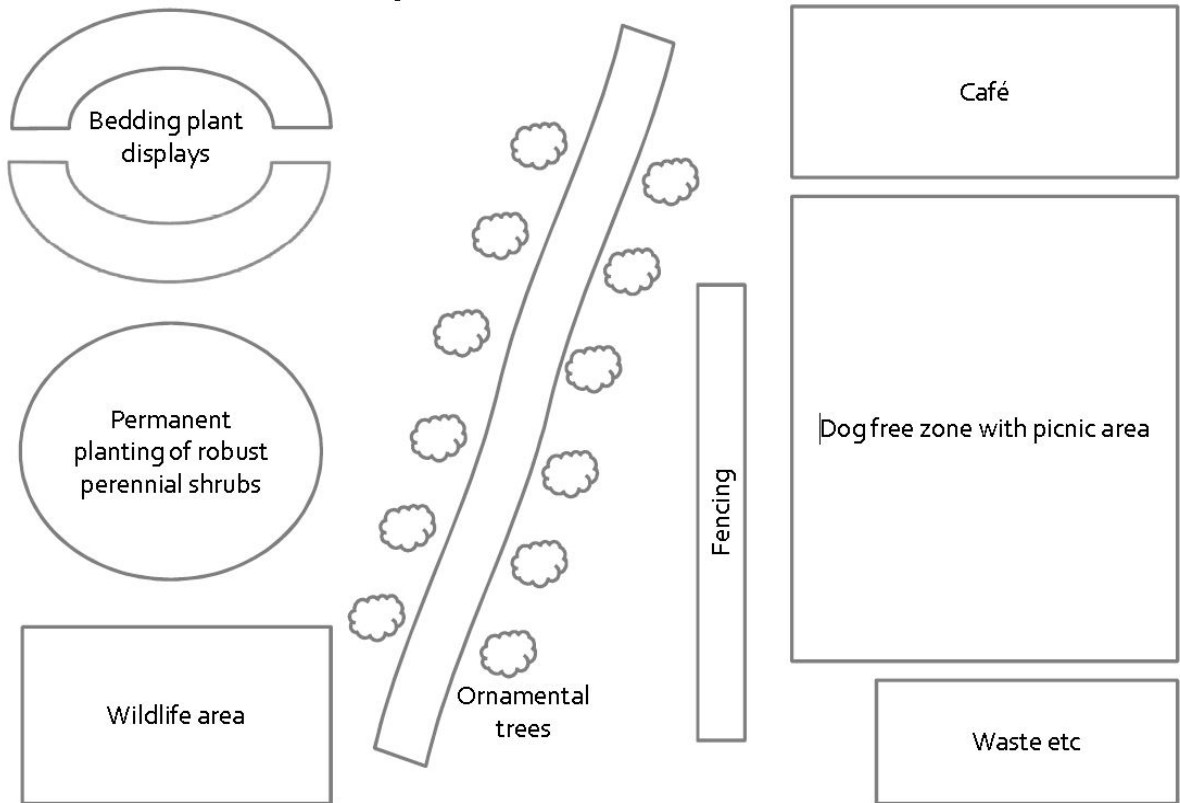
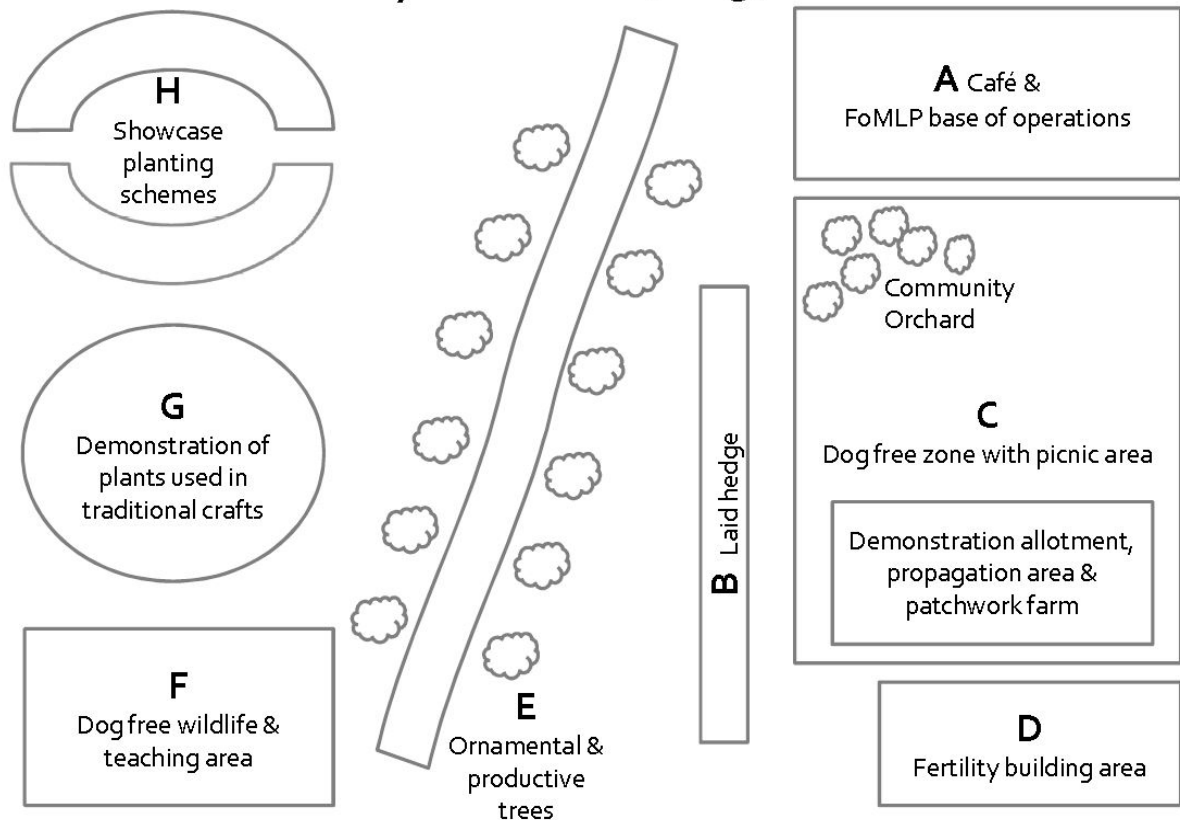


