



# Friends of Broomfield Park

## Co-Chairs Report to the AGM 2023

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**2022/23** has been a busy and phenomenally successful year for volunteer activities in Broomfield Park, with our now established volunteer groups working effectively across many areas.

This year we are overseeing the restoration of the [Model Boating Pond](#) funded by Enfield Council and are represented in its project steering group. We are also represented on the Council's working group [Unlocking Broomfield Park for the Community](#) currently awaiting the [outcome of a lottery application to fund a memorialisation project](#).

The [Conservatory](#) has continued in its pursuit of excellence, being awarded another **Gold Award** by Enfield in Bloom, while supporting its funding through plant sales and with a full events program including music and children's and adult craft and drawing workshops. They have had to cope with a major (and interrupted) refurbishment program, which is ongoing and presents a major challenge in managing their precious plant collections.

We have seen another full season of exciting **Broomfield Events**. Theatre, music, family, fun fairs, a circus and the return of [Palmers Green Festival](#), collectively drew in 16,000 visitors of all ages. An enthusiastic team of volunteers, working with a team of 16–25-year-old 'festival makers' and in partnership with local organisations is making Broomfield Park an important centre of arts and culture in North London.

The **Horticulture Group** now cover eleven gardens across the park with beautiful and well-developed floral displays through the seasons. The Long Border achieved a **silver award** from Enfield in Bloom, and many would agree it deserves Gold, were it not for structural components such as retaining walls which are not within the group's control. We have seen a redevelopment of the neglected Sensory Garden into a Fernery, along with much work in the Garden of Remembrance, which has also had the old oak pergola restored by the Council along with the new design and planting of the cut-out beds by volunteers. Funding has been supplemented by regular plant sales and an Open Garden event hosted by Elizabeth Dobbie at her lovely garden at her home at the former gardener's cottage in Arnos Park. The popular program of guided walks around the ornamental flower beds continued earlier in the year.

The **Palmers Greenery Community Café** has continued to develop its role within the park, not just as a popular provider of delicious drinks, cakes, and other comestibles but an essential hub for friends, groups, and others to meet and talk. The Palms Greenery committee has given direction and resources from its surplus fund to projects within the park often in association with FoBP such as the Growing Space, Mosaic Workshops, and the 'Dinosaur in the Wetlands' children's project. This year it has taken the lead in an association with [Make Space for Girls](#), with Enfield Council and FoBP. Their recently published [Social Impact report](#) bears testimony to outcomes from their hard work.

Our highly active **Lakes Action Team** have continued their drive to improve water quality, and support biodiversity in all the lakes, while supporting the waterborne wildlife through another successful breeding season. This year they have won a significant grant from the Environment Agency to carry out an environmental audit to improve the watercourses and wildlife. In March they gained funding and worked with a volunteer work team from GoCardless to introduce a swan platform, to plant up floating bio-havens, add barley bales and planting around the Sanctuary area.

The **Community Orchard** and **Apiary** have been carefully managed and provide a haven with crops of apples, honey and other produce shared with our local community at popular events such as the Summer Picnic, Apple Day, and the Wassail. We are supported by local musicians and skilled artists and crafts people who generously donate their products for sale at our Art and Craft Sale and other events. The Orchard claimed another **gold** award from Enfield in Bloom.

The **Growing Space** was further developed with the construction of new raised beds and plant frames by our REACH team and planting vegetable and fruit crops. Some local families took over raised beds and added to the harvest. We have developed our composting with the aim of retaining all our green waste and the compostable waste from the Palmers Greenery Community Café for reuse in our flower beds. The Growing Space was awarded **Gold** by Enfield in Bloom, and the Wildlife Pond in the Growing Space was also awarded **Gold** by Enfield in Bloom in its own right.

The **Habitats Group** has developed its role over the last year in many areas of the park and with a focus on wildflowers and supporting at risk butterfly species. We have developed a methodology for managing wildflower and meadow areas with scything and raking and established log pile and nettle wildlife reserves. We have made links with Butterfly Conservation and planted some of the newly available resistant elm trees and buckthorn elder whips to support the endangered White Letter Hairstreak butterfly, a highlight of the year came when we spotted one on the established wych elm in the Community Orchard.

Plans have been established to start an annual management program of the Broomfield Wetland in a three-year cycle, we will be working with the waterways team from Enfield Council and Thames 21 to clear reed beds, coppice marginal willow trees and ensuring that access, water supply and drainage are cleared.

We have continued to work with groups in our aim to involve more people of all ages, but particularly young people and those from diverse backgrounds. With the **REACH project** we worked with excluded year10 school pupils from across the borough This had restarted after lockdown and met challenges that came consequently to that difficult period. At the graduation ceremony in July, we were pleased to see that 90% of the students returned to full time education with ongoing mentoring and support. However, we were saddened to hear that, after a close five-year association with REACH, that the project was to end, due to the redeployment of resources within the Enfield Secondary Educational Service.

The **Community Mental Health Group** meet in the clubhouse on a weekly basis throughout the year and have become involved in various projects around the park, including gardening

activities and their inspiring art sessions. They participated in a community workshop for the new Palmers Green Public Art Trail and were invited to the recent unveiling of the murals on the former Football Changing Room building and on the flank wall of Greens Café at 345 Green Lanes.

The recently expanded **School Visits Group** arranged and co-ordinated school year visits from local primary schools, making use of different habitat and wildlife areas in the park, including the wildlife pond, wetland, and community orchard. The visits were a remarkable success and we had very positive feedback from the visiting schools.

Over the year we have continued to arrange **Volunteer Days** with corporate groups and members of our community. We had a successful family day to support the 'Big Help Out' for King Charles's coronation in May. In addition to the 'GoCardless Lakes volunteer day' in March, we had enthusiastic teams from 'DEFRA' and 'Oakland Care' to help us manage the thistles around the wetlands and to scythe the grass in the wildflower meadow.

We would like to thank Enfield Council and the Parks team: Victoria Black, Andy Negri and Grant Steer for the support they give us. The Council have carried forward some major works in the park this year, including the Model Boating Pond, restoration of the historic Gazebo on the east lawn, renovations to the Conservatory and repairs to the oak pergola in the Garden of Remembrance, where the FoBP host the annual Remembrance Service.

The Committee would like to make special mention of one of most long standing and influential volunteers, Elizabeth Dobbie, who is standing down from the committee. Elizabeth has been a leader in the Conservatory and Horticulture projects and her energy, clear thinking and determination have made the success that we see today.

**Kim Lumley   David March**

**Co-Chairs FoBP**

