

FRIENDS OF BATTERSEA PARK REVIEW

Issue 129
Autumn/Winter 2024



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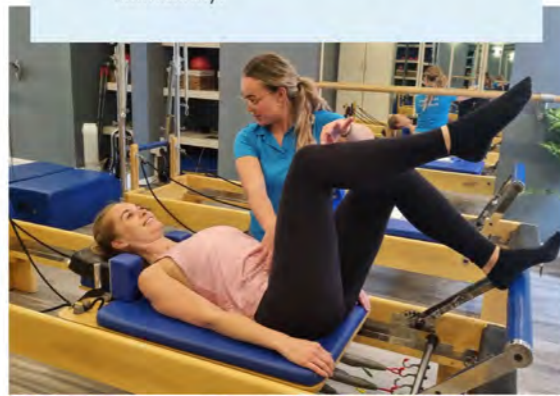
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Review

Autumn/Winter 2024

Editor Frances Radcliffe
Production Lydia Jones



friendsofbatterseapark.org

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Founded in 1988



This year autumn seemed to arrive overnight in the Park; one day it was still summer, but the next and for coming days, it was definitely autumn. By the time you read this, the fireworks will be over and the Friends will have laid a wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Day. In no time at all, it will be Christmas.

There have been two recent significant events in the Park besides the fireworks displays on 2 and 3 November. The three concerts over the August Bank Holiday weekend again proved to be a success. Secondly, Parkrun held its opening Saturday morning run on 12 October. Sara Milne's report on the first three runs is on page 13. The number of runners has been higher than expected but damage so far has been insignificant and regular Park-users seem to have managed to cross the Carriageways and Central Avenue after a delay that they can tolerate. If you have any comments or suggestions on Parkrun, please email them to hello@friendsofbatterseapark.org so that they can be taken into account when the event is reviewed in six months. Junior Parkrun on a Sunday morning is certainly 'a good thing'.

This is not an easy time for Enable as their contract is renegotiated. The Council is

proposing to take some work in-house. See page 4.

National Lottery funding for the first phase of the Cascades Project is very good news. See page 4. There is something of an air of neglect when walking from the Rustic Bridge to the Lake and then back round to the Pump House. More vigorous weed control would be helpful.

We still need a wishlist, and to establish priorities about the best way to use our financial resources to benefit the Park. Please send your suggestions to our Secretary Juliet Lyon-Smith at secretary@friendsofbatterseapark.org or 1 Vicarage Crescent, SW11 3LP. All suggestions will be carefully considered.

Particular thanks to Annabel Stein, our hard working Membership Secretary. Not only has she just organised another Lunchtime Lecture and the distribution of this magazine, but she also planned the Friends' litter picking morning on 22 September. Our pickers went into the bushes where other litter pickers seem not to go. Many thanks to them for their work on the day and for their suggestions as to how the Friends could make a greater impact next time we arrange a litter collection (see page 18).

The next Friends' event is our Spring Lunchtime Lecture on 17 March which is on herbs, spices and their uses.

... and for Christmas, don't forget that our history of the Park and 'I love Battersea Park' mugs make great presents, and each cost only £10. Order from friendsofbatterseapark.org

Enjoy the Park!

Cover Image: Tea Terrace in afternoon sunshine, 18 October 2024

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Parkrun

The first run took place on 12 October. See page 13 for more information.

Enable contract

Wandsworth Council is proposing significant changes to its contract with Enable which ends on 31 March 2025. The Council intends to extend the contract for a period of up to a further five years but on amended terms. These were outlined at the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 September. Final decisions will be taken following the next Committee meeting on 26 November. The proposed changes include transferring 9 Enable parks staff to the Council which would itself take over from Enable the strategic management of biodiversity policy (1 post), management of the ground maintenance contract (2 posts), and management of the arboriculture contract (6 posts).

Friends and Management Advisory Committees for open spaces in Wandsworth are generally not convinced that the proposed changes are necessary.

Considerable audit work is underway as required by the Council, so this is a busy time for Enable. Moreover, under the proposed new arrangements, Enable would be expected to pay a larger concession fee to the Council.

Thrive News

A new Sensory Garden has been designed to provide a safe space for Thrive's client gardeners with dementia. It's at the back of Thrive's Main Garden on East Carriage Drive, close to the tennis courts. The Friends will donate the plants. A Friends' Open Day to see the new garden will be held in the spring.

Thrive's Christmas Open Day takes place on Thursday 12 December. See page 19 for details.

Green Flag and London in Bloom

In July, the Park was again awarded a Green Flag, the international symbol of high standards. In October, the Park retained its London in Bloom Gold Standard. Congratulations to Enable who manage the Park and to Continental Landscapes, our horticulture and ground maintenance contractor and KPS, our arboriculture contractor.

The Cascades Project

The project aims fully to restore the Pulhamite rockery and cascades by repairing damage, reinstating power supplies, and reinvigorating heritage planting.

In August, it was announced that development funding of £654,757 has been awarded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund to help Wandsworth Council apply for a grant of £2,714,457 to complete the restoration.

The waterfall was switched off between the World Wars and fell into disrepair, with attempts at restoration in the 1980s creating further damage. The National Lottery's Heritage Fund's grant will provide valuable resources for preventing further degradation, by completing the investigations, trials and designs needed to restore and future-proof the waterfalls for generations to come.