## My Local Park [2012]



## My Local Park [2015]



## A tour round My Local Park in Haringey

It's a sunny Sunday in June 2015, and I'm going to take you for a stroll around My Local Park, pointing out some of my favourite features. Take care not to tread on a picnicker – they're all over the place, enjoying the annual Big Lunch<sup>1</sup> celebration.

A lot's changed here in the last couple of years. Everything was inspired by existing initiatives in other parks, but the combined result is impressive, and we're proud to have become a thriving community hub for a wide range of user groups in addition to the loyal dog walkers and football kickers. Nothing I'll show you has cost more time or money than what went before, but we did have to take a hard look at some traditional practices (never easy to challenge) and apply a bit of joined up thinking to issues that had previously been compartmentalised, particularly around environmental sustainability.

In the past it didn't seem to have occurred to a lot of people to consider the role our parks could play in confronting the urgent problems of climate change, peak oil, food security and local economic decline. The subject was dismissed as soon as broached – maybe it raised 2<sup>nd</sup> World War spectres of bowling greens dug up to grow potatoes! Anyway, here we see our park as an amazing resource for tackling all those issues without in any way compromising its ornamental and amenity value.

We'll follow the map. It isn't to scale, obviously, but it shows the park's main features.

### Map ref A

Let's start at the café. It's been transformed since the new owners took over two years ago. The café was always popular with parents and dog-walkers, but it served the usual 'clone-food' to be found anywhere in the UK at any time of year.

The owners lived in another part of London and had no emotional investment in our local area, Their stock was sourced at a central wholesaler and their profits spent elsewhere. But a lot of local money flows into the café, and if they'd employed local people and used local suppliers it would have stayed circulating in the local economy.

Fortunately, they decided it was time to move on, which gave us an opportunity to influence the future management. The café is at the heart of the park - is indeed the face of it to many people - so we knew it had to express our values and be fully integrated into park life.

During the tendering process the council and the Friends took advice from London Food Link's 'Ethical Eats' network<sup>2</sup>. Recognising that it makes no sense to protect the ecosystem *within* our park without reference to that outside, we specified that the new management must be prepared to commit to a high standard of environmental responsibility, and to transparently monitor their supply chain and waste stream.

