

The magazine of the Friends of Richmond Park

Autumn/winter 2023

# Park Life

In Richmond's National Nature Reserve

**A river runs through it – but how healthy is  
Beverley Brook**

**New Park signs**

**How new Heathrow flightpaths  
threaten the Park**

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*Cover photo by Eric Baldauf*

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*Richmond Park Christmas Tree card photo  
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*Cover photo of Beverley Brook last winter by Amanda Boardman*

# From the Chairman

Welcome to this edition of Park Life. Firstly, thank you to Vivienne Press, our editor for eight years, who evolved the then newsletter into Park Life magazine bringing us enjoyable, interesting and important articles. Welcome to Joanna Mills, our new editor, whose first issue this is.

This year has seen a number of prominent changes to the Park. The last issue featured the path works, the new wooden road barriers and the raised crossings. This one features the changes to the catering facilities. It's good to read of the environmental improvements that come with the new kiosks at Pen Ponds and Broomfield Hill. The Friends welcomed the reopening of the WC facilities at Ham Gate, although the potential litter from the new grab'n'go catering facilities is a concern.

One important change has been much less visible. In September The Royal Parks brought in-house 26 gardening and

maintenance staff who work at Richmond Park and were previously employed by contractors. In the early 1990s the Friends strongly opposed the outsourcing when it was introduced so we welcome this change. It will strengthen TRP's maintenance and gardening expertise and ability to operate. It completes a number of management and staffing changes. We profile two of the key individuals in this issue; I am struck by how many who now manage the Park spent time in the Park as a child.

Looking ahead, we report on a significant threat to the peace and tranquillity of the Park in the years ahead. The Friends are very concerned by the options being developed by Heathrow for flight path changes and the impact they could have on Richmond Park. We are heavily engaged in discussions with Heathrow and other stakeholders, emphasising the need to protect Richmond Park's special status.

*Roger Hillyer*

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# A river runs through it

## *How healthy is Beverley Brook?*

Richmond Park provides almost a tenth of the catchment area of Beverley Brook and gives us an insight into how the brook might have been in deep history, with rainwater seeping into the ground, boggy areas, springs and rivulets, before draining to the river.

As its name indicates, beavers used to live in this modest, slow-moving brook. Other clues suggest that it was once a salmon stream fed from chalk springs at the edge of the North Downs/Surrey Hills. Water extraction has depleted this natural source and it's unlikely that salmon would have survived the population explosion of the 19th century when rivers often became open sewers.

The brook is now heavily modified. It starts in culverted drains in Sutton and Merton and it's been canalised, its course straightened and unnaturally widened over the course of 100 years or more, including in Richmond Park, where it originally meandered naturally in what is now the golf course. The aim was to move the 'flashier' flood water as quickly as possible to the Thames along with any debris or contaminants.

Urbanisation encroached on the flood plain, so the channel was dredged and deepened to cope with more rapid run-off, with the spoil used to bank up the edges and toe-boards to limit erosion. All this has cut off what little natural flood plain remains. Sports fields are increasingly protected rather than being used as fields that might flood occasionally. Beverley Brook ends up

flowing into the Thames through two large direct culverts built in the 1920s to alleviate the flooding of Barnes.

***Beavers used to live in the brook... and it was once a salmon stream fed from chalk streams***

Climate change predictions mean we can no longer rely solely on engineered flood defences. We have to change our approach to rivers, away from Victorian ideas that they can both supply water and dispose of waste. We need to collect fresh water in case of drought and build natural resilience to flooding. Fortunately, doing this will also improve biodiversity and our open spaces.



*The sorry state of the source of the brook at Cuddington Park*



*Beverley Meads where the brook is unnaturally wide, steep-sided and straightened*

Our challenge for the brook is to achieve good ecological status, using sustainable and affordable nature-based solutions that will improve the river flow, its habitat and biodiversity. But the most significant challenge is improving water quality. Run-off is polluted. Drain misconnections which dump sewage in the river need to be corrected. A significant part of the flow is treated water from sewage treatment works near Motspur Park. We hope to initiate citizen science programmes for regular scientific testing of water quality so we can identify the problems and propose actions.

It is not all bad news. The work done within Richmond Park shows what can be achieved. Improvements to the 1.2km Palewell reach are scheduled for this year. The Royal Parks have also undertaken simple but valuable attenuation work, especially above Pen Ponds, to slow

run-off so rain water seeps into the ground. Further work is proposed, both in the Park and elsewhere with more than 40 potential interventions noted by the South East Rivers Trust.