The Council's news release notes that 'The preparations for largescale capital works provide an opportunity to engage with local communities, to celebrate shared history and co-create a management and maintenance vision for the Park that is fit for the future. The project's themes around protecting natural heritage, exploring renewable energy options for artificially running water, and better identifying and talking about the unique heritage and its benefits



available to us, lend themselves well to opportunities for wide-scale education and volunteering opportunities'.

Butterflies

Two species of butterfly which have only rarely been recorded in the Park in recent years were seen this summer. The Marbled White has not been recorded at all in recent years, and the Common Blue (pictured - a female) has only been recorded a few times. Clive Freedman's photographs can be seen on a new butterfly page which he has added to the Trees of Battersea Park website at <https://www.treesofbatterseapark.org/butterflies/>.

Bats

On 4 and 11 September the Linnean Society led bat walks in the Park. Bat detectors picked up many calls from Common and Soprano Pipistrelles, some from Common Noctules and there could have been a Leisler's Noctule. The best area was on the lakeside at the Three Standing Figures, but calls were also detected between the Fountains Pool and the cricket nets and on the west side of the Bandstand. Contact Clive Freedman at batterseaparktreewatchers@btinternet.com if you would like to try detecting bats with him one evening.



Summer Scheme

Back in 1988, Henrietta Croker-Poole MBE initiated the first Summer Scheme in Battersea Park, as part of the newly formed Battersea Crime Prevention Panel. This day of free sporting activities was aimed at the young people in the housing estates of North Battersea as a diversion from boredom. It grew to a four-day event, Sport in the Park, in and around the Millennium Arena, with sports coaching, a climbing wall, face



painting, and even an opportunity to stroke a python.

Following Covid, and a new partnership with Wandsworth Council, Enable and Smart Hospitality, the event was named The Big Play Out (see page 7) and for the past two years has taken place at the Evolution site. Henrietta, who sadly died in 2023, was thrilled by the success of the event that year, and this summer nearly 10,000 Wandsworth residents booked into the scheme.

The Battersea Ball has always been the main fundraising event for the Battersea Crime Prevention Panel, and last year over 900 guests raised a record £72,000. This year the ball takes place on 25th November, with tickets bookable on <https://www.batterseaball.org.uk/>.

Yews

It is sad to report that Darren Lorigo who has trimmed the topiary yews over the last three years has moved to Whitby. Grant Orchard from Sussex Hedges is taking over. The yews may look a lot less hairy by the time you read this. The Friends will continue to fund this work.

Sparrowhawk and heron

Jamie Baker photographed a sparrowhawk at the zoo in May. It was bathing in the crowned cranes pond before flying off into the Park.

In October, Lydia, who produces Review and her daughter were joined by a heron.

Parkwatch continued on page 18

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The Big Play Out

Wandsworth Council, in partnership with Enable, Battersea Summer Scheme and Smart Hospitality delivered a week of educational fun and entertainment at Evolution in Battersea Park. From 29 July to 2 August, local families enjoyed an array of free activities and entertainment.

As part of the Council's Access for All scheme, 9,728 Wandsworth residents booked into the week, offering children aged 5-15 an opportunity to engage in diverse, educational, and fun-filled experiences at no cost. Running daily from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, tickets were made available to Wandsworth families, who also received free hot meals courtesy of Smart Hospitality.

There was something for everyone to enjoy, from towering inflatables,

captivating street dance, and immersive science workshops to educational animal experiences. Other highlights included a Nerf gun battle zone, and classic dodgem cars. For those seeking a calmer atmosphere, quieter corners offered interactive and creative learning sessions, face paint stations, and cosy reading nooks.

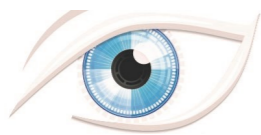
Sublime Science captivated children with magical experiments involving smoke, flying objects, and gooey slime-making, while the Sky Birds display offered an interactive and educational experience with Birds of Prey. Additional attractions included a nails and hair braiding salon, family-friendly movie screenings, and the Nutritionist Corner, where families received healthy eating tips and recipes.

In collaboration with Battersea Summer Scheme, Enable partnered with numerous community organisations, including Riverside Radio, Doddington Roof Gardens, Live Karma Yoga, and Carney's Community, plus a daily visit from the Wandsworth Youth Bus.

There were four music and visual arts workshops by BB Broadway inspired by the music of Battersea Park in Concert, with the children's artwork published in the concert programme.

Feedback revealed that half the children tried activities they hadn't experienced before, with many parents expressing their delight; 93% said they would return again with 71% rating the week great or good for inclusivity.

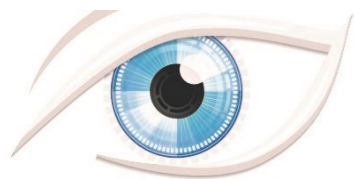
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Autumn Colour



Above left: Witch hazel in Winter Garden

Above right: The hybrid Maple, Acer x freemanii 'Autumn Blaze', north of the cricket nets, was in fine colour this autumn. This tree is recorded by the Tree Register as the Girth and Height Champion of Greater London (widest trunk and tallest)

Left: Maple Walk

Summer Tree Identification with Greg Packman

Clive Freedman

On 29 June, we welcomed Greg Packman to the Park for a second time; this time for a guided Summer Tree Identification Walk. Greg, who works with the Royal Parks and is keen to share his knowledge, began by telling us that sources of help in identifying trees include books (for example the Collins Tree Guide), smartphone apps and dichotomous keys. Keys use pairs of characteristics to guide us through a decision tree towards a final identification of the

species.

