

Winter 2020/21

Welcome to the Winter edition of Old Park Meadow's Newsletter

We really hope that you are all keeping safe and well. We have had a very cold start to the New Year with snow in January and February which enabled us to take some beautiful photos of Old Park Meadow. The snow changed the landscape and looked so pristine. We can't wait until it warms up a little though and hopefully we can get back to some kind of normal. Following the latest announcement, it will be lovely to meet up with friends and families again soon and we look forward to having some fundraising events in due course.

We are so grateful to have received The People's Award for the East of England again this year by the Natural Death Centre and the Association of Natural Burial Grounds (ANBG). The People's Awards are all about the people involved and purely based on feedback received by the ANBG from families we have supported. The award highlights the level of service we provide, the personal approach we use and why the families or friends chose to have their loved ones buried or have their ashes interred with us. We would like to thank everyone who takes the time to provide this feedback.



We are now preparing the grounds for spring growth, strimming back some of the grasses whilst leaving several areas of cover for the insects and small mammals. We have had new irrigation installed in the flower beds creating a more efficient watering system and ensuring the plants are watered at root level leaving the foliage dry.

The buzzards are now a regular sight along with the red kites, they are quite mesmerising to watch. Our birdwatchers have seen both male and female stonechats, flocks of goldfinches, meadow pipits and wagtails. We often see the great spotted woodpeckers around and still have frequent visits from the heron to the pond. We would love to hear about any wildlife you spot on your visits to Old Park Meadow so please do let us know and send in any photos you have.

We still have honey for sale in our reception area. Garth, a local beekeeper has a few of his hives here with us and we have been blessed with the most delicious honey, both clear and set. If you would like to buy a jar when you are next here, pop to the door and we will grab one for you. It is £5 per jar, cash only as all monies are given straight to Garth.



Our voluntary gardening club runs every Wednesday morning 9am—12noon. Anyone is welcome to come along to this whether you have a loved one here with us or not. It is a great way to spend a couple of hours or so outdoors and a chance to chat with others at the same time. We have a small team of volunteers, some come every week, others as and when they can and for as long or as little as they like. If you would like to join us you can call in advance or just turn up on the day, we are always happy to see new faces.



We are looking forward to holding social events again this year to support our charities; Farleigh Hospice, St Clare Hospice, Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and The Essex Wildlife Trust. We really missed these last year and we know the charities have missed out hugely with much of the usual fundraising cancelled. As soon as we can safely get together we will do so, please keep an eye on our Facebook page!

During December our families came along to hang their decorated stars on our Christmas tree. It was lovely to see so many of you, even though it was a little limited due to the restrictions in place.



Just a gentle reminder that dogs on a lead are very welcome here at Old Park Meadow however as we are creating a nature reserve it is important to the wildlife that dogs do not roam through the long grass. We have meadow pipits, skylarks, other birds and small mammals nesting here. Please keep your dog on a lead, collect their mess and take it with you so that others can enjoy the grounds.

The best way to keep up to date with our news and regular events is to 'like' our Facebook page. We are here Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm if you need anything. Please take care, stay safe and we very much hope to see you for all for a coffee and cake soon!

Delyse, Leisa, Alison & Phil



Where to find us...

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