The river currently supports seven species of fish as well as kingfisher, little egrets and Daubenton bats, while the river-fly surveys are encouraging.

Maybe, just maybe, if enough people show support then the dream of a revitalised chalk stream with trout and salmon could become a reality.

*By Mike Hildesley*

*Mike Hildesley is Chairman of Barnes Common, one of many stakeholders, including the Friends of Richmond Park, who are actively working to protect and improve the Beverley Brook. This article is based on a talk Mike gave at the Friends' AGM in April.*

## Places to eat - a new look

There's a new look to the catering kiosks at both Pen Ponds and Broomfield Hill and new outlets at Kingston and Ham Gates.

The sleek new kiosks are part of a new generation of catering kiosks installed by Colicci which has the concession for most of the royal parks. Each kiosk is made of galvanised steel, clad in steam-bent oak, sustainably sourced from Herefordshire.

"We've tried to create something like a sculpture because we didn't want the kiosks to be a box", says Rob Colicci, who runs the family-owned business. "So they're quite avant garde but are designed to sit sympathetically in the Park."

There's no mains power at Pen Ponds or Broomfield Hill so both kiosks are powered by generators fuelled by hydro-treated vegetable oil (HVO) which produces far fewer emissions than diesel generators. To reduce emissions further, the Pen Ponds kiosk will also be powered by a battery, partly charged by solar panels on the kiosk roof.

The Royal Parks and Colicci have also redeveloped two old toilet blocks at Kingston and Ham Gates into Grab & Go catering kiosks with refurbished toilets, bringing the toilet facility at Ham Gate back in use.

Rob Colicci says the ambition now is to improve recycling rates and reduce litter. Its coffee cups are recyclable, but only if they're put in the special bins or coffee cup chutes. Currently less than 10% are being captured for recycling. "We just need to get people into the habit of using the coffee cup chutes," he says.

The new kiosks and revamped toilet

blocks represent a major investment for Colicci, which has run most of the catering outlets in Richmond Park for 20 years. It was awarded a new five-year concession earlier this year.



*Park manager Paul Richards at the Pen Ponds kiosk*

***"Avant garde but designed to sit sympathetically in the Park"***

"We know the potential of Richmond Park and we were waiting for the moment to show what could be achieved", he says. "It's come at a real cost but I am passionate about the Park and I know we'll make it back."

The café at Roehampton Gate is a project-in-waiting. The Royal Parks are expected to submit a planning application for new facilities some time next year.



## Other Park news

### RP1: The Richmond Park bus service

Earlier this year saw an extended summer bus service operating in Richmond Park. It's a free service, has disabled access and runs between all the Richmond Park car parks as well as Ladderstile Gate, Richmond Gate, Pembroke Lodge and Isabella Plantation. It's operated by The Royal Parks with volunteer drivers.

This year the service ran from Easter until November and there were two important developments. The bus timetable expanded to three days a week: previously just Wednesdays, this year it operated Monday, Wednesday and Friday. And the route outside the Park was extended – it continued to go to Danebury Avenue on the Roehampton Estate; this

year it also went to Ham and the Sheen Lane Centre near Mortlake Station.

Even for regular visitors to the Park, the bus ride can give a new perspective on the Park. There is usually space on the bus – so do look out for the service next summer.



*RP1 with volunteer driver Paul Adams*

### Ham Gate damage

Ham Gate was severely damaged in the early hours of Saturday 5 August when a car collided with the gates. Ham Gate is one of the six gates left open by Charles I at the time of the enclosure of the Park.

The wrought iron gates date from 1921 when the entrance was widened and the two decorative lanterns have been

a much loved feature. Although the gate opened again after a few days' closure, it will need replacing and the pillars, gas lights and pedestrian gates will also need repairs. The Royal Parks are currently looking at procuring a specialist to make a replacement gate.



*Ham Gate in 2017 (photo by Max Lankester)*



*Ham Gate after the crash in August 2023*

# Pembroke Lodge Gardens

## *A new guide to the unique and historical gardens of Pembroke Lodge*



*The new guide's cover page*

The hardest wood of any tree in the world, a hidden grave, the spring that provided Queen Victoria with the water to do her washing at Kew Gardens (she didn't actually do it herself), the apocryphal story behind the naming of King Henry's Mound... just a small selection of the things I learnt at the launch in September of 'Walks in Pembroke Lodge Gardens'.

