



# Friends of Woodcock Park

By Kenton Grange

## Newsletter Spring 2017

**We are privileged to have an incredible collection of trees in the park and local area. Some of these are specimens unique or rare in the UK. We thought we would share some of the story of the common English oak.**

### The Oak

The common oak supports a greater biodiversity of life than any other living entity in the British Isles. It is an ecosystem in itself. It is not just the acorns which provide food to squirrels! As well as insects, many birds and mammals such as deer need the oak to feed them or provide shelter at some stage in their life cycle.



The oak, like many trees, grows new sets of leaves for late spring. This is called lammas growth. It does this because there are so many insects and micro-organisms living on the oak that the first set of leaves would not see it through the year. In the autumn, these leaves drop with the acorns.

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### Park Café!

#### Let's get a café in the park!

Recently, the Friends group have been involved in:

- new picnic benches
- new park equipment
- the tennis courts
- ensuring park equipment is safely maintained
- new flower beds
- new bulbs, shrubs and trees
- Joining the National Park City London initiative

And of course the mural by St Gregory's. These involve working in collaboration with Brent, Veolia and the local schools.

We have an active Facebook page and a new website. We liaise with many different groups on issues that present in the park and local area. You can read more about some of this in the newsletter.

We are keen to work towards a park café! A very successful one ran there many years ago (before the war): Let's bring one back.



This is a big project and we can't do it without support. If you aren't able to directly contribute to the project, it helps just to become a member and vote for it at the AGM. Details on the back page.

#### Vote for a park café!

### Trees clean the air

Trees clean the air and improve the quality of life for everyone: they reduce particulate matter around them by up to 65% (protecting your lungs!), cool the air in the summer and lock up carbon dioxide. They also reduce the water run-off into drains, reducing strain on water systems and helping prevent the flash flooding we've been seeing.



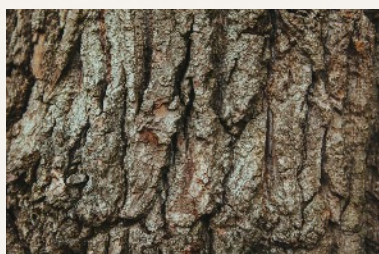
## Join the Friends of Woodcock Park

We are always looking at ways of improving our local park facilities. We can't do this without showing we have the support and commitment of members from the local community.

There is a membership form at the back of the newsletter.

### The Oak cont.

When the leaves fall, they create a rich leaf mould which gives life to invertebrates and fungi, which in turn provide food and maintain the balance of life. Studies of the common oak show that it supports up to 423 species of invertebrate and 324 species of lichen. The bark and larger holes in the tree provide nesting spaces for insects, birds and mammals such as woodpeckers and bats.



The oak is a national emblem. It is one of the hardest woods on the planet. It has been used for thousands of years to build everything from houses and boats to tools and furniture. Oaks live for up to a thousand years and are not mature enough to use for construction until they are at least 150 years old. It takes forty years just to produce its first acorn. Woodlands covered the majority of the British Isles in the past but there are few ancient forests left. The open canopy of oak leaves allows enough light through for bluebells, primroses and other



We are always pleased to help the Friends of Woodcock Park. We are available should any members require any advice on property matters, even if it is not your immediate intention to be

active in the sales or lettings market. Our 19 years in the area means that we have a wealth of knowledge which could prove invaluable when making important property decisions.

Tony McGuinness

### The Wealdstone Brook (aka River Lidding)



We strongly recommend you DO NOT bathe, paddle or walk in these waters or on their flood banks and that you discourage your children and pets from the same. Theo Thomas, The London Waterkeeper ([londonwaterkeeper.org.uk](http://londonwaterkeeper.org.uk)), has repeatedly tested for and found unacceptably high levels of e-coli bacteria. This is not helped by domestic and other pipe mis-connections in the area. Due to this contamination, Brent have placed No Paddling signs on the banks of this historical river.

Brent, Harrow, The Environment Agency and Thames Water have carried out many significant investigations and works on the sewage and drain water systems in the area in recent months. If you become aware of issues with the brook or local drainage systems, such as sewage, report it to the Environment Agency on the Environment incident hot-line telephone 0800 80 70 60, where you will be given a report number. Please let us know the report number on [water@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk](mailto:water@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk) to keep up the pressure.





Alternatively, please sign up online or contact us on [membership@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk](mailto:membership@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk) to support this local community group. We work very hard!

