



Friends of Mill Hill Park

Residents committed to making a difference

Spring Newsletter April 2022 | 44



The view from the Chair

In our autumn Newsletter we promised an ambitious agenda **to bring a wider range of activities to the Park**. To fund this, our Secretary Mary Ritter submitted an application for £6,280 to Barnet Borough Community Innovation fund that was awarded in full, enabling the FMHP to build up the infra-structure to run the wider programme.

These projects include creating a web presence for communication with the public, and FMHP email. Within the Park, we are developing programmes of 10 Ways to Save the Planet, Tree Treasure Hunt, Teddy Bear's Picnic, and a Christmas Fair. Further more, we are continuing with Theatre in the Park productions. To widen access for children and families who cannot afford tickets we are able to offer free tickets to 6 such families. To ensure we have sufficient qualified Stewards to assist in these presentations, £500 is provided for Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) Enhanced Checks and £300 for First Aid training for our volunteers. This is a great opportunity for members to gain these qualifications. We are in the process of establishing a FMHP email address through which people can register their interest.

Ann Robinson, who has been our very efficient Treasurer since 2013, is standing down on 31st March 2022. We are very grateful to Ann for her decade of service. I am sure you join me in thanking Ann profusely.

This means there is a vacancy for Treasurer. Our accounts have historically ranged between £1,000 and £2,000. Now, with the additional grant funding, we are particularly keen to attract a new Treasurer. If you know a capable candidate, please let me know roger.morris@kcl.ac.uk.

Our **Theatre in the Park plays** last year benefited considerably by being staged in the 2nd (unused) Bowling Green. It is firmly fenced in, so children are safely enclosed; and it absorbs rain and surface water, a major benefit for outdoor theatre that is not found elsewhere in the Park. The Nursery section of the Pavilion, and the second Bowling Green, have been leased by London BBB to a nursery company who are keen to help with community events, including allowing Theatre in the Park to continue in the Green. The Green itself will be adapted primarily for nursery use, including filling in the surrounding ditch that will going forward enable wheel chair



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access and full participation of all in the plays. On Sundays in July we will host on the Bowling Green three plays and a Children's Entertainment (see back cover).

In November we partnered LBB Green Spaces in planting 500 trees in the Flower Lane sector of the Park, to develop over the coming decades a **Woodland Memorial** inspired by our battle with the Covid19 Pandemic. Woodlands differ from grasslands or isolated trees in creating local environments that promote mental health of those who regularly imbibe them. Woodlands are currently estimated to save our NHS £185 million annually, based on evidence of the reduced incidence of depression and anxiety in patients resulting from regular visits to woodland. The pattern of planting, arrived at by Jim Paice with Andy Tipping (Trees & Woodlands Manager of Barnet's Greenspaces) should, as the trees mature, create true Woodland in that sector of Park while retaining 30% grassland for summer picnics. Persuading trees to make a woodland on London clay is not easy, requiring much mulch to break up the clay, and weeding to stop grass entering. And, of course, skilled planting in the first place for which we thank the Council's Greenspaces Team, and our own members!



One project for this year that will have major implications for the Friends is to alter the Constitution, changing it from being an Association to a **Charitable Organization**. This will be led by Mary Ritter and Cathrine Clarke.

The Children's Enclosed Play area. In 2010, the Friends noted that the equipment in the play area was towards the end of its life, and had little to offer 3-8 year-olds. The Friends waged a major campaign, led by Claire Zinkin and Cara Demetriades, that led to a £24,773 grant from LBB Green Spaces and £49,473 Lottery funding that provided the playground we have today. Most of the equipment is still in working condition except in the very water-logged areas where it has rusted. It is time to



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work together with other community groups including Mill Hill Residents Association to re-examine the use, equipment and drainage of Mill Hill Park's play provision for all ages. To start this off we had an on-site meeting on 11th March, led by Matt Gunyon (Greenspaces Service Manager) with Richard Young (Greenspaces Development Officer in charge of this side of the Borough) with interested members of the MHRA and the Friends who could meet during professional work hours, several with young children. Despite cold weather, the excitement and commitment to improving the play area was palpable. It was apparent that professional people with project expertise will prove beneficial in our working with the Greenspaces team in forging ahead with the programme. To pull it together will take strong leadership.

Meanwhile, we are delighted to see the **Crazy Golf** area under renovation to enable an enclosed play and picnic area for families with toddlers that will be up and running for the benefit of the community this spring/summer.

There is excellent use of the Park and its facilities. Our role is to ensure that daily maintenance and improvements provide a welcoming and safe environment for everyone. We continue to conduct audits and rely on our members and users of the Park to communicate problems noticed that impinge on your enjoyment of the park.

Provisional Dates for your diaries

AGM is 2.30-3.30 pm

24th September 2022 in the Bowling Clubhouse.

TEA Quiz, 2-4pm Thursday 13th October, Bowling Clubhouse

This will provide an opportunity for dialogue with you on your priorities for the park, talking through our plans, encouraging new faces as members and on FMHP committee and confirming accounts.

A key priority is to increase our membership so please do let your friends, family and neighbours know of the Friends of Mill Hill Park, so we reach new families in the neighbourhood and have their ideas and voices in the mix of our planning.



We, along with MHPS, showed our gratitude to David Welch in planting a memorial flowering tree (Paulownia Tomentosa) to honour his dedication to Mill Hill green belt.

Taking the larger picture, this outline is of a major commitment to making the Park a central community resource, at a time when we are plagued by COVID19 viruses and caught in an unstable political world.

The serenity of Mill Hill Park is going to be an essential tonic for us all.



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**Friends of Mill Hill Park with Mill Hill Residents Association &
Barnet Borough Arts Council**

THEATRE IN MILL HILL PARK JULY 2022

3 rd July	3.00 – 5.00 pm	Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter Quantum Theatre
3 rd July	6.00 – 8.00 pm	A Midsummer Night's Dream by Will Shakespeare Quantum Theatre
10 th July	3.00 – 4.00 pm	Teddy Bear's Picnic
31 st July	3.00 – 5.00 pm	The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde. Immersion Theatre



Outdoor theatre. Bring a rug or low-backed chair, and if rain is likely, an umbrella and a ground sheet. You are free to bring a picnic.

Tickets: Adults £15, Children (aged 4 – 16) £10, can be bought in advance from the Theatre web sites (below) or at the gate into the disused Bowling Green where the plays are staged.

<https://www.facebook.com/immersiontheatreuk/>

<https://www.quantumtheatre.co.uk/about>

MEMBERSHIP SIGN UP

FRIENDS OF MILL HILL PARK

I/We wish to join/renew membership /standing order of the **FRIENDS OF MILL HILL PARK**

Name/s.....

Address.....

.....

Email.....

Date.....

We are encouraging those who pay by cheque/cash to pay by **Standing Order** to help keep down our ever increasing bank charges. If that is possible, the bank details are:

Sortcode: 40-04-28

Account number: 71146548

Otherwise cheques should be made out to Friends of Mill Hill Park.

Please send this form to Mrs M Warren, Membership Secretary,

51 Victoria Road, Mill Hill, NW7 4SA

Thank you for your continued support in helping us to look after a valuable amenity in our community.