The scene was set by Friends' Chairman Roger Hillyer and with three short talks by Vivienne Press, Friends' Trustee, Jo Scrivener, Assistant Park Manager and Sue Barber from the Hearsam Collection.

It was great that Paul Richards, Park Manager, was able to join us.

I was lucky enough to be one of the Friends' volunteers at the launch who then tried out the three distinct walking routes of this 16-page guide under the expert guidance of four of its contributors. These were Jo Scrivener and Karl Terry, Head Gardener at Pembroke Lodge Gardens, who led us round the Garden Walk and dazzled us with their horticultural knowledge.

Christopher Hedley showed us the Woodland Walk and provided a fascinating insight into the different varieties of trees that grace the area, and David Beaumont engaged



*Tree expert Christopher Hedley points out highlights on the Woodland Walk*



and entertained us with his stories about the history of the Gardens.

In between walks and talks, we were captivated by Sue Barber's display of exhibits from the Hearsum Collection



*David Beaumont relates the history of the Gardens*

and enjoyed delicious pastries kindly supplied by Pembroke Lodge in the Woodland Patio garden.

We learnt about champion trees and veteran trees, pollarding and coppicing, Rule Britannia and Reasons to be Cheerful (plenty of those in the Gardens). It was interesting to hear how climate change is informing decisions that the gardening team are making and to see the success of the pollinator meadows.

Some of the group were volunteers in the Visitor Centre and they were delighted that they would now be better informed to answer the questions that their customers often pose.

"We will be able to promote it much more effectively", said one volunteer, while another suggested that the planting shown in the Garden Walk had

given her ideas for her own garden.

The FRP team that produced the guide was led by Vivienne and included Joanna Mills, Marilyn Watkinson, Christopher Hedley, Max Lankester, David Beaumont and Rosie Leydon; the 12 volunteer test walkers who gave many helpful suggestions; Eric Baldauf who kindly took its 40 photos; Brian McDonald who helped at the launch and Arnaud Montagna who took the photos on the day. The Royal Parks, including Jo, Karl, Paul, Rhona Harley and Simon Richards provided invaluable information and the latest topographical survey of the gardens.

As I write this, autumn is upon us and the leaves are starting to turn, just the time to seek out the Golden Rain Tree or the Persian ironwood as well as the scarlet oak and maples. As for the hidden grave and the story behind King Henry's Mound... well, I can highly recommend a trip to the Visitor Centre to buy the guide (£3.00) and enjoy finding out for yourself.



*From left: Jo Scrivener, Karl Terry and Park Manager Paul Richards joined the launch event*

*By Alison Glasier. Alison is a member of the Friends of Richmond Park and a Park volunteer*

# CAA Heathrow – a new threat to the Park

New arrival and departure flight paths being considered by Heathrow threaten Richmond Park's very existence as a haven for people and wildlife.

The new flight paths are part of Heathrow's response to the national Airspace Modernisation, which is the first complete overhaul of UK airspace usage in 50 years and builds on new technology, using satellites rather than ground-based radar allowing more accurate control of aircraft.

This is a separate issue to the flight paths associated with its plans for a third runway, which the Friends fought in 2019-20. The third runway has been postponed until the 2030s.

All UK airports are reviewing the flight paths they use for arrival and departure. The process started in 2021 and the new paths will be used from 2027.

Heathrow has just completed Stage 2 of its review, which involved developing

650,000 notional tracks. They were then whittled down to a short-list of 150 options, divided into arrivals/departures and westerly/easterly operations.

Nick Coleman, the Friends' trustee who leads the team fighting this, says the impact on the Park could be huge.

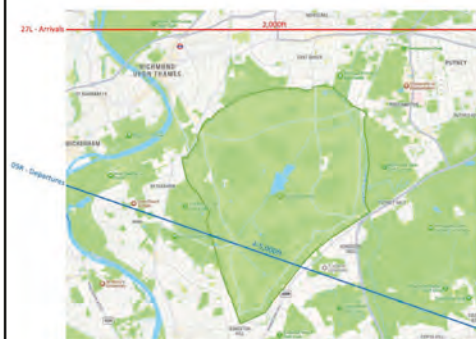
"The short-list has 40% (17 of the 43) of the westerly arrival options going over Richmond Park. Today there are none. If the same proportion (40% of the flight paths) eventually chosen also overfly the Park, it could mean up to 60,000 flights a year.