Over the next two hours, Greg explained the various features of a tree which help us to distinguish one species from another – see the table below. He focussed on those which were most apparent in June, but also mentioned those which can be seen at other times of the year, including features which he points out on his Winter Tree Identification walks. Particular species of tree have other identifying features which are

not included in the table below. In Battersea Park there are examples of all the trees mentioned in this table.

Greg stressed the importance of not only looking at obvious features such as leaves, flowers and bark, but also looking at the ground beneath the tree and using our sense of touch to feel the bark and both sides of a leaf and our sense of smell to detect the smell of a flower or a leaf crushed between thumb and fingers.

Part of the tree	Feature	Examples
Leaves	Are the leaves opposite or alternate?	Opposite leaves are less common, and include Ash, Maple, Sycamore, Horse-chestnut, Catalpa, Dogwood. Alternate leaves include London Plane.
	Are the leaves simple or compound?	Compound leaves include Ash (fig. 1), Horse-chestnut, Walnut, Tree of Heaven, Rowan, Elder, Gleditsia, Rose.
	What shape is the leaf?	Limes have heart-shaped leaves. Cherry Laurel has long leaves. Some species of Elm have asymmetric leaf bases (fig. 2). Horse-chestnut have palmate compound leaves (lobes radiate from a central point). Ash have pinnate compound leaves (leaflets arranged along the midrib) (fig. 1). The shape of the leaves of English Oak and Turkey Oak, and Norway Maple and Field Maple are different.
	Does the leaf have lobes?	English Oak, London Plane, Maple
	Does the edge of the leaf have teeth?	Hornbeam, Hazel, Sweet Chestnut, Lime, Elm.
	Does the surface of the leaf feel rough or smooth?	English Oak is smooth on top. Turkey Oak is rough on top and minutely felt below. Wych Elm is rough on top.
	Is the surface of the leaf hairy or hairless?	Holm Oak are usually smooth on top and felt below.
	Is the back of the leaf different from the front in any way?	See above. Silver Lime (fig. 3), Silver Maple and Holm Oak are lighter underneath.
	What is the size of the leaf?	Sycamore leaves are usually larger than the leaves of Field Maple. Catalpa have large leaves.

	Do the leaves smell when crushed? If so, what do they smell like?	Cedar has a strong smell which insects find unpleasant. Sweet Gum smells of gum.
	Is there a leaf bract (a kind of modified leaf) on the flower/seed stalks?	Lime
	Are the leaves spiny?	Holly
Deciduous or evergreen	Do the leaves fall in winter?	Pines and Holm Oak are evergreen.
Leaf stalks	How long are the leaf stalks?	English Oak has short stalks. Sessile Oak, Sycamore, Catalpa and Cherry have longish stalks.
Flowers	What do the flowers look like? What colour are they?	Red Horse-Chestnut has red flowers.
	Do the flowers go up or down?	Norway Maple and Small-leaved Lime go up. Sycamore and Common Lime go down.
Buds	What shape are the buds?	Lime has plump, fairly round buds. Hazel has plump oval buds. Beech has pointed buds. Turkey Oak buds have protruding whiskers (fig. 4).
	How far apart are the buds?	Wild Cherry has clusters of buds on flowering spurs. English Oak and Turkey Oak have clusters of buds at shoot-tips.
	Is there a terminal bud?	Oaks have a terminal bud (fig. 4).

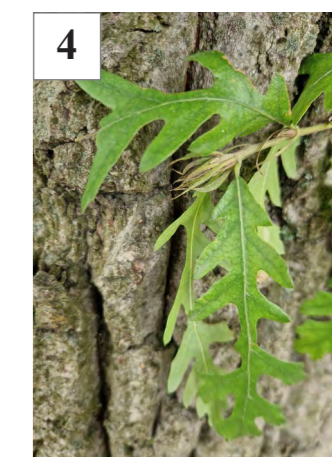


Fig. 1 Compound leaves of an Ash, with teeth on the edge of the leaflets, and seeds