We selected the winning candidates for their passionate commitment to ethical and sustainable food, and with the understanding that collaboration with the FoMLP<sup>3</sup> would be an integral part of their role. All park staff and FoMLP members now get discounts in the café<sup>4</sup>, and its walls are dedicated to our maps and information displays about the park, its history and upcoming activities.

Importantly, we have a friendly agreement to use the space for activities out of cafe hours, as it would be crazy for such a great community building to be sitting empty. Designated members of the FoMLP are key holders and, if no café staff are present, take responsibility for shutting up afterwards and making sure everything is safe and tidy. The café can lock the shutters of the inner kitchen area containing the till and expensive equipment, thus keeping their insurance company happy. Of course this is rarely an issue as most of the café staff live

1 [TheBigLunch.com](http://TheBigLunch.com)

2 [SustainWeb.org/EthicalEats](http://SustainWeb.org/EthicalEats)

3 Friends of My Local Park group

4 Which has led to an impressive rise in FoMLP membership!

locally, are intimately involved with the life of the park, and enjoy attending our discussions. The nice thing about having our meetings in the café is that they can be open to all members who choose to drop in, not just to the committee. This sometimes means things take a little longer for us - but it's a small price to pay for the sense of ownership and belonging that results for park users.

We had a stroke of luck in that some members of our café team had previously worked at the Castle Climbing centre in Green Lanes, which successfully focuses on using its own garden produce. So it was easy for them to design a menu specialising in locally grown food and locally picked herbal teas.

Our first participation in 'Urban Food Week'<sup>5</sup>, from 16th-21st September 2013 was a great success. It attracted people who didn't even know the park was here and helped to compensate for Haringey's pathetic rating in the 2012 'Good Food for London' report<sup>6</sup>. During the tendering process, the Council (and a few of the Friends) had thought our criteria somewhat eccentric, but they were now pleased to get a lot of kudos for being seen as sustainable food pioneers!

Refreshed after your fresh mint tea? Let's move on.

### **Map ref B**

The fence around the dog-free zone had been pretty dog-eared for a long time, so a few years ago we planted the length of it with free hedging plants (the Woodland Trust gives them away every year<sup>7</sup>). So by the time the fence started to collapse, the new hedge was growing robustly. We were inspired by the laid hedge in Waterlow Park, undertaken six years ago by a local amateur enthusiast, and asked him to come and do ours. Park users have enjoyed the demonstration of hedge-laying techniques and we're looking forward to the flowers and fruit. As are local schools, equipped with activity sheets and other teaching resources from the Tree Council's Hedgerow Harvest project<sup>8</sup>.

It feels much more satisfying to be using natural materials and traditional crafts in the park, rather than importing timber. And of course the whole process hasn't cost a penny. It's taken longer and a bit more forethought, but we like it like that. We're gradually renewing all the boundaries in the park in this way.

### **Map ref C**

This large dog-free area with picnic benches used to be under-used (understandably, as so many of the park users were dog walkers!) but it's now busy with a lot of new activities:

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5 [SustainWeb.org/EthicalEats/Urban\\_Food\\_Week](http://SustainWeb.org/EthicalEats/Urban_Food_Week)

6 [SustainWeb.org/Publications](http://SustainWeb.org/Publications)

7 [WoodlandTrust.org.uk/en/MoreTreesMoreGood](http://WoodlandTrust.org.uk/en/MoreTreesMoreGood)

8 [HedgerowHarvest.org.uk](http://HedgerowHarvest.org.uk)

## **The Community Orchard**

It was planted in the winter of 2013 under the guidance of the London Orchard Project<sup>9</sup>. The idea was first mooted in 2009 but never took off, mainly because of worries about vandalism. However, by 2012 the sceptics had been converted to enthusiasts by the great success of the six community orchards in Hackney parks and the mini orchards planted by the London Orchard Project all round London.

We put in young trees, and the entire cost was only around £100. As Haringey is awash with apples in September, we chose late fruiting varieties, particularly those where the fruit stays hanging on the tree. This way less of it will fall and be squashed before it's picked. We're using techniques like festooning to keep the trees low and the fruit reachable. Although we're yet to pick a fruit, lots of activity already centres around the orchard, with informal workshops discussing pruning, training and grafting techniques. Our volunteers learned at ELL<sup>10</sup> and are enthusiastic to pass their knowledge on.

