



FRIENDS OF
JOHN LEIGH PARK



Newsletter, Autumn 2021

GARDENING NOTES AND NEWS

Matthew Curnow, Friends Volunteer and leader of the Gardening Group

John Leigh Park is a great outdoor space to have on our doorstep. Some like to play tennis or bowls, some come to see the birds, have a swing and a slide. For others it's a place to walk the dog or meet and have a chat.

For me it's a place to garden. I joined the gardening team earlier this year and I am really enjoying the enthusiasm and energy we share in looking after the plants in the park.

This year we moved some plants around to make space for those we want to see more of. We have got rid of ugly plants. And we have done our best to nurture the plants we like.

Our biggest success is probably the wildflowers pictured here. They have been great for colour and smell. They attracted so many pollinators you could hear the buzz around the meadow throughout the summer. Recently we removed the grass from the edge of the meadow so it can expand and develop a more natural shape.



But it has not always been easy in the gardens. Thank you for your support in trying to save the plants on the octagonal bed. It helped a lot although all is not well around the Red Robin tree. You may have noticed the box hedges looking worse for wear. They are being attacked by a caterpillar from Southeast Asia. If you carefully inspect the hedge, you can see them. They have black heads, dark green bodies and black lines running along their length. If you find one, pick it off and stamp on it.



Matthew and the Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers have been working on getting rid of the box hedge moth caterpillars. One young man took out 164, others 50 or more.

A pheromone trap has been set to catch male moths.



Some hedges have lost their leaves, but some are still looking good. We are not sure it is a battle we will win.

Although the council do a great job maintaining the lawns and keeping the trees safe for us to walk under, they do not have the resources to look after the gardens in our park. Maintaining and improving the gardens is done by us - we who use the park.

Gardening is one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling activities you can do in John Leigh Park. So, whether your passion is for creation, care, conservation or conversation come and join us in the garden. You can help with design, planting, maintenance or make the tea. We meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9am, and Saturday mornings from 10am – 11am. No experience required.

Matthew Curnow

Celebration- Jamming In The Park and The Mayor of Trafford's Visit.



For the most part the park has been a setting for people to make their own entertainment through the summer as the constraints of the covid pandemic have, quite properly, meant that organised events for any number of people have not been allowed. By the end of July and again in early September we felt confident enough to offer musical sessions: 'Jamming in the park' on two Sunday afternoons. These were approved by Trafford MBC's Events Team. 'Jamming' is built around Alan Rydout and his musical friends and associates: Jon, Ben, Michael, Mike & John (Oldplay), Recycled, The Guestlist and Rob.



Both occasions were blessed with sunshine and there was a fabulous turnout of about 200 each time. On September 5th the Mayor of Trafford – Councillor Laurence Walsh and the Mayoress, visited the park in the swish Mayoral car – driven by a smartly dressed chauffeur. The Mayor walked with us up to the Hartley Road Gateway to appreciate the refurbishment which has been funded by Trafford MBC and local people, including the Seamons Moss Community Association. The gateway was decorated in celebratory balloons for the occasion. These were kindly supplied by Mandy of Balloon Castle in Timperley.



The Mayor and Mayoress entered fully into the spirit of the occasion, walking round the park and congratulating us on its beauty, the range of activities it supports and the spectrum of people using the park that afternoon. Councillor Walsh joined the bands at the microphone and shared well made comments.

D Jolley





Health walks recommenced as soon as was allowed – from April this year. We have maintained a discipline to minimise any chance of cross infection. People gathered outside the pavilion and after a while we felt it reasonable to provide simple refreshments outside after the walk. The walks all involve a look around the park to see what is happening and note the changes with the seasons. In addition, we venture to nearby roads and green places – all of interest and a background for conversation. People do love St George’s Pool! We cover about two miles in an hour – not looking to produce athletes or long-distance hikers but to ease people into exercising limbs, balance and breathing – sometimes after weeks of sitting down for most of the day. 10.30am start almost every Monday from the bowling pavilion.

**ALTRINCHAM METHODIST CHURCH
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ON-LINE Altrincham Methodist Circuit
<https://thesundayservice.gallery.video/altrinchammethodist>

Join us at 10.30am for our on-line service.
 Past services are also available here.

**Our Sunday Worship at
Altrincham Methodist Church**

On the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month 11.00 am

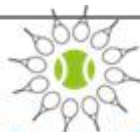
Mid-Week Services **ENCOUNTER**
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Reflections/Worship

On 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month
 The 1st Wednesday of every month will be a short communion service
 And the 2nd Wednesday will be a short service of reflection.

This is an open invitation to all

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Link To John Leigh Park Tree Trail

Our trees are perhaps the most notable feature – there are specimens of a good number of species – some very old and others planted more recently. A tree trail was devised a few years ago and is referenced on the website.

[John Leigh Park Tree Trail - Friends of John Leigh Park \(ipage.com\)](http://www.friends-of-john-leigh-park.co.uk)

We are planning to make a map available within the park to encourage people to follow the trail and learn more about the trees. Kevin Smith is the motivating force behind this. Trees featured in the trail are: Dawn Redwood, Black Walnut, Hornbeam, English Oak, Fern Leaved Beech, Japanese Maple, Horse Chestnut, Holly, Common Lime, and Sweet Chestnut.



Devonshire Road Church
Devonshire Road Broadheath
0161 929 9364

Our **TAKE-A-BREAK**
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Each Wednesday (term time)
10.30 am – 12 noon

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for a drink and a chat

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Avril on 0161 748 3188

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HISTORY OF THE PARK

John Leigh Park celebrated its centenary in 2017 – an occasion which moved us to produce a short history of the park written by Leslie Turner – ‘Celebrating the History of John Leigh Park 1917-2017’. This booklet is available priced £2 from us or from the post office at Oldfield Brow. Two interpretation Boards were produced in the following year by a local business and sponsored by Ian Macklin. These are sited beside the Octagonal Bed and provide a convenient visual resumé of the geography and history of what was the estate of Oldfield Hall and serves the people of Altrincham and visitors so well. Much more history on our website.

EVENTS IN THE PARK

No Schools Cross Country races were arranged this Autumn because of the illness of a key person in the Athletics Club. We wish him well – and we hope it will be possible to start the races again in 2022. But – we are working with Altrincham Baptist Church and there will be **Carols in the Park** December 19th – starting at 4.30pm for 45 minutes. And – by popular request there will also be an Advent trail in the weeks leading to Christmas.

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The blooms in the **Friends of John Leigh Park planter** have been amazing. It is situated at the front of Altrincham Hospital on Railway Street and is a cheerful splash of colour in the town centre. We are very grateful to Alan Rydout and Lynne Dwyer who do the planting and look it after it all through the year.



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REPAIR OF THE BRIDGE

We are blessed with two excellent play areas. One includes the aviary and is suitable for small children – up to 4 years old. The Oldfield Road play area has equipment suited for children and teenagers 5 – 16 years old.

The equipment is much appreciated and heavily used – sometimes to damage or destruction. This can leave us without a piece of equipment for many months before it can be replaced through the capital programme.

During the summer, a major repair of the much-loved Bridge has been achieved by the in-house team of Amey – a fabulous achievement saving time and money and producing something which is outstanding in its beauty and durability. Hats off to the team.

Dave Jolley