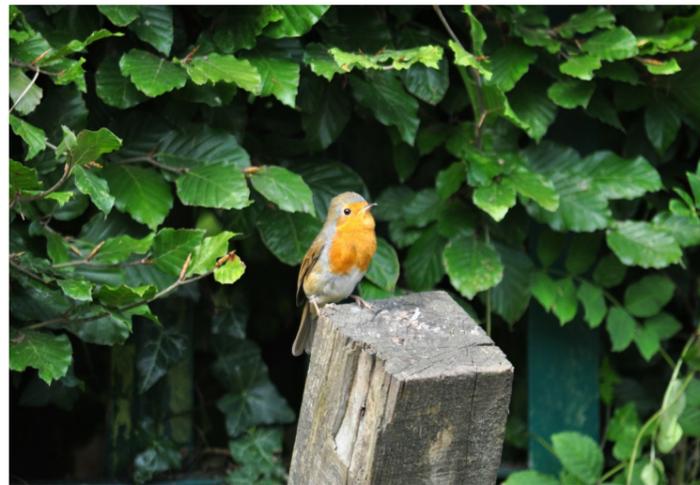


## Oaks Park's Flora and Fauna

Oaks Park and the Nature Trail which surrounds it will, depending on the season of the year and the weather conditions, provide local walkers and users of section 6 of the London Loop an opportunity to see a wide range of flowering plants, such as field scabious, cowslips, yellow rattle, wild marjoram and wild grasses. These flowers and grasses, as well as being attractive, are



essential food plants for butterflies, moths and a multitude of insects and pollinating wildlife.

In spring and summer, we may see many of the locally identified thirty species of butterfly such as the Common Holly Blue, the Chalkhill Blue and the Marbled White, as well as exotic day flying moths such as the Six Spot Burnet Moth found here and on Banstead Downs near Belmont. The areas in and around Oaks Park also



provide great habitat for numerous species of birds such as Green Woodpeckers, Whitethroats, Blackcap, Chiffchaff and Goldfinch.

Oaks Park is one of a number of important sites of chalk grassland, which have developed on shallow lime rich soils overlying chalk rocks. In Southern England, lowland chalk grassland is confined to the North and South Downs. Sutton and Surrey contain grasslands exceptionally able to provide conditions supporting many different plants and animals in a mosaic of vegetation. A description of the nature of chalk grassland can be seen on the attractive information boards within Oaks Park, partly funded by the Old Surrey Downs Project.



## Chalk Scrapes in the Oaks

The Friends of Oaks Park, working with Sutton's Biodiversity Team, plan to install some chalk scrapes over the next few years in the wildflower meadow area of the park. This will involve removing the thin soils over the bedrock, exposing the white chalk. The scrape is then seeded with kidney vetch, which only grows on bare chalk. Oaks Park will join several other local scrape sites, managed by the Biodiversity Team, which have attracted the small blue butterfly. It only feeds on kidney vetch. The new scrapes can make life easier for this scarce and declining species, Britain's smallest butterfly and reinvigorate our chalk grassland!



## Friends of Oaks Park Newsletter 2019



### A Lovely Day for Tree Planting!

In October 2018, we bid for some trees to help complete H.M. the Queen's legacy project, the Commonwealth Canopy of Trees, planting thousands of trees across all 53 Commonwealth Countries. The trees came from the Mayor of London and the Conservation Volunteers.

The trees arrived and we chose one of the very wettest days of the year to plant 100 woodland and hedgerow saplings in the park. 12 members of the Friends, the Council Trees Team, led by Ben Morris and our Idverde gardener, Tony Moorhouse arrived to plant the trees. We were also joined by the then Mayor and Mayoress of Sutton, Councillor Steve Cook and his wife, Pauline, which was very much appreciated. Tom Brake MP also came along to support us. The age range of those doing the planting was 40-90, which was impressive! It was a real community event. The trees were planted in record time and we retired to the café to warm up. Thank you to everyone who was involved. We may be planting more trees soon .

### Thank you

We have had lots of support from lots of people this year. We would like to thank the Downlands Trust, in particular, for agreeing to sponsor the full cost of our new leaflet holder just inside the café. Their generous grant is very much appreciated. ([www.downlandstrust.weebly.com](http://www.downlandstrust.weebly.com) )

We would also like to thank Mr Tony Gallagher of Purley Bowls Club. He made, and sponsored the cost of, our new Friends of Oaks Park banner for use at events. We are very grateful.

