

The Valley Voice

Issue 41

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Friends of
**Braidburn
Valley Park**

For further information about the Friends and our wonderful Park, visit our website: www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk

The Park is alive with...

... all kinds of activity! We see people using it for their exercise – walking, jogging, running, cycling, the outdoor gym, and fitness or yoga classes – or as a route to school, work or shopping. It's a place to walk the dog, or get together. Local schools have used it for classwork and gym, and P5 from South Morningside have been energetically raking the wildflower meadow.

The uniformed organisations, unable to meet indoors, have been meeting in the park, even by torchlight! Small groups have been able to work on the wildflower meadow, and pruning the willow dome, which had been sporting a wild lockdown hairstyle! Individuals have been litter-picking and gardening. Altogether, the park is looking good, and deserves the Green Flag that we have been awarded again for 2020/21. We pay tribute to the Council, who despite Covid 19 restrictions and staff absences, have coped with the maintenance and been responsive when alerted to particular issues.

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Contact Us



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Email: info@braidburnvalleypark.org.uk

Website: www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk

Snow Days!

We were delighted to see so many local families enjoying the snow in the park. We saw some truly fabulous snowmen (and women) appear and there was sledging to beat the band! Somebody on skis was even spotted!

We love seeing folk having a good time but please do exercise caution and supervise your kids at all times.



Wildflower Meadow: upkeep and upgrade

Wildflower meadows are important and beautiful places. They provide food for our pollinating insects including bees. Many of us find that a summer's day surrounded by a diversity of colourful flora and fauna is a most peaceful and pleasant experience.

The wildflower meadow at the south of BVP was created in 2005. To prevent grass from becoming dominant it is necessary to cut and remove the grass every year. We are very grateful for the assistance provided by children from South Morningside Primary school, who armed with rakes filled over 30 black bags with grass cut from the meadow. The grass had been cut by members of FOBVP using our scythe, which is both fun and has lower impact than the council's mowing machines. Do let us know if you'd like to have a go next Autumn.

This year we also recently decided to expand the meadow in both area and diversity. This required removing turf from an area beside the existing meadow which was mainly grass and which would otherwise dominate anything else we tried to introduce. It would have been hard work but for the kind assistance of three students from SRUC (Scotland's Rural College). After removing the turf we sowed a mix of 22 native wildflower and 6 grass species known as 'Urban Pollinator Mix'. We intend to continue the work in March which is the next ideal time for sowing these seeds. Again please get in touch if you would like to help.

Unfortunately the beauty mentioned above does not appear overnight and we hope visitors to the park have not been too shocked by the appearance of a rectangle of bare earth visible from the main path!



Thank you!

To so many individual members who have been helping by litter-picking and gardening.
To the young volunteer who has been litter-picking as part of his Duke of Edinburgh bronze award.

To the three final year Environmental Management students who came forward to offer their free time and energy to the park.

To Chris Green, who did the original work on the Tram Shelter and generously used lockdown time to freshen it up and fix the sign.

And to Andrew Swann, who kindly replaced the three orienteering posts which had rotted – he set up the trail in 2008.



Gabions?

Not some addition to the park's wildlife...

Robin Harper, former MSP and local resident, shared his concerns about the erosion of the banks of the burn: the flow of water has been undermining the banks, and in places threatening the collapse of the path. Through the Summer he worked solo in the theatre area to encourage the flow down the centre of the Burn. He also carried out a detailed survey of the length of the Burn, which led to discussions with the Council's officers on work to shore up the banks at the weakest points.

The Council took his concerns on board, and have installed gabions (large stones in a basket-like arrangement) at several points – a neat solution which blends in with the banks.



AGM

For reasons all too obvious, at this year's AGM we will not be able to gather in the church hall as usual. Instead, members are encouraged to join us in an online (Zoom) session, which is scheduled for Sunday 28th February at 2pm. Invitations will be sent out by email in the week before the meeting; they will include instructions (it's easy!) for those unfamiliar with Zoom. If you use email but are one of the 36 members we are currently unable to reach by email, please take this opportunity to remedy that (even if the AGM by Zoom doesn't appeal). It's easy: just send an email to membership@braidburnvalleypark.org.uk That will add you to our mailing list.



Photo by Oleg Bagleybter
<https://www.instagram.com/obagley.photography>



Snowy MacFit classes

Membership matters

In a difficult year it is clear that many have been extra appreciative of having a park nearby, with 18 joining FOBVP as new members, most of them using the online form on our website, which makes the joining process easy. The current membership total stands at 208. Please continue to recruit friends and neighbours!

Most subscriptions are renewed in January and many members will already have done so. If you haven't, please do not delay! Whether you have or haven't, if you are in the habit of paying by cash or cheque, please consider setting up a standing order for future payments. It makes administration easier for us; and will mean there is one less thing for you to remember! You will find a mandate to send to your bank on our website. It contains the FOBVP account details which you'll need if you prefer to set up the payment through online banking.



Our beautiful park! Photo by Elspeth Quinn