

The Friends of Downhills Park Newsletter

WWW.downhills.org.uk

DOWNHILLS PARK – TIME FOR ACTION

The Friends of Downhills Park have made considerable strides since the group was formed in 1999 but each year has brought new projects and concerns.

On the credit side we have run the annual Art in the Park event and in 2003, celebrated the centenary of Downhills with a festival and video. Each year we have liaised with BTCV for community tree and bulb planting. This has enabled the Lime tree avenue from Philip Lane gate to be nearly replanted. We hope to complete this task in winter 2007. Flowering cherries have been planted to revive the area south of the Italian gardens and spring flowering bulbs to turn the Wood into a mass of yellow daffodils and later bluebells. Numerous other trees have been planted in the park. The tennis courts, once on the brink of demolition, are now well maintained and well used.



Lots of enthusiastic friends of the park help to recreate the lime tree avenue with new tree planting

Future plans

- The Parks Dept is soon to redevelop the basketball court as a multi use games area.
- Friends are currently in discussions with the Parks Dept, BTCV and Park View Academy to screen the metal boundary fence. A couple of rows of birch whips have been suggested for this.



Downhills Park looks wonderful covered in snow

- Making a Difference funding is being sought for steps to be created from Midnight Alley up to the wooded area just along from the Downhills Park Road Gate .
- Information is being sought on possible TFL funding for cycle paths to replace the tree root damaged paths in the Recreation ground. There is already TFL funding for a cycle route running north/south via Lordship Rec and Midnight Alley.
- Friends will be involved in a history walk through Downhills (and joining Lordship Friends) on Saturday 30 June (See advert inside).

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COME TO THE AGM

See back of the newsletter for details of the Friends of Downhills AGM on 15th April 2007, 2pm

Friends concerns

On the debit side I report the concern of Friends on the lack of progress in replacing the derelict Bowls Pavilion with a new community pavilion (*see separate article*) and there is the same concern on another project requiring external funding, the restoration of the railings on the Downhills Park Road boundary wall. The Council has been successful in raising millions of pounds for Finsbury Park and Markfield Recreation Ground and are presently spending many man hours developing large funding bids for Chestnuts and Lordship but Downhills projects remain unfunded and at present there is no one at the department with special responsibility for developments in Downhills Park. Friends are also

concerned that the Parks Dept is overly responsive to police views on countering crime and too many bushes have been removed for security issues creating a *see-in-all-directions* park. The Friends want Park Keepers established to be a positive presence in our parks to help, among other things, to reduce crime and anti social behaviour (dangerous dogs in the park being a very recent example) rather than the removal and loss of greenery with the consequent exposure of unsightly boundary fences. If you have any comment to make on any of these matters or any other positive suggestions please come and join us at AGM on 15 April. (*See back page advert*)

David Macdonald, Chair, Friends of Downhills Park

A Community Pavillion — when?

No movement on the replacement of our only building

Friends have become increasingly disenchanted with the lack of progress of Haringey Parks Dept in coming up with a plan of action to take forward the replacement of the soon to be demolished Bowls pavilion with a multi use (probably café/ toilets/ meeting/activity room) building.

In November 2006 Friends were advised that an external funding bid would be made by Parks Dept in April 2007 and it has proved rather difficult to get a very clear view of what is happening but we have been assured that the Friends will be involved in any future consultation. Hopefully Parks Dept officials will be present at our AGM on 15 April to update us all on the present position. FODP research has consistently shown that park users desire a café, toilets and permanent staff in the park. Local schools and organizations have expressed interest in utilising any new facility in the park.



A sorry sight after years of active use. The bowling club pavillion will be demolished soon.

BRING BACK PARK KEEPERS

The Friends of Downhills Park send a representative to the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum which brings together all the parks Friends groups across the Borough.

As a part of that Forum we support the demand for a separate named person from the Parks department to be responsible for each park in the borough who will be a point of contact for the public and who will make it their job be visible in the park and to know everything that is going on in relation to their particular park as well as keeping an eye on the maintenance and security of the park.

