

# PARK LIFE



NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF CATOR PARK AND ALEXANDRA RECREATION  
GROUND – SUMMER 2021

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Dear Friends,

It's been another busy 6 months with so much activity in both parks. It was a wonderful return to events and walks – which we'd missed so much as a community.

First, we had **Music in the Park** – a very enjoyable afternoon with the music provided by our long-time friends - the Beckenham Concert Band. Local families and friends came to picnic in the sunshine, enjoyed the tea & cake stall, raffle, craft stalls and Himalayan Kitchen's delicious fare which rounded off a fab afternoon. Later in September it was time for the very popular **Paws in the Park**. There was plenty of fun for pooches and people with hoopla, face painting, cake & tea stall, beer & hotdogs as well as many stalls from all our lovely supporters. The Best in Show winner 2021 went to Ghosty – see pic – and very proud he was too! Heading into Autumn we had the Bat walk night in Cator – it has to be said that over the years our own Millie has become quite the bat expert and walk leader! Finally, and most recently we hosted, along with the Beckenham Bowls club, a "What's my wine" quiz evening. Thank you to everyone who booked tickets and came along – and to our raffle donors, The Alexandra Pub, Julia Hall Neal's Yard Remedies & Pengetout. Participants were treated to several tasty wines, a generous cheese platter and a very fun evening – we all came away that little bit more clued up about wine and a great time was had by all.



The AGM also took place in November – I'd highly recommend a look at the slides of the meeting on our website (address above) – not only for governance details of the group but also for a look at the many more examples (too many to list in this newsletter!) of all the great work the Friends have done during this last year illustrated beautifully with pictures of volunteers in action. We were also given a very enlightening presentation by Dr Judith John of Bromley Biodiversity Partnership, Species & Habitats Group discussing Hedgehogs under threat and how we can help.

Biodiversity is an issue we have taken very much to heart – with the introduction of bug hotels and the "No Mow" months of the summer just a couple of ways we are helping along our local bug environment. We are also supporting a project by a group called **Thames21** to re-establish the more natural features of the current river pool (which runs through Cator Park) through the application of a number of river restoration techniques such as the introduction of woody habitats and the establishment of key spawning habitats for fish. Natural materials will be used to narrow the flows and hopefully create a range of habitats. We'll report more as we learn more.

**Park Bench Updates...** We have very positive news regarding benches in both parks. After crowdfunding during 2020 we successfully raised enough funds for one bench which, we are happy to report, has now been installed in Cator Park. In addition to this another two memorial benches should also have been installed in Cator by the time you read this. In Alex Rec you may have noticed a lovely new memorial bench at the Tansfeld Road end of the rec. Two further memorial benches will be installed soon in memory of the late John Parker founder of Alexandra Nurseries. John started the much-loved Alexandra Nurseries over 10 years ago converting a plot on the Alexandra Cottages estate into a local gem – a garden nursery, café, shop and all-round community hub in the heart of Penge. John was a kind supporter of our park group and work and will be missed. We are continuing to raise money for a further bench for Alex Rec in 2022. To donate please see our bank details below quoting ref Bench and your name so we can thank you!



**Tree & Planting Update...**We have re-staked all our sapling trees. There are a further 30 saplings currently being cared for in committee members' gardens. We are waiting for them to grow strong enough to be planted out at a stage where they'll have the best chance of successful planting on. We have continued with bulb planting in both parks again this year and -watch this space- we are also working on an exciting "Willow Arch" project which we hope to unveil soon.

**Padding Pool Site News...**Unfortunately, we don't have the outcome of the November LBB meeting about support for a replacement water feature project. Meanwhile, the floor of the pool has been covered with a sealant paint by idverde so it can be used as a mini scooter play area. However since then the gates have been temporarily locked as the pool was subject to some arson-focused vandalism this month. We will continue to engage the council on future improvements and will feedback any news when we have it.



**Volunteering:** Gardening sessions are held in both parks throughout the year. A big thank you to all our volunteers including the Good Gym, our Duke of Edinburgh Award students, Committee members and local friends who have helped with maintaining benches by sanding and repainting them, weeding and pruning of the park house and borders, planting 100s of new bulbs in both parks, cleaning graffiti, replenishing dog poo bags, watering new plants and so much more – we salute you all. If you fancy getting out, meeting new people and feeling great about improving our local environment please do join us!

**For Gardening parties please see dates below:  
Weekend dates are 10.00-12.00am and Weekdays are 7.00-8.30pm**

<b>Cator Park Meet by central notice board</b>	<b>Alex Recreation Ground Meet by the old Fountain</b>
Feb 13 <sup>th</sup> (Sun)	Jan 9 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) and 11 <sup>th</sup> (Tues)
Mar 26 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)	Mar 5 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)
Apr 5 <sup>th</sup> (Tues)	Apr 2 <sup>nd</sup> (Sat) and 23 <sup>rd</sup> (Sat)
May 7 (Sat) and 17 <sup>th</sup> (Tues)	May 14 <sup>th</sup> (Sat) and 28 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)
Jun 4 <sup>th</sup> (Sat) and 18 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)	Jun 7 <sup>th</sup> (Tues) and 25 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)
Jul 2 <sup>nd</sup> (Sat) and 19 <sup>th</sup> (Tues)	Jul 9 <sup>th</sup> (Sat) and 30 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)
Aug 6 <sup>th</sup> (Sat) and 16 <sup>th</sup> (Tues)	Aug 13 <sup>th</sup> (Sat) and 27 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)
Sept 6 <sup>th</sup> (Tues)	Sept 17 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)

**Up and Coming Events:** To help us with our sustainability plan please bring your own cups & plates to events. Please also note that we have just ONE contactless payment card so if you can bring cash that will help us enormously!

- Santa Paws - Festive Dog Walk** - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 10am Alex Rec - Wear your festive jumpers. No dogs required!
- Spring Walk** - Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March - Meet at Kent House Coffee & Flowers 11am
- Easter in the Park** - Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2pm - Alexandra Recreation Ground
- Music in the Park** - Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July, 3pm - Alexandra Recreation Ground
- Paws in the Park** - Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1-5:30 pm - Cator Park
- 2022 AGM** - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November - venue tbc

### Membership for Cator Park and Alexandra Recreation Ground

Our annual subscription supports many activities & helps us to preserve and enhance the park environments.

1. Complete the details below and return to Friends of Cator and Alexandra, 262, Kent House Road, Beckenham, BR3 1JN. Email us at [friends.cator-and-alexandra@live.co.uk](mailto:friends.cator-and-alexandra@live.co.uk)
2. Complete a Bank Transfer: Friends of Cator and Alexandra, A/c No. 61592226 Sort code 60-02-12
3. Please make cheques payable to Friends of Cator and Alexandra.

Name ..... Address ..... Postcode .....  
Email .....

Annual Subscription fees: Individual £3.00  Family £5.00  Organisation £10.00   
Five-year Family Membership £22:50  Five- year Ind. Membership £12:50