In 2014 we decided that we wouldn't let the immaturity of our trees get in the way of a good party so we held an Apple Day celebration<sup>11</sup>. It was effortless to organise - we just had to call in the help of the Crouch End Apple Day crew, who've been running one every year since 2009. Members of the local 'Abundance' group<sup>12</sup> brought lots of fruit and an apple press, everyone drank fresh juice and ate homemade apple pie, and some people took the 'longest-peel' competition extremely seriously!

Making sure we wring every bit of entertainment we can out of this orchard, the Friends held a wassailing celebration this year. Once again the Crouch Enders were there to show us how it's done. We drank something mulled and spicy and it definitely helped brighten up a bleak February.

## **The Demonstration Allotment**

When the Royal Parks trialed a demonstration allotment in St James Park, its success led them to set up projects in other parks. Demonstration allotments allow the public to participate in workshops to learn about food growing and harvesting. In June 2013 one of our committee members attended a celebration at the Regent's Park Allotment Garden and came back inspired to set one up locally, albeit on a smaller scale. So we signed up to Capital Growth<sup>13</sup>, the London food growing network and TCV<sup>14</sup> helped us to build some accessible raised beds, exactly like the ones they built for the community Kitchen Garden in Waterlow Park.

We knew it would be easy to source free seeds, tools and plants, because they're abundant once you're tapped into gardening networks (like GrowingInHaringey.org.uk) and our own park could provide abundant growing media. Our only concern was whether we could find enough gardeners to run the project. In the end we had the opposite problem... Thanks to Garden Organic's Master Gardener programme<sup>15</sup>, and a backlog of frustrated people stuck on allotment waiting lists, we found we had more than enough volunteers. In fact the main issue initially was resolving disagreements between passionate advocates of different horticultural styles! We solved it by giving priority to leaders prepared to commit to a regular course of sessions throughout the year. 'Growing in Haringey' ran a seed saving workshop for us, and we get all our own seeds for free from their annual February seedswap.

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9 [TheLondonOrchardProject.org](http://TheLondonOrchardProject.org)

10 [EdibleLandscapesLondon.org.uk](http://EdibleLandscapesLondon.org.uk) based in Finsbury Park

11 [England-in-Particular.info/cg/AppleDay](http://England-in-Particular.info/cg/AppleDay)

12 [AbundanceNetwork.org.uk](http://AbundanceNetwork.org.uk) - Volunteer pickers of surplus fruit

13 [CapitalGrowth.org](http://CapitalGrowth.org)

14 The Conservation Volunteers [TCV.org.uk](http://TCV.org.uk)

15 [MasterGardeners.org.uk](http://MasterGardeners.org.uk)

Of course the demonstration allotment area isn't just used for food growing. We run workshops on different methods of propagation, which gives us free plants too. Again, our volunteers attended, then replicated, classes at ELL. Once we found how easy it was to take hardwood cuttings, we grew too many fruit bushes to fit in the park! But, following the example of Queen's Wood Organic Garden, we hold plant sales and use them to raise cash for the very little equipment we actually need to buy.

Canes, plant supports, twine, compost and leaf mould are of course all sourced from the park itself – you'll see how when we get to sections D and G.

### **The Picnic area**

The picnic benches were little used. Now they serve a double purpose as seating for summer teaching sessions. For the moment we can take over a corner of the café in rainy weather, but to keep dry in the future, we're going to put up an awning which will double as a rainwater harvester. We'll be using the design of the brilliant example built in Finsbury Park<sup>16</sup>.

### **The Patchwork farm**

As you know, for the last two decades Growing Communities of Hackney<sup>17</sup> has led the way in getting affordable sustainable food into the urban environment. When a local Haringey group won a place on their Start-up Programme, we jumped at the chance to provide a piece of their 'patchwork farm'<sup>18</sup>. We're proud to be helping supply fresh food to our neighbourhood, and indeed to our own café.

### **Map ref D**

Now we come to **The Fertility building area**.

This used to be a desultory holding area for spare compost, prunings and other waste. We decided to raise its status and celebrate it as an educational resource. We hold compost giveaways which attract loads of people to the park (and raise the income of the café accordingly). We have a huge leaf repository and use the leaf mould to make our own seed compost in the demonstration allotment.

We also have an excellent display about composting and recycling, courtesy of the council.

The park's rigorous mulching regime (which I'll tell you about later) means we get through a lot of wood chip. The parks staff have good relationships with local tree surgeons who keep the pile topped up. Locals are welcome to come and help themselves too.