GREEN FLAG 2006

During early 2006 Parks Dept gardeners concentrated on the Italian Gardens and the borders by the Keston gate to introduce new planting and hooped fencing. In addition new benches were placed in the Italian gardens. Friends liaised with the Parks dept when the Green Flag judges arrived in mid summer and in early September the Green flag was hoisted above the park. This is obviously good for Downhills but not the end of the story. This award should help attract funding to the park as it shows a commitment from the Council to maintain the park in good condition. Each year the Park has to be judged again so high standards must continue to be met and improvements from the management plan implemented.

ANOTHER HAPPY DAY AT ART IN THE PARK

Art in the Park last July was, as usual, another very enjoyable day shared by over 800 people of all ages. With help from local residents and friends we offered painting, sculpture and crafts and a puppet workshop and puppet show with Indigo Moon.

This year we hope to carry on the tradition of great days in the park involving people in creative fun with a variety of materials in the beautiful surroundings of the park. We will be joined this year by Pekko Puppets who will do a show and run a puppet making workshop.

If you would like to help or are an artist or craftsperson (amateur or professional) with any ideas for creative projects at our festival please contact Joan on 0208 881 1018

▶ **Next Art in the Park**
Sunday 15th July 1pm-6pm



Children hard at work willow-weaving at Art in the Park.



Left: Friends canvas opinions from local people at their Art in the Park stall

HISTORY WALK Meet 2pm Saturday 30 June

meet *Chris Currie* and *David Macdonald* of the Friends as they lead a walk from **Downhills Park-Philip Lane Gate** to learn about the past of Downhills Park. The walk will continue into Lordship Recreation ground, led by *Ray Swain*

GET MORE INVOLVED WITH THE FRIENDS

The Constitution allows for up to 15 members of the Association to be elected onto the Committee at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee can choose to co-opt another 3 people to join them.

Management Committee members should:-

- attend meetings. (Currently held 6 times a year)
- Assist with organising public meetings
- Assist with the production and distribution of newsletters and mailings
- Present their own views, and the views of other members, to representatives of the local authority, regeneration bodies and consultants.

If you are not on our email list and would like to get more information about the Friends and our activities fill in the form below and send it to **The Chair, Friends of Downhills Park, 306 Philip Lane, London N15** .

I would like to be on the Friends of Downhills Park email list

Name:

email:

Other Friends Groups in the area

There are lots of Friends groups in parks in our area. If you want to be involved with any of these, you should contact :

Friends of Belmont: Matt McCabe,
216 Downhills Park Road N17

Friends of Lordship: Joan Curtis,
14 Sandringham Road, N22 6RB

Friends of Chestnuts: Ceri Williams,
ceri.williams@blueyonder.co.uk

Friends of Noel Park:
friendsofnoelpark@yahoo.co.uk

DOWNHILLS MEETINGS

The Friends of Downhills Park no longer have a permanent public meeting place since the Bowling Pavillion is now not available to us.

If you want to attend meetings, keep an eye on the park notice boards where we will advertise times and venues of future regular meetings.

All park users are very welcome to attend and get involved in what ever way you feel you have the time and energy to do.

The more friends there are the more power we will have to get things done in the park

**LOOK OUT FOR OUR
WEB SITE ON**

www.downhills.org.uk

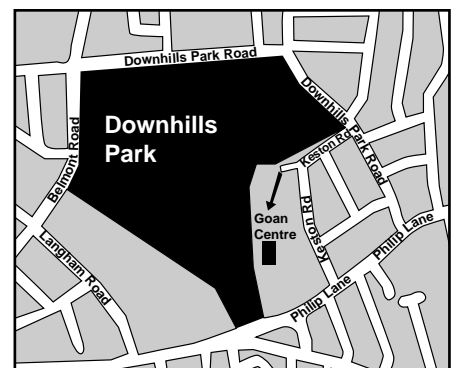
FRIENDS OF DOWNHILLS Annual General Meeting all welcome!

SUNDAY April 15th 2007

2-4pm

at the Goan Centre

(off top bend of Keston Road—see map)



Find out what improvements are planned for
Downhills Park and give your opinions

Have your say on the bowling pavillion

What is to become of the Bowling Pavillion
and green. Bring your ideas on this and any
other issue of importance to the future of
Downhills Park?

Refreshments available – all are welcome

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