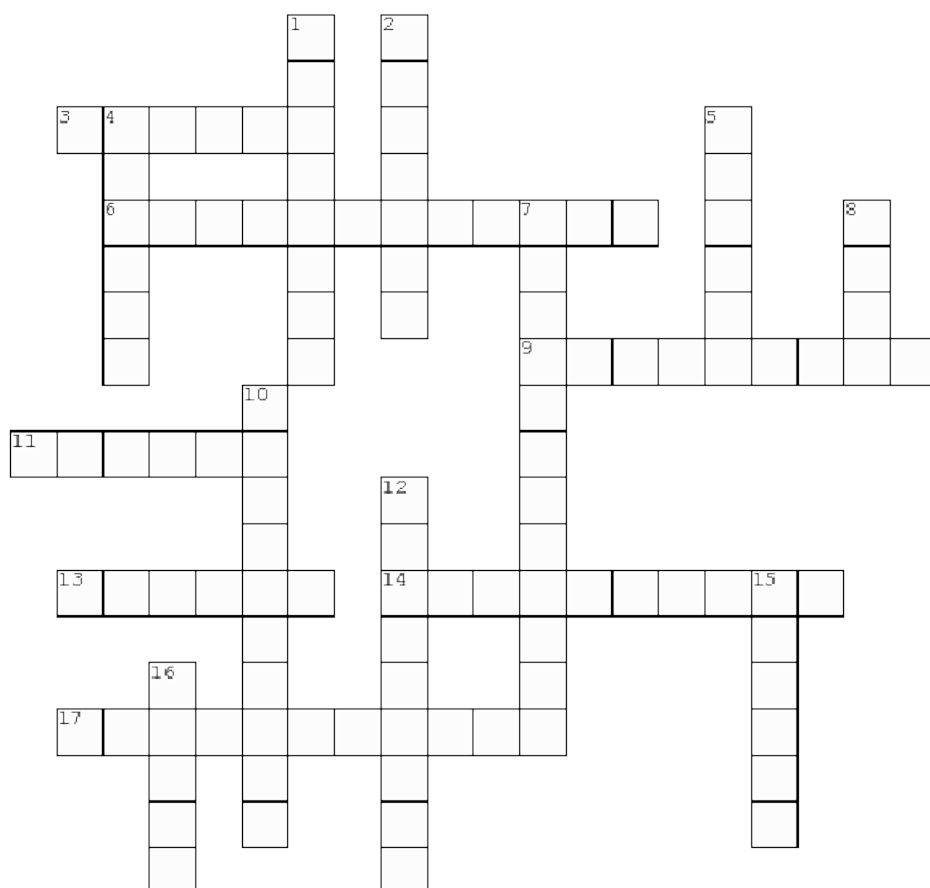
It is £5 for an individual and £7 for a family per annum. We welcome support from local businesses too!

## Green gardens

Paved and hard core gardens and driveways increase water runoff and pollution issues; mostly green drives and gardens minimise water issues in the locality. Go green!

## The oak and the brook

A crossword of words from the newsletter



Created with [TheTeachersCorner.net](http://www.theteacherscorner.net) Crossword Puzzle Generator

### Across

- 3. waste water from pipes such as the toilet
- 6. a healthy variety of different life forms, e.g. butterflies, beetles and plants
- 9. different life forms living together to stay alive, e.g. fungi, lichen and micro-organisms keeping plant roots healthy
- 11. the only one
- 13. tiny plant or moss-like growths which are often most obvious on old stone
- 14. it is so 'wow' that it is hard to believe
- 17. tiny tiny bits of pollutants, such as off car tyres

### Down

- 1. an example of a species, e.g. of a tree
- 2. very old with a long history into the past
- 4. a distinctive badge for a cultural grouping
- 5. cover overhead
- 7. animals which don't have a backbone, like insects
- 8. there are very few, if any
- 10. reduce or go backwards
- 12. having something other people don't have
- 15. a second growth of leaves in late spring
- 16. a stream or small river

## The Oak cont.

wildflowers to grow in the earth beneath.

We enjoy at least two types of oak in the park: the *Quercus robur* 'fastigiata' and *Quercus petraea* 'Insecata' ('Laciniata') of the family Fagaceae. You can tell if it is the *Quercus robur*, or Pedunculate Oak, common to the south because the leaves have no stalks and the acorns do, while the *Quercus petraea*, or Sessile Oak, is the opposite!



## The Oak Processionary moth

The caterpillars of this moth are a pest which damage oak trees and are a risk to human health. The hairs are toxic and should not be breathed in or touch your skin.

There has been minor evidence of them in the park in the past. Should you see any



## Friends of Woodcock Park AGM

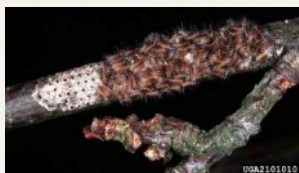
Members are invited to the Friends' AGM (Annual General Meeting) to support park improvements and investment.

**Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 20:00**

**Masonic Centre, Northwick Circle, Kenton, HA3 0EL**

**RSVP to [secretary@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk](mailto:secretary@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk)**

evidence of these moths, please check here [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/oa\\_kprocessionarymoth](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/oa_kprocessionarymoth) to report them.



### Damage to Trees

We were very concerned to see damage to the bark and limbs of many trees, which appeared to be from a combination of factors, e.g. inappropriate use of objects such as vehicles and scooters in the park and in contact with the trees. Squirrels are also known to cause damage. This damage appears to be in regression.



### Let us know...

If you do see anything you are concerned about in the park and you are not sure about contacting Brent council or community police, please let us know or email [asb@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk](mailto:asb@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk)

### Have Fly-tipping Removed

Brent have released a handy app called the Cleaner Brent App. Our members have commented that a photo and brief description quickly gets problem areas seen to.

The app covers everything from graffiti to illegal rubbish dumping to potholes to overgrown greenery and means you can sort it out with your smartphone there and then.

For more information and to download the app, visit <https://www.brent.gov.uk/cleanerbrentapp>

## Join The Friends of Woodcock Park - online or on paper

What do you mainly use the park for? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any further suggestions or comments for the park, please outline them: \_\_\_\_\_

Might you be interested in volunteering to support the park if we contacted you with suggestions? Y / N

**Name** Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname(s): \_\_\_\_\_ First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** Number & Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Post code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact** Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Landline: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ £5 individual ☐ £7 family ☐ £ \_\_\_\_ We welcome membership and donations from local businesses

**Please email to:** [membership@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk](mailto:membership@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk) or complete the online Join Us form.