

Friends of Pearson Park



Winter Newsletter ~ November 2008



The Friends' trip to NE Lincs parks

By Haris Livas-Dawes, Chair

Our October trip, for which we obtained funding from Wyke for the mini-bus, was a great success, not just for the opportunities of networking and learning from best practice, but also for the treat of seeing these wonderful parks in Grimsby and Cleethorpes.

At a talk before our visits we found out that the council had improved 9 parks, receiving millions in funding. It was stressed that everything was done through the Friends' groups and they were consulted on everything "to the nth degree." This included even the smallest details; for example, the colour of paint to be used. Although the public is always interested in instant results, the improvements in their parks actually took seven years in the making, including the original feasibility studies, tenders, and the commissioning.

As the money won had to be divided among their various parks there was infighting between the parks, but now, we were told, the council promotes the parks across the board with brochures and promotional leaflets, of which we received copies. The purpose of the improvements was to "restore the parks to their former glory." Of course, there were some things



Members of the Friends admire some innovative features of the refurbished parks

Photos: Chris Bayley

they were not allowed to do; for example, Heritage Lottery funds cannot be used for play equipment. The upkeep of the parks is helped by volunteers from a local college. The Friends groups get a great deal of help from the council, even taking their minutes.

We can only wish we got such help. And that we were consulted "to the nth degree."

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Welcome to our new members

Twelve new members joined us at the Princes Avenue Traders Association fete in August, where we had a stall, complete with our very own tree (a *figus benjaminus*) in a pot. We raised about £40 in total from membership fees and the sale of our postcard sets. To date, we have 18 new members in 2008.

Lottery update & other news from the Chair

- ✓ Our **lottery bid** is nearing completion and we now are looking for further funding so the park can be further improved.
- ✓ We saw an excellent (in terms of looks and price) fence in Grimsby that encircles their People's Park and we are collecting information about this to use something similar. **Some kind of fencing** is urgently needed for Pearson Park as the verges are being eroded, and are rutted and muddy due to cars parking on them.
- ✓ Our **meetings**, as always, are open to any members who care to attend. We are always interested in members who wish to contribute their time as most community groups in Hull have a certain proportion of people who do all the work and the rest do nothing but claim the benefits.
- ✓ Our November meeting was attended by three persons from the soon-to-be-formed friends' group for the **Princess Elizabeth Playing Fields**. They wanted to know how we operated and we were glad to welcome them.
- ✓ There still has been **no consultation** about the Heritage Lottery bid, but



according to David Gibson, Deputy Chief Executive of HCC we will be consulted as necessary.

- ✓ The **duck house** (see photo above) is finally in place on the island. Our partner in this part of our lottery bid was CASE, a well-known charity in Hull. Their woodworking department has done an excellent job, first researching possibilities, measuring the site and finally coming up with and making the best option. We are very pleased with their cooperation.
- ✓ We could not manage the planting of the **wet woodland** in November as the site was completely waterlogged. While waiting for it to dry out we have received an extension from the National Lottery until the end of January, but not a second longer as our extensions are holding up the

signing off of the entire Breathing Places competition. We are, of course, not at fault as we can't control the weather which has been very wet.

- ✓ The **poster contest** for the correct feeding of ducks has not yet been completed. Our partner is the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. The difficulty has been in getting the Trustees together to judge the entries.
- ✓ **Website:** We applied for funding from the Wyke Area Committee, but have been told that all funds are allocated now. The next tranche will be available in April 2009.
- ✓ **Fund-raising:** We have 2 new projects in line to supplement the income generated by our postcard sales: a perpetual calendar featuring photos of the Park (taken by FPP member Susan Harr) through the seasons, and a pack of notelets (featuring Susan's photos of the Park).
- ✓ **Green Fair:** Visit our stall at Hull Friends of the Earth's Green Fair, on Saturday, 22 November, at the Spring Bank Community Centre
- ✓ **Anti-graffiti kits:** Wardens in Pearson Park will hand these out to those who need them, on Saturday, 22 November

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One of their endeavours that could be used by persons from Hull is something called "Wired Up" (see photo, right) which we viewed. This consists of high and low obstacle courses which include balancing beams, trapeze bars and high platforms. The various challenges are for teams and certainly would be good for building self-confidence in groups; for example, for young offenders. We hope this idea is taken up by the relevant officials.



Photo: Chrys Bavey



Meeting dates

Our **next meeting** will be on Monday, 12 January 2009

Our **AGM** will be on Monday, 2 March 2009

All meetings are at 7 pm in the Pearson Park Hotel

All are welcome!

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