



Email: friendsofspringfieldpark@gmail.com

Website: friendsofspringfieldpark-liverpool.com

NEWSLETTER

November 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear All

As well as some updates on everything our amazing Committee and volunteers do, in our latest newsletter you will also find some information on the planning for the housing next to the park and the community meeting planned for early December.

It's been a very interesting month with information discovered about the land deal and variations that no one in the current FoSP Committee had knowledge of. Questions would need to be asked if the previous FoSP Chair knew about the variations which have cost the community part of the park. In a land deal in 2019, at the same time as the park planning went in, LCC changed the original land deal to accommodate an area of our park to drain off storm and surface water from a future housing development. There was no consultation with the community about this variation.

The Committee are furious about the lack of information and transparency from LCC and the Trust about this situation and we will be working with other local groups to 'Stop the Swale' because if there is no swale there is no housing. At a recent meeting Alder Hey have said they are reviewing the size of the swale and acknowledged that it was disproportionate to the park's requirements. We will be insisting the swale is completely removed from our park. If the Developer needs a swale for his drainage then let him use his own land, not our park!

Remember if we 'Stop the Swale' we stop the housing. Our park doesn't need a swale, just proper park drainage. We want our full park back, not what looks like a canal that has been built for the developer's use.

Please get behind what will be a major community action once it starts. We will update everyone in December once our committee has been sworn in, with your blessing of course, for another year.

I will be standing again for Chairperson. However, it will be my last year as it's my belief there should only be a maximum of 5 years for any Chairperson. The rest of the Committee roles will be discussed at the AGM and hopefully some of you may stand for the roles.

Please get in touch with any of the present Committee if you want to be more involved in our activities. We look forward to seeing all our members at our AGM at the end of November.

Thank you for all of your support to date.

Steve

PARK NEWS

The last litter pick of the year took place on Saturday 28th October 2023 and will resume in the Spring. The children who attended the litter pick were rewarded with pumpkins to carve at home. In the interim period if you wish to do any individual litter picking, contact us and we will provide you with the necessary equipment. Littering within the park remains an issue, but we will continue our efforts to try to keep the park clean and tidy for the enjoyment of the community. Any volunteers are gratefully appreciated.

Our compost boxes have recently been moved by Alder Hey Contractors to make room for new lighting. Alder Hey have apologised for moving the compost bins and have promised to make the area good, including the loss of some lovely plants and flowers, following the fitting of the new lighting. However, the compost production is going strong and will assist Laura and Keith to continue to create the beautiful flower beds in the park next year. The sunflowers have been really successful this year and have provided lovely colour and have put a smile on people's faces as they walk or drive along East Prescott Road throughout the summer and autumn months.

In the last few months our volunteers have been busy. Thanks again to Ange for running the free activities for our local children during the summer holidays. If you wish to find out details of the activities in the park, please see our Facebook page or website or contact us by email. Our social media pages have lots of pictures of the summer and autumn activities.



We have again been awarded a Level 5 Outstanding Certificate by the Royal Horticultural Society and Britain in Bloom for the park. Well done to all our volunteers, with special mentions as ever, to Laura and Keith, and Andrew for all his hard work with the composting.

There continues to be a lot of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the nature trail and within the new park area close to the MUGA. This has consisted of damage to a new fence which separates the nature trail from the loop line, allowing easy access into the nature trail and litter being discarded around the wooden benches. We are trying to get the benches moved out of the nature trail into a more visible area of the park to reduce the ongoing issues. The sun canopy next to the MUGA has also been damaged after youths were sighted using the canopy as a trampoline. The damage has been reported to Merseyside Police by FoSP and by Alder Hey Hospital. Merseyside Police have asked FoSP and any park users to report any incidents of ASB so they can build up a profile of issues affecting the park and respond accordingly. CCTV cameras have also recently been installed in the new children's play area and the park's carpark. This should be a good deterrent for any future ASB and damage in the park. The park now has an ASB group made up of various organisations including Merseyside Police, Liverpool City Council, Alder Hey, local ward Councillors and FoSP. The group had their first meeting we shared all of our concerns, and are hoping a second meeting will be held in the near future.



The new storage container in the park is in the process of being decorated by a local artist, Jay Hampton, she has painted two large bumble bees, and she is to return to complete the artistic

work once the weather improves. We hope that this brightens your day as you walk through the park.

Progress of Springfield Park reinstatement

The work on Springfield Park continues, with Phase 2 being progressed with the installation of the new children's play area, which looks fantastic. The original children's play area is due to be removed in January 2024, the children's swings have recently been removed with us not being informed, we are chasing for them to be reinstated - why should our children be without? Alder Hey have advised us that the adapted seesaw will be moved in the coming weeks by Contractors and will be located in the new children's play area. If we receive any further communication in relation to the original play area, we will let you know. FoSP have requested that the original play area and the fencing remain in place for a repurposed use. On a really positive note, Lady Anne Dodd has agreed that FoSP can retain her donation earmarked for an accessible swing in the original play area to purchase something else for our park. We'd love to hear any suggestions you may have.

At the last public meeting with members of the Alder Hey Board and Liverpool City Council, a discussion took place in relation to the removal of the willow trees located near the MUGA. It is the view of FoSP, that these trees should not be felled and that the Contractors should work the paths around the trees, as they have to accommodate the gas building they temporarily need. Alder Hey promised to review the situation in respect of the trees and report back at the next meeting. They reviewed the situation and reported back that they would try to save the mature



willow tree, but the two small willow trees would have to be felled to accommodate the planned pathways. At this stage, the willow trees have not been removed, we are keeping a watchful eye on them. Alder Hey have advised that they are trying to retain all three willow trees, but they have been unable to make any promises. We will continue to try to save all three willow trees from destruction. Our view remains all three trees are mature and must be all saved.

Planning Application - Housing Development

FoSP have submitted a lengthy objection to the proposed housing development near to Ronald McDonald House. We have also fully supported a local resident with the petition against the development. Although the housing development is not on park land, the swale (drainage channel to collect surface rainwater) is located on our park land. The swale is extensive and takes up a substantial area of park land near to the future football pitches. The swale has been designed to accommodate surface water from the proposed housing development. FoSP object to our park land being used to accommodate the large swale for the developer's needs.



Alder Hey have agreed to look at whether the size of the swale can be reduced and we await a date for the council planning committee meeting in respect of the housing development and will keep you updated.



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Annual AGM

The FoSP Annual AGM is due to take place on **28th November 2023** via zoom for our members. We would encourage as many people as possible to attend the FoSP Annual AGM. Details will be circulated on the FoSP website.

Community Meeting

The next Community meeting organised by Alder Hey and Liverpool City Council is scheduled for **6th December 2023**. We will communicate further details in due course but please mark the date in your diaries and advise your friends and neighbours.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers, partners and other local 'Friends of' park groups for all their hard work, knowledge and support of our group.

The Friends of Springfield Park Committee

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