



FRIENDS OF BUTTS CLOSE

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER

March 2019

Rhythms of the World update

Following our request for views in last month's newsletter, we received only three opinions on the proposal to hold a large scale event on the Close in 2020, two against, one a 'guarded' for. This is possibly because 2020 is a long way off, but planning for permissions for this proposal will start in some six months' time, and we may well be asked at that time what members' views are: without your feedback it might be thought that FoBC will acquiesce to any decision being made. It would be helpful to have your views so that we are ready to respond if asked.

And other events...

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

The Circus 21 – 28th April – however this may change

Thurston's Funfair 7th – 20th May

Triathlon 7th July

The Circus 13th - 20th October

There will be a Fitness group every Sunday from beginning of April, plus the usual Regiment Fitness exercisers, and perhaps the yoga group again, on Friday mornings.

The Spring Big Hitchin Litterpick!

This will take place on Sunday 17 March across Hitchin, and the details for Butts Close are appended. One welcome change is that thanks to some smart negotiation by Ellie and superb support once again from NHDC officers, we will be able to collect rubbish and recyclables separately (provided they are clean enough for recycling - but no bottles at this point - they will have to go in the rubbish bags, or take them home for recycling).

In the Press...

Does anyone actually read the Interpretation Boards that are at the north and south entrances to the Close? Well, we now know that they do! If you look in the March/April edition of the *Inside Hitchin Magazine*, on page 18 you will see an article on Butts Close – clearly lifted from the text of the Interpretation Boards. ‘Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery...’

...and what could have been...

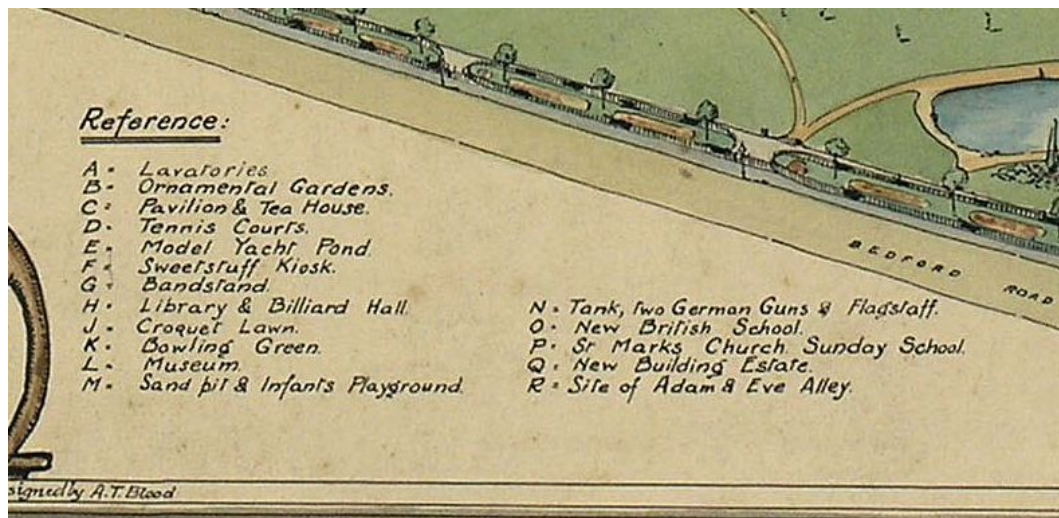
We are all used to the Close being an open, communal space, a green ‘lung’ for our town, and to the pond as a wildlife habitat¹ with its own, slower and gentle pace of life. We have also welcomed the stewardship of the Close by the Council together with the Countryside Management Service, helping keep it this way. But it might not have been: the plan below was brought to our attention – a proposal for 1920’s ‘activity park’ !



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¹ Including a recently spotted kingfisher.

We've enlarged the text section below, so you can see the full detail.



Tony Riley
For
FoBC
March 2019



HITCHIN'S BIG SPRING CLEAN

Butts Close

Sunday 17 March 10am - 12 noon

Meeting Point: at the bench by the pond.

Team leader: Bill Sellicks - 07901 992166

Team Members: Tony Riley, Stuart & Helen Howarth, Shelley Leitch, Ruth Taunt, Jan Roger + Emma Stanley + 2 children, John Keene, Jennifer Moles + husband + 1 - **PLUS** anyone else joining in – but please bring your own picker!

What to bring & wear: Dress for the weather. We'd recommend that you wear suitable clothing & sturdy shoes, boots or wellies; strong gardening style gloves are essential.

What we provide: 1 litter picker per adult, 1 T-Rex picker per family, large bags - white for recycling, coloured for rubbish. **Team leader to collect this kit** from 8 Highbury Road, 4-7pm, Friday 15 March & return it 2- 4pm on Sunday. It can also be returned to our 'treasure stall' (see below).

Collection point for filled bags: by bins at Fishponds Rd entrance to Elmside Walk.

Treasure! We will be hiding 'treasure' somewhere on the Close for the kids. If you find a jam jar with a golden lid, inside there will be a voucher. Use this to claim your treasure 11.30 - 12.30 at our stall opposite the War Memorial. Good luck! Please keep the jar so we can reuse it!

First Aid: Please consider bringing a few plasters, some wipes or antibacterial hand gel.

Contact details if needed on the day: first point of contact during the event is your team leader. After the event: Ellie: 07974 272315 (kit) Rachel: 07824 704354 (treasures)

IMPORTANT NOTES: Be sensible - we are covered under Hitchin Initiative's third party insurance but hope not to have to call on that! Dangerous items (e.g. sharps, broken glass etc) to be collected only by adults. Common sense and care should be sufficient. We hope to have a great day and have a tremendous sense of satisfaction at the end of it! Have fun!

Please email us a photo of your team with its spoils for our website/the press; and do tell us how many bags you filled & numbers in your group & anything weird/wonderful you found!

THANK YOU! This wouldn't have happened without you!