"For departures, only 15% impact the Park, a similar proportion to today. But whereas today's departures affect only the southern tip of the Park, the new ones go straight over the quiet centre."

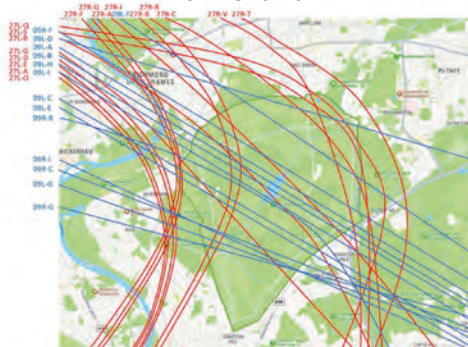
The two maps show today's picture and the options that impact Richmond Park. The map on the right has been derived from the maps in Heathrow's

## CAA Airspace Modernisation Heathrow flightpaths

Now



Short-listed options that impact Richmond Park



public Stage 2 documents.

Judith Pearson, the Secretary of the Friends, says: "We met regularly with Heathrow during the 6-9 months of Stage 2 and also had a very robust written exchange of views.

"We got them to recognise the importance of Richmond Park and to make changes to their approach to assessing the options. So we're very disappointed to see the number of options that overfly Richmond Park in the final short-list.

"Stage 3 includes a more detailed assessment of the environmental impact of all 150 short-listed options. We expect that if Heathrow do a proper, full analysis, it will show a very large environmental harm for both people and wildlife from these flight paths."

***If the same proportion  
(40% of the flight paths)  
eventually chosen also overfly  
the Park, it could mean up  
to 60,000 flights a year.***

The environmental impact on Richmond Park comes from four things.

First is the noise from overflying aircraft – regular very loud bursts of 75-85 dB (decibels) which is more than ten times the present daytime average noise in the Park. The noise will spread much further in open landscape than in city streets where traffic and other noises mask it. And people will feel it more since there are no ways to easily escape it, such as buildings.

Secondly, it will destroy the Park's tranquillity. Richmond Park is probably the most tranquil significant open space in London. People come to the Park because it is an escape from

the hustle and bustle of the city and helps restore their mental health.

Thirdly, aircraft noise can affect many wildlife species, masking the sounds that they use for communication, foraging, detection of predators and navigation. It can even affect mating and reproduction. It can especially affect birds of prey such as owls, kestrels and buzzards that use sound to track prey, songbirds such as skylarks that sing high in the sky and bats that use echo-location to navigate and locate prey.

Finally, there is a real risk that aircraft emissions of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) could, over time, severely damage the Park's sensitive acid grassland and veteran trees, which have existed for hundreds of years in an environment of very low nitrogen levels. If they decline it will affect the hundreds of species that depend on them.

The Friends' chairman, Roger Hillyer, says: "These new flight paths are probably the biggest threat to the peace and tranquillity of Richmond Park since the Friends was founded 60 years ago. We must not let it happen."

*Please help us to fight the new flight paths.*

*Go to [www.frp.org.uk/save-richmond-park/](http://www.frp.org.uk/save-richmond-park/) or email us at [saverichmondpark@frp.org.uk](mailto:saverichmondpark@frp.org.uk) where you can:*

- *Sign up to receive regular updates on our campaign*
- *Join a list of members who are willing to sign a petition or email/ write to MPs, the media or Heathrow when the time is right*

*Help the team with their work; the type and level of your involvement is up to you.*

*By Ron Crompton, former chair of FRP who is part of the Friends' campaign against the new flightpaths*



# Richmond Park Open Day



*Plenty to discover at the Discoverers' stall*

September's Indian summer of hot, sunny days broke with spectacular timing on the day the gates of Holly Lodge were thrown open for Richmond Park's open day.

But for those who arrived early or dodged the rain showers, there was a unique chance to meet the teams and find out about the work that goes on to keep the Park such a special place.

From horses to fungi and cycling to river dipping, there was something for everyone. Of the more than two dozen activities on show, six were run by the Friends including the Discoverers, the conservation volunteers, the Beverley Brook river fly survey team and those who keep the Brook and the Park free of litter.

Adults and children were held spell-bound by farrier Annan re-shoeing one of the heavy horses. It's a job



*The farrier at work*

which needs to be done every 4-6 weeks, Annan said, depending on what the horses are doing. As their work includes cutting the grass in the Park, rolling the bracken, clearing woodland and being part of Operation Centaur's equine therapy team, he's kept busy.

