



PRIORY PARK NEWS

Welcome to the first issue of the new Priory Park Friends Group Newsletter

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2016 ISSUE 1

Our New Committee

Bird Box Project

**What you can do to
help us stop
vandalism in the
park**

Recent Wood Chipping

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Litter Picking
Saturday
18th March 2017**

**Note for diary:
AGM
Wednesday
17th May 2017
Speaker: Liz Davies
St Neots Museum**

This is an exciting time for the Group and it is our intention to keep members regularly up to date with all the exciting things which are happening in the Park and what steps the Group are taking to ensure that the Park is an area which can be enjoyed by all age groups (and dogs)!



We've already carried out various conservation projects and have some exciting new projects planned for the upcoming months.

We'll keep you posted and let you know how you can get involved.

New Committee

Since the AGM last May, we have had several changes to the Committee. Ian Toye has taken over the role of Acting Chairman, while Helen Lewis is welcomed as our new Secretary. We're delighted that Francisca Shaw has agreed to continue as Treasurer, along with Ron Jones, who runs the Priory Park Friends web site and deals with anything remotely technical. Also, sitting around the table are Nick Tracken, Linda Rowley and our latest recruit, David Jasper. Also new is Tricia Salerno, who helps Linda with the Forest School.

We're working as a great team, I'm happy to say, with each member taking responsibility for something whenever possible.

Bird Box Project

Some of the existing bird boxes are showing signs of wear and tear, so we decided to invest in 10 new boxes this year, and possibly more to follow in due course. And so, one afternoon in early October, a trusty team of Ron, Francisca and Nick located 10 suitable trees and put them up (the boxes, not the trees.). Ron had given each box a 'house name' and those of you with nothing better to do might like to seek them out to enjoy the new nameplates.



We have several larger owl boxes dotted around that we think and hope are being used, so for that reason we are reluctant to disturb them for possible maintenance. The same applies to the bat boxes ... note: they're the ones intentionally without a bottom to the box, and not to be confused with a floorless bird box.

It's not easy to detect whether boxes are being used yet, without getting up a ladder and peering in. So, if you just happen to spot any action at any box, please let us know.

Vandalism

There is a small area of woodland on the Longsands side of the park that is being used as a 'cycle-cross' course. Now whilst the park is there for everyone to enjoy, and no-one wants to be a 'spoil-sport' (literally) it is becoming a bit of a problem as quite a few saplings have been cut away, logs moved around to make more space and even some earth moving undertaken.

I'm sure this is very nice for those involved but when it comes to cutting down the saplings and surrounding undergrowth it becomes a problem for all of us. Obviously, the Council cannot police the park 24/7, so they've asked that anyone seeing any of this taking place should dial 101 to report it. It would also be appreciated if you email us at secretary@ppfg.uk with details of the incident and the Police incident number, this will enable us to keep a record for the future.

Wood Chipping

The wood-chipping team has extra incentive this year as we'd decided to participate in the 2016 Great British Woodchip Off.



With woodchip kindly donated by Huntingdonshire District Council, teams compete to show their ability to woodchip evenly – not too thin and not too thick – with a smooth but interesting surface and perfect border alignment, while only having two hours or so to finish the task before it rains.



The path, originally a bit on the muddy side, should end up being nice and dry, of an attractive colour and without a soggy bottom. Also under scrutiny is wheelbarrow control, tipping technique and safe use of shovel, while continuing to make sound-bites and odd expressions at the nearest camera.



After two hours hard work we successfully completed the top pathway from the Rowley Road end. Fortunately, we were the only team present that day so we've a good chance of winning the 'Wood-chipper of the Year – 2016' trophy and all the envy and adulation that comes with it.

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/>