

FRIENDS OF OAKLEY PARK NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2009



Autumn Clean up & Bulb Planting
Saturday 17 October 10am.
Meet by the Playground

Annual Social Evening
Saturday 23rd January 2010 8pm
Church of our Lady Church Hall
Corner of Kings & Connaught roads

www.oakleypark.org.uk

Hello from the new Chairman!!

Following 10 years of sterling hard work as Chairman, Ron Ayton has decided to step aside a little and although he is still very active on the committee has handed over the role of Chairman to me in January.

To introduce myself a little, I'm Sarah Horton. I have a daughter in Velmead Junior School. I've been living in Fleet, with my husband for about 16 years. My background, before I had my daughter is in Engineering. I became involved with Oakley Park when my daughter was a toddler. The children's playground was very poor then suffering from vandalism and age. Along with others I campaigned for new playground facilities.

This has been an exciting year for Oakley Park with the long awaited arrival of the new climbing boulders. It is great to see so many people having a go at them. Working in collaboration with Hart District Council we also have a new ball wall and have refurbished the basketball area. We've also been busy painting the football hut.

Thanks to Dave Hall we have an exciting new look website. It can be found at :-

<http://www.oakleypark.org.uk/>

Dave has done a great job with the website and it is well worth a visit to keep up with the latest park news. If in future you wish to receive updates about events by email then please contact us via the website.

You'll see that we have regrettably increased the annual subs a little to £4/family and £2 for an individual. Your subs do make a huge difference in what we are able to achieve in the park and enable it to be a great community facility for all of us to share.

Future projects include the exciting possibility of a permanent Orienteering Course. We will update you as we make progress on that. We are also looking at getting some information boards, much as you see around Fleet Pond. They are proving to be more expensive than we first thought, so this may take some time but we have started saving up thanks to a generous donation from Waitrose 'Community Matters'. We also have some ideas for more planting. If you have any ideas that you would like to see implemented in the park then do contact us.

**Sarah Horton,
Chairman**

Pleasant Retreat

Some of you may have noticed an old well structure in Oakley Park Woods. Tony Wright from 'North East Hampshire Historical and Archaeological Society' has given us permission to reproduce a report he produced about the well for the NEHHAS newsletter spring 2007. As it is an extensive article we have summarised it for

you. The full article can be found on our website.

Excavations in Oakley Park Wood, Fleet

In October 2006 an excavation in Oakley Park Wood, Fleet revealed a brick lined well. Based on the dimensions and type of brick used it is suggested the age of the well to be no earlier than 1820 and probably nearer 1880. Off-centre in the well was a metal up-pipe, which would have been connected to a nearby pump for drawing water. The position of the well was measured so as to compare its location with that of a number of structures shown in the wood on OS maps dated from 1896 to 1940. One structure on the maps would have been within a few metres of the well and this particular structure is the only one shown on the 1896 map, but not shown on an earlier 1873 map of the common land.

Further documentary research based on Fleet Street Directories indicate that a dwelling called 'Pleasant Retreat' was situated in the Oakley Park Wood in the period between at least 1910 and 1936, and recollections by local residents suggest that this property is probably the structure shown close by the well.'

Boulders Opening Ceremony

The climbing boulders were officially opened on May 22nd. A good number of people attended - including Carl Westby from Hart District Council. Cllr Chris Hunt - ward member for Fleet Central helped cut the ribbon. As soon as the ribbon was cut children clambered over the boulders. Cllr Hunt spoke about the 'Hang out in Hart' project and about the partnership between the Council and Friends of Oakley Park in maintaining and improving both the woodland area and the play facilities.

Friends of Oakley Park would like to thank both Hart District Council for including us in the 'Hang out in Hart' project and also the Big Lottery Fund for the grant. It is fantastic that teenagers now have this equipment specifically chosen as a result of us talking to many of them.

Sarah Horton
Chairman.

Help required

If any of you can spare an hour we would welcome assistance with the delivery of newsletters. If you are able to help please contact us by phone or email

Volunteers turn out in force for morning in the woods

A good turn out on our volunteer morning in late February meant that lots of positive work was achieved by the willing volunteers. A good tidy up was needed and a few bags of rubbish were removed from the woodland as well as many non-native invasive plants such as cherry laurel and rhododendron. These plants may look good in the garden, but if they become established in woodland they can often spread and take over at the expense of our native woodland plants. Many of these plants were removed from the glade in the middle of the wood which the Countryside Rangers have opened up this year by removing a few of the trees and some of the holly. All of this work will increase light levels and hopefully encourage more plant species to grow in this area that will then be used by butterflies, dragonflies and other insects.

So many thanks to the volunteers from the Friends of Oakley Park, the students Helen Ogle, Catrin Anderson & Claire Dunford and the teachers from Court Moor School who also gave up a Saturday morning to come and help!

Joanna Lawrence
Countryside Ranger

A Huge Thank You!

Friends of Oakley Park would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to Jerry Brooks of 'Brooks Markings' for finishing off our refurbishment of the Basket Ball area and putting the finishing touches on the Ball Wall area. He is responsible for putting the markings on the tarmac that help turn them into lovely facilities for people to use and he did this free of charge. It really finishes them off nicely.

Come & Join Us

As you will have seen our annual get together is on Saturday 23rd January. Why not come and meet fellow supporters of Oakley Park over a glass or two of wine. There is always ample food and we expect to have a guest speaker. If you didn't buy your ticket when paying your annual sub it is not too late to attend there will be tickets available on the door.

YOUR COMMITTEE

Sarah Horton	674815
Chairman	
Ron Ayton	660708
Vice Chairman	
Lawrence Christer	661034
Treasurer	
Irene Bye	617321
Secretary	
Mike Bye	617321
Membership secretary	
Joanna Lawrence	623443
Countryside Ranger	