The Park's senior wildlife officer, Tony Hatton, stood watch over a trailer full of deer antlers of all sizes, most discarded by the deer when they shed them each winter. The management of the Park's deer population involves conducting a census 5-6 times a year – not an easy task when one stray dog or loud noise can make a herd scatter mid-count.

Suspended from a tall oak was one of the Park's tree surgeons, demonstrating how he safely climbs the tree to reach boughs which need cutting. With around 130,000 trees in the Park, the team are kept busy re-pollarding trees along Beverley Brook, clearing fallen ones, fencing those which need protecting and removing oak processionary moth



*Red and fallow deer antlers*

– not a popular job when it's hot as it requires full protective clothing.

There was plenty to keep children enthralled from 'fishing' for river flies in large tanks to identifying different nests or matching different animals with their main food source and their poo. Volunteers shared their passion for butterflies, wildflowers and fungi.



There are hundreds of people who look after Richmond Park: staff, volunteers and contractors. The Park Open Day offered a glimpse into the vital but often unseen work they do to protect it.

*Open Day Photos: Amanda Boardman*

*Beverley Brook team photo: Stephen Russell*

*Clearing Beverley Brook . The haul included 177 bottles & cans*

# New signage in the Park

Members may recall an article in the summer 2020 Newsletter about our review of signage in the Park. This included Nick's inventory of all the signs in the Park and Vivienne's research from around the world about what makes environment signs effective.

At that time, we found that most of the Park's environmental signs were neither well-designed nor well-positioned. This meant that they were ineffective in conveying messages to Park users.

Of course, signs are not the whole answer. However, most visitors to the Park want to do the right thing and signs can tell them what that is. And enforcement is difficult if there's nothing saying what's wrong!

So good signage helps.



This No-Cycling sign meets all the design criteria. The sign is also well placed.

Signs for actions that are harmful and have a minimum fine have white text and a bright red background.

**1. Signs are positioned where pedestrians and cyclists naturally pause, including around 5 metres inside the gates.**

**2. Main messages and images are readable from 5 metres.**

**3. The messages are specific, simple and clear about the action that visitors are being asked to take, with the action as the main message.**

**4. Design and colours stand out, rather than blend in.**

**5. Any image complements and helps to convey the message**

**6. Simple and spacious design**

We presented our research on this to The Royal Parks in early 2019 with a list of the key aspects of effective signage.

Following this, TRP started to redesign all its signage. To help further with this, in the winter of 2021 we organised and carried out a signage survey to test the impact of different types of signage.

Thirty Friends of Richmond Park volunteers asked visitors who had walked past a sign if they had noticed it and what they recalled of the message. This enabled TRP to assess the effectiveness of a sign and its location.

Since then, the Friends have had several useful meetings with The Royal



Parks to discuss signage, including with Ali Jeremy, TRP's Director of Communications and Engagement.

We are pleased to report that, after much design work and all-parks co-ordination, during this year TRP has begun replacing the old signs with new designs, starting with Richmond Park.

The questions is: do the new signs have all the key aspects of effective signage design?

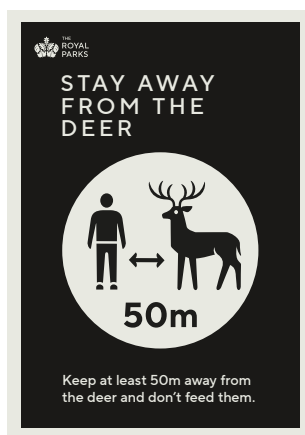
The good news is that they do! Well done TRP!

To complement these excellent designs, we hope that TRP will place them in positions where visitors can see them easily.

The relatively new Skylark field signs appear to have slipped through the new design process. We understand that when they come to be replaced they too will follow the new guidelines.



Signs for actions that are harmful and against the law, but don't have a minimum fine, are black and white with a red border around the cartoon.



Signs for action that are a good thing are black and white. This sign meets all the design criteria though the black background is less noticeable than the red.



TRP are replacing the old dogs-on-leads sign with this new well-designed sign. However, positioning on crates may not always be the best position for visitors to see the sign easily.

*By Vivienne Press and Nick Coleman. Vivienne and Nick are both trustees of the Friends of Richmond Parks and lead the Friends' work on signage.*

# Friends of Richmond Park Discoverers



of the Richmond Park Wildlife Group) taught us about the remarkable life cycle and behaviour of these insects. By the end of the session, our young explorers were even able to distinguish between a male and female Gatekeeper butterfly.