Fig. 2 Asymmetrical leaf base and seeds of an Elm

Fig. 3 Upper and lower surface of a Silver Lime

Fig. 4 Bark, leaves and terminal bud with whiskers on a Turkey Oak

Wintering Waterfowl

Valerie Selby, *Enable, Biodiversity and Parks Development Manager*

	What colour are the buds?	Common Ash has black buds, whereas Narrow-leaved Ash has brown buds.
	What does the bud feel like?	Horse Chestnut has sticky buds.
	Are the buds opposite or alternate?	If the buds are opposite, the leaves will also be opposite.
Shoots	Are the shoots smooth or warty?	Silver Birch often has warty shoots.
	Can you see leaf scars where last year's leaf was attached?	Horse-chestnut has a semi-circular mark. Walnut has a mark like a monkey-face.
Branches	Are the branches opposite or varied?	If there any many opposite branches, the leaves will also be opposite.
Thorns	Does the tree have thorns?	Hawthorn
Seeds and fruit	What do the seeds or fruit look like?	Oak has acorns. Maple and Wingnut have winged samaras. Ash has long drooping clusters of winged seeds (fig. 1). Elm has pale round samaras up to 1" diameter with a brown or pink seed in or near the middle (fig. 2).
	What shape are the seeds?	Field Maple has horse-shoe shaped seed pairs.
	Do the seeds have stalks?	Acorns on English Oaks have stalks, but acorns on Sessile Oaks do not.
Catkins	Does the tree have catkins?	Birch, Poplar, Willow, Alder and Hazel have catkins.
Bark	Is the bark ridged, smooth, flaky or paper?	Oak has ridged bark. Beech has fairly smooth bark. London Plane has flaky bark. Silver Birch has papery bark.
	What colour is the bark?	Silver Birch has white or light grey bark. Red-barked Birch has red bark. Cherries have bark of different colours.
Habit	What is the overall shape of the tree?	Lombardy Poplar is columnar.
Suckers	Does the tree have suckers?	Poplar, Robinia and Caucasian Wingnut often have suckers. Common Lime often has suckers, whereas Broad-leaved Lime rarely has suckers (unless grafted onto Common Lime).

The answers to these questions narrow the number of possibilities. For example, if you see that the leaves are opposite each other, that immediately eliminates over half the species which the tree could be. However, some species (including some Hawthorns and some Cherries) can only be identified at a particular

time of the year, for example when they are in flower.

Greg pointed out many of the features mentioned in the table as we walked round, and as always he was able to add interesting information. For example when we looked at the Silver Lime (fig. 3) he explained that on

a hot day the leaf can flip over so that the lighter bottom surface of the leaf faces the sun, helping to conserve water.

Details of Greg's forthcoming tree walks in the Royal Parks and elsewhere are given on his website at <https://www.gregetalkstrees.com/tree-walks>.

It would seem timely to write once again about the waterfowl on the lake here in the Park. Alongside the beloved swans, we are fortunate that the lake is a key wintering ground for a variety of ducks including shoveler, tufted duck, pochard, gadwall and teal, along with great crested grebe.

Historically, harsh conditions in northern and eastern Europe would see huge numbers of birds migrating to the relatively mild conditions of a British winter but now, as previously frozen landscapes become increasingly accessible, significant numbers of these birds are staying closer to their breeding grounds, resulting in fewer travelling to the UK. We have no recent records for shelduck, pintail or wigeon, all of which used to be familiar winter visitors to Battersea Park.

The long-standing Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) provides essential data that informs decision making. With data provided by over 3,800 dedicated volunteers nationally, the surveys deliver an annual assessment of ducks, geese, swans, waders and other waterbirds residing on, or passing through, our coasts, estuaries, lakes, reservoirs and rivers. Recent results clearly show the alterations in behaviour of these species as a direct result of climate change. Not only are fewer birds travelling to the UK, but those that still make the journey are often arriving later and leaving earlier, therefore staying with us for much shorter periods.

However, it is not just wildfowl from the north that are undergoing change. The survey has also revealed that other familiar waterbirds such as coot are being affected by milder winters. The UK coot population comprises both resident birds which breed here and some birds which join them for the winter. While research suggests declines in our breeding population,



Above: Coot

Right: Male tufted duck



we are also seeing a notable reduction in wintering birds. We are fortunate then to have an average total of over 100 coot annually recorded overwintering in the Park.

Coots are not generally considered as migratory. However ringing recoveries have demonstrated that they can cover considerable distances. For example, one coot, ringed in London in 2017, was spotted in St. Petersburg, Russia, in April 2021, three months after last being seen in London. It was then seen again in London in March 2022, showing that it completed a round trip of 4,000 km!

Not only are we seeing a reduction in birds arriving for the winter, but the survey also reveals that some birds which would have left the UK in autumn are now staying, rather than heading to warmer climes. As our wildfowl continue to adapt to a changing climate, degraded landscapes and multiple other challenges, it is essential that we continue to monitor their movements and distribution so that we may inform future conservation decisions and considerations.

Friends of Battersea Park Committee

- Fenella Barber (**Recruitment**)
- Kate Bock (**Chairman**)
- Karen Buckle (**Advertising**)
- Russ Coffey (**Web**)
- Inge Darling (**Children**)
- Adrian Flook (**Treasurer**)
- Martin Graham (**Arts**)
- Miles Kerstein (**Wildlife**)
- Peta May Law (**BBQ**)
- Juliet Lyon-Smith (**Secretary**)
- Sara Milne (**Horticulture**)
- Briony Newman (**Social Media**)
- Sally Orman (**Admin**)
- Frances Radcliffe (**Review/Planning**)
- Annabel Stein (**Membership**)

AGM and Open Forum Discussion – 8 October 2024

On 8 October, 43 Friends met in All Saints Church, Prince of Wales Drive for our AGM chaired by the Treasurer, Adrian Flook. (Garon Watkins, Chairman for the year ending 31 March 2024, was unable to attend.) The AGM was followed by an Open Forum discussion. We were joined by Councillor Judi Gasser, Wandsworth Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment; Neil Blackley, Enable's Head of Parks; and Inspector Steve Biggs from the Parks and Events Police Service

The Friends approved the Minutes of the last AGM, the Trustees Report and Accounts for 2023/24, and the appointment of George Coe as independent examiner for the 2024/25 accounts. Kate Bock, who had been Acting Chairman since 1 April, was elected as Chairman for a period of three years. Martin Graham was elected as a trustee. Garon was thanked for all that he had done as Chairman since July 2019.

