

Friends of Pickering Park



Welcome to our Spring 2021 Newsletter

It's been a tough old year, three lockdowns and still not back to any sort of normal, but the recent good weather and the riot of colours appearing across the park has definitely helped to raise spirits and caused us to all look forwards rather than backwards. Another big plus has been the start of the improvements on the aviary and the potential for interesting new transport within the park.

Along with many families and social groups, the Friends of Pickering Park have not been able to get together in the same room for over a year now but we have been keeping in contact with each other and the general public via our Facebook page and also our redesigned website. If you have any queries about the park then please feel free to contact us on the numbers and addresses at the end of this newsletter. We will, even in these very difficult times, try to help as much as we can.

A number of the points in this newsletter have already been shared with the residents around the park thanks to a Hull City Council newsletter from the Riverside Neighbourhood Team which was posted through local letterboxes during May. The Council welcome feedback from residents about the park, so if there is anything you would like to share with them you can email them on Riverside.Areateam@hullcc.gov.uk or in writing at Riverside Neighbourhood Team, 33 Witham, Hull, HU9 1DB.

The Aviary

Progress At Last! The redevelopment of the aviary has finally commenced, and it looks as though the initial plan is to dig a hole deep enough for koalas and wallabies to make their own way to the new Small Animal Education Centre. Scheduled completion date is August 2021 which – if the last couple of years is anything to go by – means it should all be done by mid-2023. The plans for the new development are all available on our website www.friendsofpickeringpark.com and we'll keep the site updated with the latest developments as we hear about them.

Latest Developments

Land Train: Mally Welburn's well-known and much-loved Land Train which has previously run in the City Centre and East Park is coming to Pickering Park this summer. The route has yet to be fully determined, but we believe it will start and terminate close to the lake.

Pedalos: Along with the Land Train, Mally is hopeful of running pedalos on the lake. This, obviously, is a slightly more controversial plan because there's a lot of wildlife that could be disturbed – to say nothing of the anglers! We have been advised that the proposal should be supported by a professionally undertaken ecological assessment before a final decision is made on whether or how pedalos could be introduced whilst safeguarding the lake and its wildlife. We are pressing for sight of such a report in the interests of full transparency for all users of the park.

Bandstand: As if a redeveloped aviary, a new train and pedal boats isn't enough excitement for one summer we're also getting a new bandstand for the centre of the Rose Garden. We believe that this is the stand that used to be in Queens Gardens, so it's going to provide quite a focal point for the park.

The Park

Important advice on feeding the squirrels and birds: Although it is lovely to feed the squirrels and birds, it unfortunately does attract vermin too. Hull City Council have suggested that one of the main reasons that so many rats are thriving in the park is because people are throwing food for the squirrels & birds on the floor and the rats are taking advantage of this. Their advice would be that people refrain from throwing food on the floor for the squirrels/birds especially in the Rock Garden as that is where they seem to be thriving the most.

If you can feed the squirrels/birds outside of the Rock Garden and only leave small amounts of food as and when you see a squirrel/bird it could help reduce the rat infestation. HCC pest control are working on the problem, if we can all play our part too it will be better for all of us. Many thanks.

The Future

Footpath Improvements: One of the surprise elements to the recent HCC newsletter was the announcement that they were planning to improve the condition of a number of footpaths around the park. Included in this is a permanent shared pedestrian and cycle path proposed along the edge of the lake which will provide a year-round circular route to the park site.

Signposts: "Where shall we go next?" can be a puzzling question for visitors to Pickering Park as some are not aware of the amenities on offer. The Friends of Pickering Park are hoping to resolve this problem by arranging the installation of signposts near the main entrances that will point to the toilets, the Lake, the Outdoor Gym, the Aviary (when renovated), the Sensory Garden and other places of interest. This was a project for 2020 but will now hopefully happen in 2021 instead.

New Members: The Friends of Pickering Park have been unable to hold meetings since the first lockdown in March 2020 and unfortunately the Sensory Garden has also been neglected due to four out of the five regular gardeners shielding either themselves or someone close to them. This doesn't mean that we haven't been working quietly in the background, however, giving up our free time to achieve our aims of modernising the Park and broadening its appeal. We have been helped by those that have made craft items and hung them in the trees within the Park and we would like to take the opportunity to thank all those responsible as we know they have brought pleasure to and smiles from visitors.

During these terrible, dark times the Park has welcomed many more visitors than it usually would have done with some, perhaps, gaining solace from a beautiful place. It has been proven that activities such as walking in open, green spaces are beneficial for both physical and mental health.

Our past fundraising efforts have brought the Sensory Garden; the Adventure Zone – including the zip wire and outdoor gym; the bench around the turkey oak tree; more equipment for the children's playground and extra seating dotted around the Park. We would love to add more character and facilities to the Park over the coming years.

We hope to resume normal service as soon as permitted and possible but, for various reasons, our numbers have been steadily depleting. We would welcome new members to help the organisation with additional efforts and some fresh ideas. If you are willing to help our cause, with a few hours to spare as and when possible, then why not join us? We are a friendly group of varying ages with one common intent – to keep Pickering Park as one of the best recreational areas in the city of Hull.

Contact Details

Friends of Pickering Park: Website – www.friendsofpickeringpark.com Email – friendsofpickeringpark@yahoo.co.uk Phone – 07564 980893 (Leave a message if no answer) Facebook – Friends of Pickering Park.

Park Rangers: For information on the Fishing Lake, summertime paddling pool opening hours, broken equipment (contact Council too) or worries about wildlife. The Rangers are very good and do their best for the Park. They report all issues concerning the Park to the Council, which is part of their duties, but once passed over to the Council it's out of their hands.

Contact the Rangers on 07702 669996.