In August, we continued our partnership with the Hearsam Collection and held our second Arts and Craft Day where children learnt to make birds out of clay and out of paper.

Two weeks later, we invited children to have fun with maths in Pembroke Lodge Gardens, running around measuring the circumference of different trees, learning about the symmetry of leaves, plotting bar graphs of butterflies, and calculating the average mass of pine cones.

Discoverers were busy over the summer with events for families who have registered with us, the public and local community groups.

In June, our registered families joined an evening owl walk. It was overcast and almost cold, so not many owls to see but we did manage to find one near the car park as usual!

Events continued in a rainy July, as we were invited by The Royal Parks to take part in two 'Nature Days' where a guided investigation of a wet log populated with moss, lichens, snails and other creatures generated fantastic discussion for all ages.

At the end of the month, we hosted a butterfly count and workshop, in order for families to engage in the National Butterfly Count. In a short presentation, Nigel Jackman (Chairman



We also spent a morning with teenagers from the Kingston Action for Refugees group, discovering the Park's history and ecology. The familiar sound of grasshoppers was a surprise for some of them, creating a soundscape which was reminiscent of home.



In August, the Roehampton Community Weeks project invited us to run two events. The first was an arts and crafts stall in the shade of Roehampton Gardens,



and the second was an evening bat walk around Adam's Pond. Attendees enjoyed trying out our new bat detector!

Our regular 'First Sunday of the Month' morning walks near Pen Ponds also took place throughout the summer, and we had fun trying to make cyanotype sun prints, although the sun did not always oblige!

*By Monique Sarkany. Monique is a trustee of the Friends of Richmond Park and leads the Discoverers' programme for families with school-age children.*

*Photos by Monique Sarkany*



# What's out there?

## *A Park ecology survey*

How does the wildlife in Richmond Park behave when there are no people around and how does the presence of people in the park affect the wildlife, during the day and night? Answers to these questions are essential if the Park is to remain a sanctuary for wildlife and fulfil its designation as a National Nature Reserve.

The Friends of Richmond Park have commissioned an ecology survey to be conducted by the Institute of Zoology (the science directorate of ZSL Zoological Society of London) and overseen by The Royal Parks.

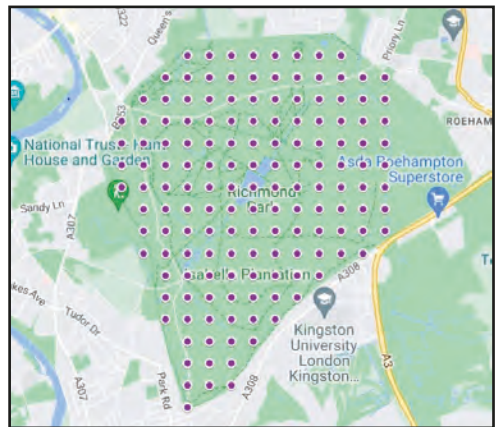
ZSL have done a similar survey as part of the London Hog Watch project, established in 2016 to monitor hedgehog populations. Camera-trap surveys were deployed in areas from the largest parks to private gardens to understand what influenced hedgehog distribution and abundance in order to aid their conservation.

Over 100 surveys have already provided 3,000 camera placements across half of all London boroughs, including Richmond.

In 2018, 40 cameras were deployed in the north-west section of Richmond Park, and although no hedgehogs were sighted, seven other mammal species were detected. A much larger survey covering the whole of Richmond Park, using 150 camera traps, will allow for more detailed biodiversity information.

Camera trap surveys provide very rich datasets, allowing for more effective conservation management strategies.

From the data it is possible to assess the distribution and relative abundance of urban mammals and a range of ground-feeding bird species. The findings can be compared with other surveys to provide a broader understanding of factors affecting species distributions across London. Being able to track human footfall will also allow The Royal Parks to assess humans' potential impact on wildlife.



*An example of the 150 camera locations at the proposed Richmond Park survey area*

The survey will begin in the early spring of 2024, when the bracken has died back so that the camera traps have a clear view.

We will need lots of volunteer helpers to set out the cameras and then to recover them about two weeks later. So look out for details in the bulletin once the survey dates have been confirmed.

