

Spring 2020

Welcome to the very first edition of Old Park Meadow's Newsletter!

We hope you are all keeping safe and well, we have really missed seeing many of you at our Coffee Mornings and Gardening Clubs. We also miss the lovely ladies from St Clare Hospice who run the monthly Bereavement Cafe we host here. It is a real lifeline to some of our community and we cannot wait to have them back with their tea, coffee and biscuits!

Despite the extraordinary circumstances we have all found ourselves in, nature continues to flourish here at Old Park Meadow. We have been making the most of the beautiful weather we have been blessed with to enhance the grounds.

At Water's Edge, we (well.... Alan) cleared the pond weed from the pond and then added some new additions, water lilies and water hawthorns, to the hornwort, frogbit, stratiotes aloisde etc already in place. We have seeded all around here again so it should look even better next year. We have had some unexpected visitors too.....



Many of you will know that we planted thousands more bluebells in our young Bluebell Wood last Autumn. We did have a show last month and hope they will be more established with even more coming up next year. Tulips, daffodils, grape hyacinths and snowdrops were added all around the grounds. Thank you so much to those who came along to help with this - we really do appreciate your help and hope you will be back this October/November with your green fingers and enthusiasm! The Wildflower Meadow has been seeded, this years' mix includes borage, poppies, cornflowers, forget-me-nots, foxgloves, oxlips and wild primrose amongst many others. We also sprinkled this on our graves, fingers crossed now for some more rain to help nature along.





Spring Corner had an impressive display of tulips and daffodils, if you come up to visit you will see that we haven't strimmed quite so much in this area yet as we are waiting for the daffs to die back a little more first.

We have noticed that the insects and bees are multiplying daily now - there is a real buzz about the place! The Michaelmas daisies are out and the Vetch and Meadow Fescue is coming through. In a few more weeks we will be knee-high in a variety of grasses and wildflowers.

We have blue-tits nesting just outside reception in the eaves but we are not quite quick enough to catch them on camera! We are working on our photography skills though as we would also like to get a few shots of the dragonflies. We do realise how lucky we are here to be surrounded by this fauna and flora; the skylarks are back, the swallows are soaring and we regularly see the buzzards overhead.

Sadly, our Art Exhibition could not go ahead this year but hopefully we can reschedule it for Spring 2021. It was such a fabulous fundraiser last year for the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance and we are very keen to get all our artists back here to show off their new pieces. At this point we are unsure whether we will be able to safely hold our Craft Fair in October but we will keep you posted.

We are very proud to have received The People's Award for the 'Best Natural Burial Ground of Britain for 2019/20' awarded by the National Death Centre. This award means a great deal to all of us here as it is about the people involved, not just how sustainable a site is etc. Thank you to everyone who submitted their feedback. We also collected the Silver award at the National Cemetery of the Year Awards, awarded by the ICCM. We really are truly grateful to all our families for supporting us.

Please 'like' our Facebook page for more information on our regular events and to keep up to date with our news as and when it happens. Old Park Lodge can be, and is, used for other activities. Once safe to do so we will welcome back our Monthly Surrender Relaxation Meditation sessions with Naseem <https://www.facebook.com/events/201765971010348/>, Ross will be back with his photography workshops <https://www.rosswillsherphotography.co.uk/> and The Bloom Project <https://bloomproject.co.uk/> will be offering more of their fantastic retreats and well-being days. If you are interested in these events, have a look at their pages now as some have been able to offer really helpful on-line sessions.

That's it for now from us - we hope you all keep well and are able to take a little time to enjoy this change of pace. We are here Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm and our grounds are always open if you fancy a wander.

Delyse, Leisa, Alison & Alan



Where to find us...

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