Park. Of the three offenders, one came from Totteridge, one from East Finchley and other from outside the borough. Two have paid the fine and the third has not. If this situation continues a court case would follow and it would be the intention to gain publicity about the legislation and its enforcement. The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act, 1996 applies.

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PARKS

As reported in our last Circular, the "externalisation" of Barnet's leisure facilities such as swimming pools and built facilities such as tennis courts etc is being explored. Consultants have been engaged and eight companies have expressed an interest in operating the facilities under a "not for profit" trust. We aim to be kept informed of developments and to be represented.

GRAFFITI

Barnet Council is working with the police and is proactive in its efforts to control this scourge. It will be a long haul and take time for the message to get through to the miscreants. A number of arrests have been made and followed by successful prosecutions of teenage offenders.

The Pavilion has been kept clear of graffiti due to the efforts of certain bowling club members and the park keeper. It is thought that this discourages the miscreants who like to see their efforts on display.

We have been pressing the Council to clean up the metal container at the cricket club. The adjacent pavilion is an eyesore and is, we understand, the responsibility of the cricket club, who paint it once a year for the season. Several weeks later it is again covered with graffiti, which remains for nearly a year until the next repaint.

The graffiti on the boundary wall of the Garden Centre remains offensive, but as time goes by the shrubs which have been planted are providing a better screen. The wall adjacent to the car park needs further planting.

ENVIRONMENT WEEK

This year, Barnet's Environment week is being held during the Golden Jubilee week, with very many activities organised by local groups over a wide spectrum. We hope to have literature available for you at our AGM.

As our contribution to this event, Friends of Mill Hill Park have arranged a "Walk around the Park" led by Jim Rea, Parks and Countryside Officer with Barnet Council, and a very valued member of the Friends.

Jim's walks are very interesting and instructive; he is a fount of knowledge regarding both the history and the various items of interest in Mill Hill Park. Do come along and bring your friends. We meet at 7.00pm on Thursday 6th June 2002 outside the Bowling Pavilion.

JUBILEE JAZZ WEEKEND

This will take place on 21st, 22nd and 23rd June. On Saturday 22nd the New Orleans Jazz Band will play along the way from the Broadway to the park at lunchtime. At 2.00pm the Mill Hill County High School Jazz Band will play outside the Café for about an hour (weather permitting).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held on Saturday 13th April at 10.30am in the Bowling Pavilion. Coffee will be available as usual. You should have a copy of the minutes of the last AGM provided with this newsletter. If you have any concerns you would like to raise, please feel free to contact Joanne Anderson, Secretary, or Ted Anderson, Chairman, beforehand on 020 8959 2979. Of course, there will also be the opportunity to discuss anything of interest at the meeting, and we hope to have our local Councillors there, also a police representative. We welcome any members of the community interested in the park, so please help us publicise this meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership has risen slightly over the year. At the moment we have 25 family members and 40 single members.

Some subscriptions are due for renewal in April and a renewal form is attached only for those members.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ted Anderson (Chairman)	8959 2979
Joan Telfer (Treasurer)	8959 1499
Joanne Anderson (Secretary)	8959 2979
Jim Rea	8200 5770
David Bailey	8959 2373
Marion Dewing	8959 5013