*By Hugh Deighton, a trustee of the Friends of Richmond Park*

# Look out for...

## The Dartford Warbler

Dartford Warblers are usually found in extensive areas of bracken, often accompanying Stonechats which also frequent this habitat. Whereas Stonechats habitually perch on top of bracken fronds, Dartford Warblers tend to skulk in dense vegetation. Occasionally they will briefly perch in the open but otherwise only betray their presence with their harsh churring call.

The population is sensitive to very cold winters, so much so that after the severe winter of 1962-63 the numbers declined to a handful of birds. Numbers have improved since then but it is still regarded as moderately threatened.

In winter, the birds can be found away



from heathland in open areas of low vegetation. Richmond Park is one such location and regularly holds a few birds each winter, usually recorded between October and February. The highest numbers were six in the autumn of 2008 and seven in November 2017. There was an exceptionally early bird on 19th August 2011.

*Photo of male Dartford Warbler by Paula Redmond*

## A new look for our Richmond Park Calendar



*May photo of Beverley Brook by Amanda Boardman*

The Friends' wonderful calendar has a new design so that it is now not only beautiful but even more useful.

Our previous design had small photos below the monthly calendars as well as the main images. But these small photos left much less space to write on than in most other calendars of this size and we have received increasing requests to provide more space.

The new design includes not only much more space to write on but also space for notes and useful small monthly calendars for the previous and following months.

And of course its twelve large photos of the Park's wildlife and scenery are all stunningly beautiful and will bring Richmond Park into your home every day of the year. Enjoy!

**£10 at the Visitor Centre and [www.frp.org.uk/shop](http://www.frp.org.uk/shop)**

# Winter works in the Park

## Pen Ponds Causeway

Visitors to the Park will see works taking place at the Upper Pen Ponds Causeway.

The causeway is actually an artificial dam, holding back the water in Upper Pen Ponds. The Royal Parks have strict

legal responsibilities to maintain this structure to address potential flood risk, including in light of the changing climate and the increased risk of flash floods.



*Hoar frost on Pen Ponds Causeway. Photo by Diana Loch*

## Other winter works

The Royal Parks are planning further restoration and improvement work in the Park this winter, though on a much smaller scale than previous years. It's the third year of works since the huge increase in visitor numbers triggered by the Covid lockdowns.

All pedestrian gates around Pembroke Lodge, except the main front entrance, are being replaced, as is a gate leading into the Isabella Plantation at Pegs Pond.

Other planned work include improvements at Bog Gate and restoration of the Tamsin Trail between Ham Gate and Petersham Gate.

The small bridge near Ham Gate (there are two, side-by-side) will be removed as it is no longer fit for taking vehicles. As a result, there will be a small change to the route of the Tamsin Trail.



## New faces

Paul Richards has completed his first year as Park Manager and there have been several changes to the management team in the Park. Here are two of them.

Karl Terry has worked in Richmond Park for 13 years. He's now The Royal Parks Head Gardener for Pembroke Lodge Gardens.

As Head Gardener, Karl is also responsible for teaching and mentoring the gardening apprentices – there are usually at least three apprentices working in the Park at any given time.

The environment and sustainability are a big focus in his new role. The new wildflower meadow between the Rose Garden and King Henry's Mound is an example of how improvements are being made to biodiversity and sustainability wherever possible.

Karl says: "We get a lot of regulars in the Park, so you get to know them and strike up a rapport. There are also lots of questions from visitors about how to manage their own gardens. It's very rewarding to be able to give them advice and pass on my knowledge to them."



When Pete Lawrence became an Assistant Park Manager he was already very familiar with the Park. In his previous role as Biodiversity Manager for The Royal Parks, he was a key figure in recent biodiversity initiatives in Richmond Park and led many of the monitoring surveys that provide a rich source of information on the Park's environment and wildlife.

Pete grew up in London, often visiting Richmond Park as a child. He has always been interested in urban nature conservation – how to protect nature in an urban environment whilst giving people the opportunity to interact with wildlife in a sustainable way.

He will be focusing on the management and enhancement of the wider parkland, with some early projects in the park's woodlands and continuing the wetlands work.



# Friends' Information

## DISCOVERERS



Discoverers is the Friends' activities programme for families with school-age children. Events take place twice a month throughout the year and during school holidays. All Discoverers events are free. For information, please see [www.frp.org.uk/discoverers/](http://www.frp.org.uk/discoverers/)

## Richmond Park Flora Group

We monitor, survey, identify, record and offer guided walks.

