

Friends of Hayes Parks - Update Report January 2021

The long hot dry days of summer are now behind us with leaves falling fast and everywhere we look there is work to be done. The FoHP, with the help of the Friends of Hayes Common (FoHC), have been tackling the many and varied tasks to be undertaken to keep the parks looking their best for all visitors, from the regulars to the rare (herons, council contractors, rare ducks, etc.). This work has included continual litter picking and the removal of dead and fallen limbs from trees. Only this week a large limb fell from the 'Tree of Heaven' near the gate to the Knoll in Pickhurst Lane during the storms that have seemed to batter the UK, bringing plenty of rain.



The paths through Husseywell have been cleared of leaves and acorns, the latter being a particular hazard near the pond where they can cause feet to slip whilst feeding the ducks. It has been a very good year for the oak trees and the busy squirrels (nature's planters) are planting oaks for the future generations.

We have undertaken some larger tasks such as pruning back the wisteria that grows over the front of Hayes library, across the upstairs windows and on the roof. Standing on the long stilts was a feat in itself. A project which has taken much of our time has been the cutting and reducing in height of the hedge that runs around Husseywell. Sections of it comprise hawthorn with its large spikes and the much softer privet hedge. So if you have been passing through and heard a series of ooh's, ah's and ouch's, this has just been the sounds of happy hedge cutters plying their trade. Occasionally blood was drawn, but we are a hardy bunch.

Both sides of the hedge have been done and on the road side, road name signs have been uncovered and some even advising what size vehicles can be parked there. Some young trees are growing in the hedge including the Turkey Oak, most probably planted by an earlier generation of those squirrels.

Apart from the sounds of Friends' groups in the park, there can also be heard the joy of youngsters using the playground in Husseywell, proof, as if it were needed, that life continues in these difficult times and by the time you read this Christmas will have been and gone. In the park a father told me that only 6 people would be allowed to gather on Christmas Day whilst 30 are allowed to attend a funeral. He planned to be holding a funeral on Christmas Day for his pet turkey who will sadly pass away on Christmas Eve.

Please get out and enjoy your parks, taking in their beauty whilst taking your litter away with you, observing all their changes as the seasons progress and taking away a picture or memory that you can enjoy after having been there. Enjoy it alone or with a friend and keep smiling.

Debbie Palmer, FoHP