After a break for refreshments, Kate chaired the Open Forum where Friends put various points and questions to Neil and Steve.

The first question related to cycling and e-bikes, both in relation to speeding and being off the main Carriageways which are the only routes allowed in the Park. Neil confirmed that the 12-mph speed limit applied to all cyclists and e-bikers. E-bikes could be restricted to 12-mph by a technological fix but lack of signal in the Park caused difficulty with this. Steve emphasised that the Parks Police ran targeted campaigns and issued Fixed Penalty Notices, although their first approach was to educate the public. There was

a general view that there needed to be an increased police presence in the Park and possibly more CCTV, as well as more clarity about where to find the byelaws. A Friend suggested that these be put on the Friends of Battersea Park website and that there could be a link to them on signs in the Park using a QR code.

A Friend expressed concern about professional party vans and large organised parties with music in the Park. Neil confirmed that such activities needed a formal permit from Enable's Events Team, not least to agree location and ensure safety, especially if gazebos were involved.

In response to questions about the health and management of trees in the Park, Neil explained that all trees were surveyed every three years and that there was a 'minimal intervention' policy such that a branch or tree would be removed only when essential, for example for safety reasons. There was a particular problem with massaria disease affecting older plane trees; this could cause branches to drop suddenly. The plane trees were expected to last many more years but Enable were aware of the need for succession planning and for planting new trees better suited to deal with climate change.

The severe lack of adequate lavatories at the Pear Tree Café and anti-social behaviour, including bushes used as urinals, were major concerns. Neil acknowledged the problems. The planning application submitted late in 2023 for additional lavatories and a service hatch was withdrawn in September. Discussions were taking place on a scaled down project. The Café was not prepared to fund major

work themselves when there was no certainty that their lease would be renewed. Council funding to help provide the additional lavatories had been rejected. Councillor Gasser said that she would look at this issue again in the light of the strong views expressed.

A Friend asked about the impact on the Park of increased visitor numbers, particularly from the Power Station. Neil had not noticed significant wear and tear but there had been parking problems at weekends especially on the entrance road between Chelsea Gate and Chelsea car park. New double yellow lines would be painted here.

A Friend asked about plans for the Deer Enclosure (the fenced off mound south east of the Pear Tree Café). Neil explained that this area was included within the Children's Zoo lease but that there were ongoing efforts to reclaim it for Park users.

In response to a final question, Neil explained that the development phase of the Cascades Project was underway with National Heritage Lottery funding. A further bid would be needed for the future refurbishment phase. The ultimate aim is to restore the Cascades using green energy and involving the community.

Kate asked Neil and Steve to share highlights of their team's work over the past year. Both emphasised community engagement and management of events. Neil referred to the work of the tree team and biodiversity assessments. Steve stressed the successful management of incidents including theft, targeted operations and maintaining a strong presence in the Park.

Parkrun

Sara Milne

Parkrun Battersea is breaking records for the number of runners taking part, but is that to the detriment of regular Park users?

I have to admit that although a fan of Parkrun, I was against it taking place in Battersea Park as I had real concerns about the negative impact not only on the fabric of the Park but also on the daily lives of regular Park users and local residents. However, I am happy to report that due to the willingness of the organisers for us to all co-exist in the same space for 90 minutes on a Saturday morning, the effects on both Park and Park users appear so far to be minimal. Whilst the numbers are certain to increase (1,265 at the second event) efforts are being made to ensure runners stick to the paths, don't run on the grass, keep left when running on the carriageways, don't attach bikes to lampposts or trees and are generally aware of other Park users and runners. Areas of concern are definitely at the starting point at the Bandstand due to the sheer number of runners taking part and also at the initial gathering and finishing point at the Boules Area – but the event directors are aware of this and working to improve the situation.

For Parkrun, Battersea Park is the jewel in their crown, and it was an emotional moment for the organisers and volunteers at the 'soft' unadvertised opening event on Saturday 12 October, when 269 runners arrived to test the route and help iron out any pinch points and logistical issues.

Co-event directors, Will and Jess said: 'We are so pleased with the success of Battersea Parkrun, and how many people have already come down to walk, jog, run and volunteer at the event. Whilst we're establishing, we really appreciate everyone's patience and consideration for the team and

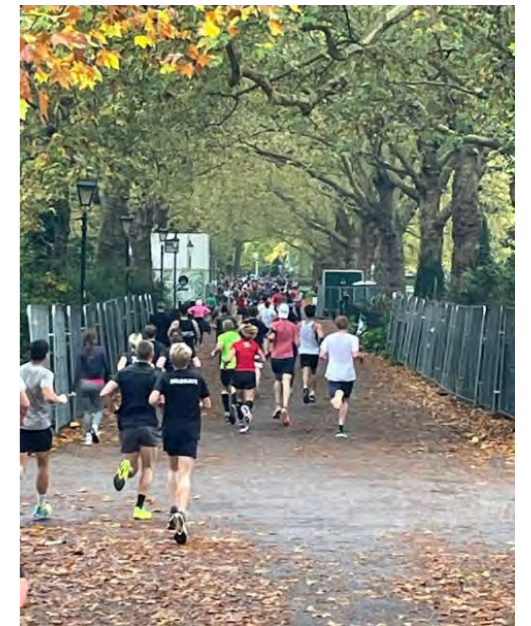
other Park users. Listening to the wonderful team of volunteers will ensure we can build a fun, safe and successful event for all'.