For information on activities and how to join us, please email Gwen Hewitt  
[gwen@the2hewitts.plus.com](mailto:gwen@the2hewitts.plus.com)

## Friends' Walks

All are welcome to come on these free guided walks. Each walk lasts about two hours and starts from one of the car parks at 10am on the first Saturday of each month.

If you need more information or special support or help with the walk, please phone Ian McKenzie on 020 8943 0632 or email him at [walks@frp.org.uk](mailto:walks@frp.org.uk) in advance, or phone 07340 766573 only on the day of the walk.

**Dogs must be kept on leads during all walks.**

**We show the gates that those arriving by car will need to come through to reach the car park.**

Dec 2nd Pen Ponds car park, via Roehampton Gate  
Dec 26th Pembroke Lodge car park, via Richmond, Ham or Kingston Gates  
Jan 6th Robin Hood Gate car park, via Roehampton Gate  
Feb 3rd Roehampton Gate car park, via Roehampton Gate  
Mar 2nd Kingston Gate car park, via Kingston, Ham or Richmond Gates  
Apr 6th Sheen Gate car park (+ Walk-the-Wall), via Sheen Gate  
May 4th Broomfield Hill car park, via Kingston, Ham or Richmond Gates

## Magazine People

**Editor:** Joanna Mills

**Picture editor:** Vivienne Press

**Proof reader:** Sally Wood

**Editorial Advisors:** Roger Hillyer,  
Ron Crompton, Monique Sarkany,  
Vivienne Press

**Contact:** [editor@frp.org.uk](mailto:editor@frp.org.uk)



## Enquiries

**Friends:** see [www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk).

If your query is not answered here, please email [secretary@frp.org.uk](mailto:secretary@frp.org.uk)

**Park management:**

[richmond@royalparks.org.uk](mailto:richmond@royalparks.org.uk)

**Police non-emergency:** Phone 101

## Friends' Information

### The Friends – who we are and what we do

The Friends of Richmond Park is a charity founded in 1961 and dedicated to the conservation and protection of Richmond Park, its peace and natural beauty, for the benefit of the public and future generations.

The Friends fund conservation and interpretation projects, organise the Discoverers' programme for families, monitor events in the Park, and offer guided walks, talks and webinars.

Our more than 300 volunteers staff the Visitor Centre, carry out conservation work, monitor sporting events in the Park and pick litter as part of our Adopt-an-Area scheme.

We lobby and campaign on issues such as the ecology and wildlife of the Park, policing, car access to the Park, cycling, flight paths and local planning issues.

We also publish books, leaflets, the Richmond Park calendar, Park Life magazine for members and provide a monthly email bulletin.

You can find out more about the work of the Friends on our website ([frp.org.uk](http://frp.org.uk)), Facebook, Instagram and on X, formerly Twitter.

New members are always welcome so please join us. You can do so via our website or pick up a form from our Visitor Centre, or email [membership@frp.org.uk](mailto:membership@frp.org.uk)

### Membership – Joining and Renewals

Please note that membership renewals for those paying by cash or cheque only is 1 January. Individual membership is £10 and household membership is £15. Please send payment to Chris Mason – details below.

It's easy to become a member: you can sign up online at [www.frp.org.uk/membership/](http://www.frp.org.uk/membership/) using your credit card. Alternatively you can obtain a form from the website, from the Visitor Centre at Pembroke Lodge or by emailing me at: [membership@frp.org.uk](mailto:membership@frp.org.uk).

If you are a member and don't receive the monthly Friends' bulletin by email and wish to do so, please email [bulletins@frp.org.uk](mailto:bulletins@frp.org.uk) with the subject 'Add to bulletin'.

Please also include the first line of your address and post code. You can easily stop this at any time using the unsubscribe button.

If you change your email or home address then please let me know by emailing [membership@frp.org.uk](mailto:membership@frp.org.uk) and including your previous address.

If you wish to receive Park Life as a pdf instead of as a printed booklet, then email [membership@frp.org.uk](mailto:membership@frp.org.uk) with the subject as 'Park Life as pdf' using the email address registered with us.

**Chris Mason, Membership Secretary**  
(Postal applications to: 38 Chesham Rd, Kingston, Surrey KT1 3AQ)





*Snow buck – one of our new Christmas card designs. ©Edward Payne @edward\_james\_photography*



The Friends of Richmond Park work to protect the Park's peace and natural beauty for future generations.

Richmond Park is a National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation.

[www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk)

 [/thefriendsofrichmondpark](https://www.facebook.com/thefriendsofrichmondpark)

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