### Oaks Park Café

Ilhan and Tamara Besler became the leaseholders for the café in Oaks Park in June. The Mayor of Sutton, Councillor Muhammad Sadiq, welcomed them to the Park. We are delighted to have them and their team in the café and we are already working well together.



**Friends' Autumn Meeting**  
**16th November 2019 in the**  
**Mallinson Room at Wallington Library,**  
**starting at 2.30pm**

### What have the Friends done in 2018/19?

We have had a very busy year and have enjoyed getting more Friends involved in events and building our links with the Downlands Trust, Idverde, the Council and the café. We said farewell to our Parks Officer, Dominic Aslangul and welcomed his successor, Ian Wolstencroft.

We have kept David Warburton, the Council's Senior Biodiversity Officer, very busy. He gave an inspiring talk at our Annual Meeting last November about what more we can do to encourage biodiversity in the park and in Sutton. In addition to planting bulbs, trees and supporting the CAOS weekends, we have organised two walks, led by David, looking at our trees and meadowland. We plan to run more



walks in 2020. David also took some of the Friends' committee to see chalk scrapes he had established on Roundshaw Downs.

We organised a very successful Dog Awareness Training Day in June, led by the Downlands Partnership and supported by the Metropolitan Police Dog Unit and the Dogs Trust.

Away from the park itself, the Friends have represented the Oaks on the Council's Carshalton & Clockhouse Local Committee and contributed to developing a new Parks Strategy for Sutton. I would like to thank the Committee of the Friends for all their hard work this year.

### What does being a Friend of Oaks Park mean?

There are no strict rules. You can pay your membership fee and do nothing. However, we would like to encourage more of you to get involved. You could:

- Offer your skills – e.g. finance, IT, marketing
- Come on our walks and encourage others to visit the Oaks
- Join our informal gardening group
- Offer sponsorship for specific things (e.g. trees, new gazebo)
- Join the Friends' committee – active not bureaucratic

We will do our best to keep you up to date with what's going on through the website and mailings, but we won't flood you with papers or emails. Please let us have your ideas.



### Cleaning our Shed

In August, a group of us tackled the Friends of Oaks Park shed. This had been sadly neglected for several years and was a happy home for many species of spider. We had a complete clear out and after a good brush and a coat of paint it looked much better. The Council will paint the outside of the door shortly, then it will all be finished, at least for a few years.



### Kendra Haste, Oaks Park Artist

I have been fortunate enough to have had a studio in the Old Stable block at Oaks Park for nearly 15 years. There are 11 artists' studios to rent, via Acme Artists, from Sutton Council. We are a diverse group with practices which include sculpture, painting, printmaking, ceramics, glass, printmaking and puppet theatre.



I am a sculptor who uses wire and animals are my subject and passion. I love working at the Oaks and I start my day walking my dog Edie, meeting other dog walkers and enjoying the landscape and views. The cold, dark winter days can be hard going with limited heat and light in the studio, but the park remains stunningly beautiful, and we can always escape to the warmth of the café!

I have been a professional sculptor for nearly 20 years. Drawing has always been important to my work and led me to first use wire as a material, trying to recreate line drawing with wire in a three-dimensional form. Animals and the natural environment are my inspiration and I've collaborated with wildlife conservation charities to help raise funds and awareness of the plight of wildlife in this age of mass extinctions.

I work mainly to commission both private and public and have been involved with many interesting projects over the years. In 2013, I was commissioned to make 12 life-size animals for permanent display at the Tower of London to help tell the story of the Royal menagerie, three lions, an elephant, a polar bear and a troop of baboons. I also have an elephant on permanent display at Waterloo Station and a rhino in the gardens of Cannon Hall Museum, Barnsley. You can view my work at [www.kendrahaste.co.uk](http://www.kendrahaste.co.uk).

For the last three years, the Oaks Artists have taken part in CAOS (Carshalton Artists Open Studios), supported by the Friends of Oaks Park. There were nearly 900 visitors over the two weekends this year. The sun shone and there was a great atmosphere at the studios, meeting local art lovers and fellow makers. Even the Mayor of Sutton paid us a visit and it was a real celebration of art and the importance of community.

The studio that was previously gutted by fire has been fully restored and now we have two new art-



### Friends of Oaks Park Committee

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### Committee Members:

Chairman: Anne Pearcey                      Secretary: Ray Shepherd  
Treasurer: Tina Bates                      Publicity: Anne Jameson  
Carl Brown, Caroline Kemp, Michael Kemp, Joyce Llewellyn, Derek Yeo