

FRIENDS OF YEADING WALK NEWSLETTER, May 2023



Spring finally arrived and the park is bursting with cow parsley, spring bulbs and blossom, including the Bird Cherry pictured left. The damp conditions and leaving the grass uncut resulted in a huge number of pale pink Cuckoo Flowers / Lady's Smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), emerging in the park. This wild flower is essential to the lifecycle of the Orange-tip butterfly – easy to spot as the males' wings have bright orange tips.

Yeading Brook to benefit from Harrow's River awards

The *Rewild London Fund*, sponsored by London Wildlife Trust and the Mayor of London, includes **Yeading Brook Unbound**, a project to re-naturalise the western arm of the stream, which falls within the River Crane catchment. The project aims to enhance individual sites for people and wildlife, and the connections between them. Project partners include Harrow Council, Harrow Nature Conservation Forum, the Crane Valley Catchment Partnership, the Environment Agency and certain parks and allotment groups. Work will involve 'rewiggling' the stream or creating more natural banks - benefitting wildlife and reducing flood risk, plus 'daylighting' the water, tackling scrub encroachment and invasive species that impact adversely on water quality and on wildlife. The project will focus on a circa 3.5 km of the watercourse between Headstone Manor and Roxbourne Park, involving major work for contractors and creating volunteering survey, monitoring, training and practical opportunities.

Further information on the project can be found at <https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/news/rewild-london-fund-successful-applicants-announced>

Geo-morphological surveys of sections of Yeading Brook West have been completed to identify where manipulation of the channel and its banks might best take place and providing baseline data about pre-project conditions. Project planning is underway and activity along the stream through Yeading Walk is expected to commence in autumn.

A second award will enable regular sampling of the brook to provide information about pollutants and the aquatic environment prior to the *Yeading Brook Unbound* project.

One of the main purposes of this initiative is to recruit new volunteers for river monitoring and surveying in new sites and along the length of watercourses. Without regular sampling we will not know whether these schemes have actually caused improvement. This project will be led by Harrow Nature Conservation Forum (HNCF) and Harrow Heritage Trust.

As part of this project FoYW invite potential volunteers to help check water quality and conduct monthly Riverfly Monitoring sampling in the stream. The survey involves catching and counting particular invertebrates that live in the water. Full training and equipment will be provided and sampling usually takes place over or close to weekends. This activity is already taking place at Yeading Walk and our website, notice boards and social media provide Riverfly Monitoring sampling dates and times to enable interested volunteers and park visitors to come and see what aquatic life is found in the stream. This valuable activity is part of a nation-wide effort to monitor the health of our rivers and results are reported to experts at the Zoological Society of London (ZSL).

To register your interest in becoming a RiverFly Monitor and receive further information, please email foywgroup@gmail.com

Volunteers help plant new wildlife hedge

An area near the Northumberland Road entrance where some large trees recently had to be removed has provided the Friends of Yeading Walk with a perfect spot to plant a [wildlife hedge](#). The saplings for the 30 meter long hedge were distributed by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and are part of the Mayor of London's 2022/23 ['Trees for London' scheme](#) which aims to plant thousands of trees in the capital.

The trees we have planted are Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Cherry Plum, Crab Apple, Hornbeam, Hazel, Guelder Rose and Rowan.

They will fruit at different times of year which will give wildlife a food source all year round.

The saplings are still young but we look forward to strong, healthy growth over the next few years

Hedges are a better choice of boundary for wildlife than fences or walls as they support a wide variety of flora and fauna, provide important shelter and protection for wildlife. They offer food in the form of leaves, nectar rich flowers, berries, fruits and seeds and are good hunting grounds for predators seeking invertebrates.

Friends of Yeading Walk Website goes Live!

We are delighted to report that the Friends of Yeading Walk Group now have their very own website. You can view it now at <http://www.friendsofyeadingwalk.co.uk> Just press Ctrl + Click to follow the link or copy and paste it into your web browser.

Committee member Hilary worked on the website with the help of her daughter, Heather, who provided the much-needed technical support. Hilary commented: "I've never done anything like this before and certainly couldn't have done it without my daughter's help. However, I really enjoyed the process of learning a new skill in my retirement. I would also like to thank Pradeepa, one of our past volunteers who originally got the project off the ground"

The website is full of information about the work of the Friends group, how you can become involved and exciting news about current and future projects as well as some beautiful photographs of the park. There will be regular news updates and details of our events throughout the year.

We hope you find the content informative and interesting. If you have any comments or suggestions, then please contact us via the website contact form or by email.

The mystery of the disappearing goal posts!



Some of you may have noticed that the goal posts recently disappeared from the sports field. In fact, one person asked us if they had been stolen!

However, we are glad to report that nothing untoward had taken place, and that they had actually just been removed for well overdue renovations.

Committee members Eddie and Jiri spent many hours rubbing them down to remove the years of rust and then repainted them so that they can be used and enjoyed by our local football enthusiasts for years to come.

New Trees on the 'Shady Walk'

In Feb 2022, Storm Eunice laid waste to a number of mature trees along the 'Shady Walk', the path along the right bank of stream between Rayners Lane and the Stone Bridge. Funded by an award from the Crane Valley Partnership (CVP), the Friends selected three new native trees including a Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), a Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) and

a Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*). The trees have settled in well over the winter and will enhance the river /woodland environment, provide food and habitat for insects and play a part in absorbing damaging carbon from the atmosphere, a key climate change strategy. A planting scheme for this area focused on creating a naturalised environment for birds, butterflies and bats will be implemented in June/July.



If you would like to help fund the Friends evolving *Yeading Walk Strategy for Trees*, please see our banking details below.

Please Support FoYW at St Alban's Church Fair on 10th June

We shall have a plant stall and will also be selling good quality children's books to raise funds for the park. If you have spare plants or children's books to donate, please email the Friends on

www.foywgroup@gmail.com

Be a Winner with 'Harrow Wins'

This is a local Harrow lottery to benefit good causes in Harrow. Tickets cost only £1, of which 60p goes to your nominated beneficiary, which we hope will be Yeading Walk. The current prize is a luxurious European City Break and a chance to enter the £25,000 jackpot draw. Local lottery odds are so much more favourable than the National Lottery, so support your park, PLAY TODAY and GOOD LUCK! See details at

<https://www.harrowswins.co.uk/>

Looking After the Park

We welcome families and volunteers to help us with projects and ongoing activities at Yeading Walk. We continue to raise funds to support and improve the park, and for specific projects. Just an occasional hour of your time makes a huge difference.

Your contributions, suggestions and comments are welcome and greatly appreciated.

Email: FoYWGroup@gmail.com

BANK: National Westminster
ACCOUNT NAME: Friends of Yeading Walk
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 21131511
SORT CODE: 52-10-33

We encourage everyone who loves Yeading Walk to support the park. As a Friend of Yeading Walk, **your annual donation of £5 works out to 14p/day - a bargain in anyone's books.** Please continue to enable the Friends to care for your park by making your annual voluntary donation today.

If donating by electronic transfer of funds, please use your name or that of your organisation as a reference. Please send us an email when you donate, using email address foywgroup@gmail.com with 'TREASURER – Payment' in the subject line, so that we can thank you for becoming a Friend and keep you updated with all the latest news.

Sincerely,

Committee, Friends of Yeading Walk.