From the Friends' perspective, we have had our own volunteers observing the runs that have taken place to date – a big thank you to them – and their invaluable feedback has been shared with Enable and Parkrun. Please email hello@friendsofbatterseapark.org if you can help or happen to see a run and have something to report.

Parkrun in Battersea Park has been years in the planning and bringing it to the Park is part of the Council's Wandsworth Moves Together strategy. The strategy aims to provide better opportunities for residents to get active in ways that suit their needs and to ensure that local services that support active communities are accessible and fit for the future.

Whilst it is still early days, and we have yet to see what happens in January when numbers spike due to New Year Resolution runners, Parkrun is becoming part of the life that is Battersea Park.

Update: On 26 October, there were 1265 runners and 53 volunteers. The average finish



time was 27 minutes and 43 seconds. Parkrun was cancelled on 2 November because of the fireworks.

Proud to be friends

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Policing the Park from Sun Gate Lodge (1884-1917)

Bob Barker

The Park's policing is part of its history; it has evolved from the nineteenth century Metropolitan Park Constabulary via the twentieth century London County Council (LCC) Park Keepers, and now back again to today's local authority Parks Police. Thirty years of this story are illustrated by the career of Constable Lillie of Sun Gate Lodge.

After the LCC (1889-1965) took over the Park from the Metropolitan Board of Works, the four slightly Art Nouveau main gates to the Park as well as the three Arts and Crafts-style lodges (c. 1891) were built. (A fourth lodge, 'Ranelagh Lodge', was planned at the Chelsea Bridge entrance, but probably never built.) In 1901, Constable Peter Lillie and his large family lived at the south-western lodge, known then as Gymnasium Lodge because of the nearby Men's Gymnasium; it later became 'Sun Gate Lodge', perhaps because the sun can sometimes seem to set over the gate. The lodges 'had a powerful symbolic role, signalling not only authority but also custodianship and care' (English Heritage); the Park Constables played a similar role.

As an ex-sergeant in the Grenadier Guards, Peter Lillie no doubt had the necessary gravitas (and, perhaps, a suitably impressive moustache) to reinforce the 'powerful symbolic role' of the lodge. His particular duties probably included locking and unlocking the iron gates at the start and close of each day.

In 1899, the LCC employed 95 men and boys plus 3 women in the Park. The staff included more than 50 gardeners, a 'boy clerk', two gymnasium attendants, a 'waterfowl attendant', a night watchman, a police inspector, a sergeant and no less than 16 full-time constables (more than twice as many as today), among them Peter Lillie. They had more limited

powers than the Metropolitan Police, though their uniform was similar, and they were rather expected to maintain order and decorum just by their presence and force of personality.

Peter was a local boy, born about 1866 in Mortlake, but brought up in Clapham, where his father was a gardener; He had joined the army at age 18 on 5 August 1884 for a twelve year 'short service' enlistment, serving in the Third Battalion of the Grenadier Guards; he gave his profession as 'gardener' like his father. According to his service records, he was then five foot seven and a half inches tall, weighed just over 10 stone, had a fresh complexion, grey eyes and fair hair. Five foot seven and a half might not sound much for a Guardsman, but he was still about an inch and a half taller than the average undernourished army recruit in England at the time: the minimum height for infantry recruits had had to be reduced from five foot six to five foot three the previous year, and later it had to be reduced again to just five foot.

The 1891 census shows Peter at Chelsea Barracks; by then promoted to Sergeant. He must have left the army and become a Park Constable a few years later, since when he married Mary Jane Hardy at St Luke's, Battersea in June 1896, he already gave his profession as 'Constable'. When he joined the Parks Constabulary, their minimum height was five foot eight, so he apparently grew at least half an inch in the army. He would have been issued with a uniform similar to the Metropolitan Police, including helmet, tunic, two pairs of trousers, three pairs of gloves (black for winter, white for summer), leggings and two pairs of boots, which he doubtless knew how to keep shiny.

Since the legal powers of Park Constables were not as great as



those of the Metropolitan Police, there were sometimes taunts from miscreants about them being 'sham' police and in October 1906, things changed. The rank of Sergeant was replaced by 'Park Keeper' and that of Constable by 'Under-Keeper'. Some of the former Constables thought the new Park Keeper role demeaning, and objected, for example, to having to pick up litter or help with Park maintenance, but maybe Lillie, with his family background in gardening, did not mind that so much.

The police-style uniforms were withdrawn and for the rest of his career he would have worn the brown suit and trilby hat of the LCC 'Parkie', still familiar in the 1970s. Post-war, the uniform was evidently simplified to include army surplus tunics dyed brown. We have now come back again to something like the situation when Peter Lillie began, and today's local authority Parks Police are 'attested as constables by a magistrate and have powers within the parks'.



Left - Right: 1890s uniform ; 1912 look; A post-war Battersea Park Keeper Mr. C. Barnard, in full 'What's Going On Here?' mode and army surplus tunic, inspecting Barbara Hepworth's Biolith (1950) during the 1951 Battersea Park International Open Air Sculpture Exhibition.

