



FRIENDS OF BUTTS CLOSE

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER

May 2018

Spring Clean...



The sun shone, the mowers mowed, Butts Close responded and we were all thankful that the winter, dragging itself out for so long, was over.

The work by the Countryside Management Service (CMS) last year is paying off, with clearing and coppicing making the perimeters neater and less prone to litter getting caught in the undergrowth. This was especially so around the south-east corner, by Bedford Road and Hampden House, which is so much cleaner.



The usual litterpick suspects...

Nevertheless, the Close needed some tlc, and this had started with the March litter-pick (part of the town-wide 'Spring-Clean' organised by Hitchin Forum). We didn't amass such a haul as in previous years, which was encouraging, and we noted that the areas around the litter bins were pretty clear.

The graffiti on the swimming pool wall had also been removed by Stevenage Leisure Services, who manage the Pool and Archers.



The CMS' work around the pond is showing results, with the rushes right now poking up their heads, and the willow over the pond shining golden in the sunlight.

The pond however is still energetically growing algae and pond weed. We had discussed approaches to this with CMS and NHDC, and had decided that dosing it with barley straw extract was the most ecologically sound solution, recognising that this might be a matter of trial and error.



Tom Ayres showing his barley bucket expertise...

Tom Ayres and Louise Wileman from NHDC did the honours a few of weeks ago. There have been no discernible results yet, and we'll inspect it for them after a month.

Contact Friends of Butts Close at buttsclose@gmail.com and Hitchin Forum through www.hitchinforum.org.uk

And finally the bollards...

In the last newsletter we said that Andrew Mills had commissioned the replacement of 25 bollards. That work is now taking place. They are careful copies of the old 'art deco' ones but they are of course un-weathered, and will look new for some time...



Forthcoming Activities...

Andrew Mills has advised us of the following bookings for the Close so far:

8th – 21st May

Thurston's Funfair

30th May – 3rd June

The Circus

8th July

Duathlon – which is two-thirds of a triathlon...

We know that people are concerned about noise from the funfair. Andrew Mills has assured us that he is happy to be advised about noise levels and he has a hotline to the funfair to get it sorted. The Council's generic customer care number is 01462 474000.

I also contacted Peter Carey, the Council's Environmental Health Manager on this matter. He has replied thus:

We do operate a weekend noise 'call out' service from April to September. What this means is that we have a rota of officers who will respond to complaints about noise. The officers are on call between 8.00pm-3.00am on Friday and Saturday evenings, plus on bank holidays weekends. We also cover Sunday evening. We have an initial response target of one hour; usually this is a call back, and if necessary we will visit the location as soon as possible thereafter. We do need to visit the person complaining to assess the nuisance complained about before we can take any other action. The service is primarily about dealing with noisy parties and noisy commercial activities, which could include the funfair, so please feel free to publicise our noise call out number, 0300 777 4129.

Tony Riley
for
FoBC
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