

PRIORY PARK NEWS

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2018 ISSUE 7

**Christmas Tree
Festival**

**Proposed Nature
Trail**

**Green Flag
Update**

UPCOMING EVENTS

(Dates to be
confirmed)

**Spring Litter
Picking
(March)**

**Wood-chipping the
woodland path
(Dependant
availability of
wood chip)**

Welcome to the seventh issue of the Priory Park Friends Group Newsletter

Every year it feels like winter comes around far too quickly, the dark nights draw in as does the cold damp weather.

However, we were fortunate enough last year to have an exceptionally hot summer, which carried on well into the Autumn confusing the trees somewhat as many of them had shed their leaves by the end of August.

The pictorial meadows planted by Huntingdonshire District Council last summer were a fabulous addition to the park and admired by many. Comments were also posted on various social media outlets. Despite the lack of rain for over 60 days they still flourished. Following on from their success, HDC intend to plant the meadows again this summer.

It is only over the last two weeks that the temperature has dropped and it finally feels like winter has arrived. However, Spring is just around the corner! The daffodils are even starting to sprout - not sure how they will fair if the cold weather continues!



Christmas Tree Festival

This year, PPFG members entered a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival which was held at the St Neots United Reformed Church. It is a very popular community event supported by a variety of groups, clubs and organisations that meet regularly in our town and district.

In order to promote the Group and make people aware of what we do, rather than just displaying a traditional tree, we decided that we wanted to create a tree that reflected the park, and utilised the abundance of materials we have available on our doorstep.

A few months prior to the event, group members spent time in the park scavenging branches, leaves and nuts from the ground to make both the tree and the decorations which drew many strange looks from other park users.



Once the materials were collected, we used a circular saw to cut the branches down to increasingly smaller lengths in an effort to create the classic Christmas Tree triangle shape. We then used a drill to make holes through the centre of all the branches and a steel rod was then “threaded” through each of the branches.

With the help of an array of tools including a wood burner, glue gun, paint, ribbons, twine, wire and lots of glitter (which gets everywhere), we created the decorations.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to visit the festival and a big thank you to all those who voted for our tree. We didn’t win the ‘best tree’ competition, but it’s the taking part that matters!

For a more detailed account of the festival and more pictures of how we made the tree and the decorations, please visit the PPFG website.

www.ppfgstneots.org



Proposed Nature Trail – Watch this space!

PPFG, have historically, utilised monies raised from membership subscriptions and donations, to purchase the planting of trees, installation of benches and bird/bat/owl boxes.

Following feedback from the park users the Committee started looking at innovative ways to invest some of the groups funding into another worthwhile project within the park which: -

- Promotes the park to all
- Gets people of all ages involved in an 'active' and 'educational' pursuit
- Would be a permanent fixture providing an activity with minimal ongoing maintenance costs.

At the PPFG AGM held in May 2018 the idea of a “numbered nature trail” was proposed and met with positive support from those present. A business plan was then drawn up and the concept was presented to HDC in December. It was agreed that it would be a beneficial addition to the park and the proposal was accepted for further consideration. Although only in the early stages, working in partnership with HDC it is hoped that the trail will be up and running by the summer.



As many of you will remember, 2 years ago we were fortunate enough to gain the Green Flag Award, a scheme that recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the UK and around the world. This status is only valid for two years and therefore must be reapplied for.

We are currently collaborating with Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) to put together an application in a bid to retain our current status.

We are hoping that with the noticeable improvements HDC have already implemented, which include improving parking facilities, the wonderful pictorial meadows we had last summer and the incredible hard work carried out by the maintenance team. With the added the proposal for investment in a “ Guided Nature Trail”, we hope this will demonstrate the commitment by all parties to meet the required criteria for being awarded the Green Flag status again.

Contacting Us

We would love to hear from you with suggestions on how we can improve the park facilities for all to enjoy and we are always looking for new photographs to post on our website.

Please send any photographs to webmanager@ppfg.uk and suggestions on how we can improve the facilities to secretary@ppfg.uk or post them on our newly launched Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ppfgstneots/>