The Lillies left the Lodge sometime before 1917, after which they lived for twenty years or more at an address in Notting Hill, though Peter himself died in 1918, aged 52, unaware of a macabre postscript to the story: the Notting Hill address was 6 Rillington

Place, where in 1939 Mary (aged 68) and two of the adult children were still living, just two doors away from the notorious serial killer John Christie, who was then himself a quasi-policeman (a wartime 'special police constable') despite already

having served a prison sentence for attacking his first wife with a cricket bat. Christie is believed to have committed his first murder in 1943, after which he resigned as a special constable. He was not convicted until ten years later.



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Battersea Park Dog Show

Tim Donovan

Lightning flashes and heavy rain meant a severe reduction in numbers attending this year's Battersea Park Dog Show on 7 July.

At one point, the Friends were advised to leave their gazebo and shelter at the Bandstand. However, there was still great enthusiasm and bonhomie amongst those who were there and the spectacle of so many dogs gambolling around and greeting canine friends was greatly enjoyed by all the proud owners.

The Friends had been asked to judge two classes: best trick and best novelty.

Best trick was won by two rescue dogs, George and Dash, George taking Dash for a walk on his lead. It was a particularly heart-warming award because the dogs had severe behavioural problems until they went to live with Jenny and Andrew Chadney, whose loving care and training has completely rehabilitated them. Someone pointed out to me that, if all dogs learn to do this, we dog walkers will become redundant!

Best novelty is a tricky one to decide but luckily, my fellow judge, Juliet Lyon-Smith and I were immediately unanimous that Valerie, another rescue dog, showing all the insouciance of a supermodel as she trotted around the ring, was the clear winner. The look of joy on the face of her young owner, Elizabeth, made that a particularly satisfying award.

As well as their rosette, winners took home a Friends of Battersea Park dog bowl and runners-up received luxury duck and chicken treats.

Events such as this take enormous organisational skills and congratulations are due to Enable for the energy and enthusiasm that they put into making this such an enjoyable day.

It's worth pointing out that the



Above left: Elizabeth with Valerie, Best Novelty winner; Above right: Jenny and Andrew Chadney with George and Dash, Best Trick winners

show provides a hugely healthy, enormously enjoyable day out to everyone, completely free of any charges except an entry fee if you want to your dog to take part in a class. If we all spread the word about what a great event it is, maybe the Battersea Park Dog Show could come to rival Crufts!

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Double the Pleasure

Annabel B Stein

Taking the bus from the Latchmere to the King's Road earlier this year, I watched the builders ripping out the innards of the Duke of Battersea and shortly thereafter **The Rose** was born, a new addition to the Rose Pubs Group. It didn't seem that long ago since the same thing had happened to the Draft House Westbridge, before that Matilda and who remembers when it was Pig on the Bridge? Being familiar with the pretty and flower-clad popular Rose in Vauxhall, I wanted to see if a rose by any other name (in this case 'location') would smell as sweet, so dragged the golfer and his pug to this gastropub for a Sunday roast. It was a lovely autumnal day so we sat in their garden at the rear. The roast beef arrived rare, just as we'd requested, accompanied by a medley of roasted veggies, potatoes, Yorkshire pudding, gravy and horseradish sauce (£22.50). Sunday roasts deserve a pudding. The golfer fancied the sticky toffee pudding with vanilla ice-cream, and I chose the mango cheesecake (£6.50). I had a glass of pinot noir (£7.30) whilst the golfer had a pint of Estrella. (£7.00). We were wonderfully looked after, as was the pug, and would certainly return especially as a jaunty stroll in the Park afterwards added to this occasional treat.

The Rose, 74-76 Battersea Bridge Road, Battersea SW11 3AG. 020 8129 1856. Open: Mon, Tue, Wed & Sunday midday-23.00; Thursday & Saturday midday-midnight. Live music at weekends.

If you wanted to open a second Georgian restaurant in London there could only be one location – Pimlico, as near as possible to the Georgian Embassy in St George's Square. I recall once eating Armenian food but had never tasted Georgian or Azerbaijani cuisine, so with much curiosity, I decided that lunch at **Iberia** was



a must. Luckily a friend who has travelled the Silk Road and is familiar with some of the Caucasus, was happy to join me. We opted for the 2-course set lunch menu (£23.00) whereupon I watched my friend savour borscht soup (root vegetables served with soured cream and bread), and later she watched me tuck into honey cake with condensed milk and cocoa. For our mains, she chose khinkali (Georgian dumplings stuffed with beef), whilst I went for mtsvadi (marinated grilled pork with plum sauce). The restaurant itself is delightful, as was our waiter, and all the comings and goings were intriguing; a bit James Bondish. We enjoyed our lunch, but next time I will choose a less heavy option from the a la carte menu, such as shashlyk (skewered grilled cubes of meat) followed by a regional cheese, or visit for dinner.

Iberia, 3 Lupus Street, Pimlico SW1V 3AS. 020 7821 1771. Open Monday 5.00-10.00pm and Tuesday – Sunday midday to 10.00 pm.

