



Learning about the wood. Volunteers work for Cherry Tree Wood. Photo by Ian Cormack

Volunteers work for Cherry Tree Wood

By Ian Cormack

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood recently held two successful birdbox making days organised by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

With Gillian the BTCV manager guiding them, eight or nine volunteers also worked on the fenced off section in the south Wood near the tennis courts. The intention was to extend this protected area and embrace more ground to encourage regeneration.

It was quite hard but satisfying work, making the holes then driving in the posts to the required depth to minimise rotting. They also learned how to tension the palings as best they could to make it look like a professional job.

Unfortunately, the men due from Barnet Council did not show up to give access to the new fencing stored in the old park keeper's hut. So, after cannibalising the existing fencing as far as possible, the volunteers had to leave the task unfinished with the partly extended area left open.

Sue, from the Friends' committee, helped rescue the day by giving a tour of the Wood to the volunteers in the early afternoon.

The Friends paid for the services of BTCV through a National Lottery grant and feel the small assistance required from Barnet was not much to ask for.

Can you spare 30 minutes to help preserve the park?

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are looking for volunteers who can spare 30 minutes to help remove small balsam, a plant which is invading the wood and crowding out native species such as bluebells. It is fortunately easy to spot and very easy to remove so the activity is suitable for all ages. Turn up to help from 11am to 12.30pm on Sunday 7 June.

Building

funds

The Apollo building site compound in Eagans Close will host a fundraising coffee morning, with a raffle and refreshments, in aid of the North London Hospice on 3 July from 9am to 12 noon. The event is supported by Barnet Homes, Holy Trinity Primary School, the Met Police and the London Fire Brigade.

Funding shortfall for field plan

By Ann Bronkhorst

THE ARCHER reported in October 2008 on Haringey's proposals for a master plan for Muswell Hill Playing Fields and on the council's consultation process. At last Haringey Cabinet have reached a decision for the future of this huge open space, listed as a site of local importance for nature conservation.

At the end of April they announced a three-phase plan, but with funding available for the first phase only.

Youth facilities first

In Phase One, to be completed by 31 March 2010, young people's needs have been prioritised, perhaps because some contributory funding will come from the Government's Play-builder scheme.

The proposed layout shows a variety of play and sports facilities clustered along the western side of the former cricket pitch, adjoining Islington Cemetery. Separate play areas for three age groups are envisaged, as well as outdoor fitness equipment, a multi-use games area for basketball and five-a-side football, and a skate park. Linking paths and CCTV are included in this phase.

The idea of a skate park was popular with the young people consulted though less so with older residents. If it does proceed, the skate park may be partly built into the existing grass bank and railed off for safety.

Funding gap for further plans

Phases Two and Three would create a sport/community

building with toilets, a café and changing facilities; pitch improvements such as better drainage; picnic tables, seats, bins and fencing; and tree planting. Council officers will have to "pursue funding" for these phases, however, and no time-frame is suggested.

Pitch hirers will be disappointed that one of the present pitches will be lost, in the overall scheme, with no funding available for its replacement. As Councillor Martin Hall has pointed out, this would not comply with the results of the earlier consultation. A cricket wicket, however, will be placed between two of the football pitches.

To see the master plan or for further information visit www.haringey.gov.uk or call 020 8489 1000 or 020 8489 5873 (Cllr Martin Hall).

Cut the fuss, take a bus

By Daphne Chamberlain

Anne Lewis from Manor Park Road believes in making a good thing even better. Since picking up a leaflet about outings run by Sullivan Buses, she has enjoyed many day trips with them, but at first there was just one fly in the ointment. It would have been so much easier if passengers could have boarded their bus in East Finchley.

She mentioned this to the company's managing director, Dean Sullivan, who sometimes drives the excursion buses himself. He readily agreed, and from this year East Finchley people can start their day out by catching their tour bus from the Underground station or from any N20 stop along East End Road.

It's their days out programme, including the seaside, stately homes, pageants, air shows, motor museums, steam trains, safaris and markets, which has hooked Anne. She says: "I can drive, but I hate it. This way I've been to places I wouldn't normally go to, and got to know the other "regulars". Everyone is very friendly, and I like the very useful maps they hand out of the places we visit."

The buses are double-decker, fitted with coach-style



Hail the bus for your days outing at any N20 bus stop from East Finchley station along East End Road. Anne Lewis leads the way. Photo by Daphne Chamberlain

seats and full three-point seatbelts. They carry wheelchairs, but advise wheelchair users to book their space a day or two ahead. Otherwise, there is no need to book, and the company can usually arrange discounted entry fees for places visited. For further information, visit www.sullivanbuses.co.uk, or call 07982 234 698.



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