Recently my grandson turned 13 so to celebrate this occasion, six of us met up for lunch at the Chelsea branch of **Wulf & Lamb**. With three in the family suffering from delicate stomachs, this vegan restaurant, with its all-day plant-based food, was the perfect choice. As we had booked online, we were offered the £20 per head deal for two courses. For mains, two of the under 17s chose Big Wulf Burgers (redefined

meat, in a brioche bun, with vegan cheese and gem lettuce, accompanied by a mix of white and sweet potato wedges), whilst avocado and toast was the third choice. For the over 17s, Wulf aubergine (oven baked aubergine with spinach and chickpeas in a pomegranate dressing), an open burrito (tortilla (flatbread) with ackee (Jamaican fruit slightly resembling scrambled eggs) and vegetables) were chosen, whilst the third adult went for two starters: garlic and guacamole crunch with toasted garlic bread, and spicy gyoza (dumplings with a tamari dipping sauce). Afterwards we opted for coffee (with lactose free milk), gluten free cakes, a muffin and vegan ice-cream. Contentment abounded especially for the new teenager whose carrot cake sported a sparking candle and was presented to him by waiters singing happy birthday! Our lunch couldn't be faulted. I certainly enjoyed my own choice as well as tasting the dishes of the others – my first foray into vegan dining. The venue itself was light and airy, the service immaculate and the prices reasonable. We all agreed we'd happily 'Run with the Wolves, and eat with the Lambs' again, plus dine in their Marylebone restaurant if on the north side of Oxford Street.

Wulf & Lamb, 243 Pavilion Road, Chelsea SW1X 0BP. 020 3948 5999. Open Mon-Thur & Sunday 9.00 am – 9.00 pm; Fri & Sat 9.00 am – 10.00 pm.



Distributors zoned labelled bags awaiting insertion of Review

Continued from page 5

New Hybrid Strawberry Tree

Brian Shipman contacted the Friends' website in March to say that he and fellow students who had studied urban planning in Battersea were having a 50th anniversary reunion and would like to give something to the Park. One of the suggestions put to him was a new hybrid strawberry tree which could eventually take over from our current tree which was badly damaged in the storms of February 2022 and has lost limbs since then. It is now looking distinctly fragile. A new tree will arrive in November from Paramount Plants at a cost of £655. News about the planting will be in the next issue of Review. Many thanks indeed to Brian and his colleagues for such an exciting and generous donation.

Review

Have you ever wondered how Review reaches you? Answer is: thanks to your Membership Secretary, Annabel Stein! Annabel produces the labels and sticks them on the envelopes, a team of Committee members spend a morning stuffing the envelopes. A team of loyal Friends then distribute copies saving lots of money which would otherwise be spent on stamps. If you could help Annabel, please let her know at membership@friendsofbatterseapark.org

Experience the magic of Battersea Park Children's Zoo After Dark



Dates: Friday 6th, 13th, and 20th December
5.30pm - 8.30pm

This December, discover a world of wildlife under the stars. As darkness falls, the zoo comes alive with festive performances, seasonal treats and exclusive talks all about your favourite animals.

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- Immerse yourself in the exciting world of the zoo after hours.
- Sing along to carols and enjoy festive performances throughout the night.
- Get the whole family involved in Christmas games and crafts.
- Indulge in heartwarming food and seasonal beverages to keep you cosy all evening.
- See your favourite animals in a whole new light at our exclusive keeper talks by lantern light.
- Create lasting memories with your loved ones at this unforgettable holiday event.



www.batterseaparkzoo.co.uk

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NOV	Wednesday 15 8pm	Run in the Dark Charity Walk/ Run
	Thursday 21 to Tuesday 24 Dec Chelsea Bridge Car Park	Pines and Needles Christmas trees for sale
	Friday 22 Battersea Evolution	Battersea Ball in aid of the Battersea Crime Prevention Panel raising funds for Sport in the Park. Ticket information on batterseaball.org.uk or ball@bcpp.co.uk
DEC	Friday 6, 13, 20 5.50-8.30pm Children's Zoo	Winter Nights at the Zoo Carols, seasonal food and beverages and festive performances. Tickets available at www.batterseaparkzoo.co.uk/whats-on/events/winter-nights-at-the-zoo See page 6
	Thursday 12 11am to 3pm Thrive Main Garden	Thrive Christmas Open Day Sale of Christmas cards, wreaths, calendars, cakes, homemade jams and chutney
	Wednesday 25 Battersea Evolution	Rotary Club Christmas Luncheon rotarychristmasday.org for guest tickets or to volunteer
	Tuesday 31 19:30pm to 2am Battersea Evolution	New Year's Eve Ball Tickets from £249

2025

JAN	Tuesday 21 to Sunday 26 11am to 8pm British Genius Site	The Decorative Fair
	Wednesday 12 to Sunday 17 11am to 8pm British Genius Site	The Affordable Art Fair
MAR	Monday 17 St Saviours Church and Hall	The Friends' Spring Lunchtime Lecture Alex Laird on herbs, spices and their uses in cookery and medicine

REGULAR EVENTS	Wednesdays 10am – 11	Walk Wandsworth Meet at pedestrian gate by Albert Bridge. Contact activelifestyles@enable.com
	Wednesdays 10am – 12.30pm	Winter Garden Contact fhradcliffe@gmail.com to check it's taking place and book in
	Saturdays 9am	Parkrun
	Sundays 9am	Junior Parkrun



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