### **Map ref E**

Let's wander round and look at the park trees. The concept of 'Edible Landscapes' has taken off in recent years and we're playing our part by ensuring that all new plantings are chosen for productivity as well as ornament. But this doesn't mean we've been turning the park into an orchard! We're just continuing a long tradition of park trees that happen to be fruitful too. The sweet chestnuts in Hyde Park and the ginkgo nuts of New York's Central Park are famous examples of bounty gathered by crowds each year without damaging the parks or detracting from their ornamental value.

There's no visible change to the landscape, and the trees still come from Barchams<sup>19</sup> like all Haringey trees, we just cross-referenced their catalogue with information from the Agroforestry Research Trust<sup>20</sup> to pick the most interesting species.

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16 Read about it here: [www.EdibleLandscapesLondon.org.uk/TheChallengeII](http://www.EdibleLandscapesLondon.org.uk/TheChallengeII)

17 [GrowingCommunities.org](http://GrowingCommunities.org)

18 Explanation here: [www.GrowingCommunities.org/Food-Growing/Patchwork-Farm](http://www.GrowingCommunities.org/Food-Growing/Patchwork-Farm)

19 [Barcham.co.uk/Trade-Sales](http://Barcham.co.uk/Trade-Sales)

20 [Agroforestry.co.uk](http://Agroforestry.co.uk)

Our main criterion for choice we call the *Splatter Factor*. We don't want any fruit large or delicate enough to be smashed when it hits the ground, which rules out most orchard or 'improved' fruit. But it includes a wonderful assortment, from Arbutus to Ziziphus, that are underappreciated or unknown in modern-day London.

The traditionalists demurred at the idea of strange new species, but we pointed out that we were merely restoring familiar varieties to the landscape. Medlars, quinces, mulberries, walnuts, damsons, bullaces, and cornel cherries were commonly grown here more than a thousand years ago<sup>21</sup>. And olives, almonds and figs were familiar to Shakespeare long before Elizabeth David introduced us to Mediterranean cuisine. After harvesting a couple of kilos of ripe olives from a Muswell Hill front garden in 2012 we decided to plant a LOT of olive trees! So although our serious underlying purpose is increasing food security and local resilience, a pleasant side effect is that the parkscape has become a living textbook of the fruits of our ancestors. For example our leaflet explains that when Shakespeare's 'roasted crabs hiss in the bowl' he's talking about apples, not crustaceans.

It turns out we've really lost track of our cultural heritage when it comes to fruit. It's just considered an ornamental now, but '*grown as an orchard tree throughout the Middle Ages, cornelian cherries were still widely cultivated for their fruits in the seventeenth century.*' And their stones, '*mingled with the remains of other food plants, have been excavated from a neolithic site in northern Greece*<sup>22</sup>'. That's quite a pedigree.

We're particularly proud of our exotic and tasty hawthorn collection. By grafting, amongst others, selections from Alexandra Park, Finsbury Park and St Ann's hospital grounds onto an established native hawthorn hedge, we've developed the largest London collection of *Crataegus* varieties outside Kew Gardens. The Tree Council<sup>23</sup> helped us get a grant for an interpretation board explaining how these are prized fruit harvested and cultivated around the world. Every Autumn this hedge is the highlight of our 'Hips & Haws' tour of the park, in which we point out all the edible and delicious autumn fruits, and show how to distinguish them from the inedible ones.

We're also busy propagating the spectacular collection of fruiting True Service Trees in St Ann's Hospital Grounds.

And are we still planting oaks? Well of course! As you'll read in our leaflet, the acorn is probably the most nutritious and undervalued food resource around us.<sup>24</sup>

In the past some of us had tried to promote this concept of an 'Edible Park'. But the idea, although it met with some enthusiasm, never really percolated thru the parks department. Edible Landscapes London [ELL], mentioned previously, is a social enterprise that was set up in 2010, aimed at helping growing spaces in London integrate sustainability, productivity and ornament. It showcases a style of horticulture called 'Forest Gardening', which confusingly has nothing to do with forests, but is concerned with creating attractive and productive planting schemes that require few inputs and little maintenance. They achieve this by rejecting 'improved' modern varieties and using robust, usually perennial, plants. Although ELL was in our own borough and cheap training and free plants, up til 2013 Haringey parks staff and Friends groups showed (perhaps understandably) little interest in attending in their free time. However, after receiving a National Lottery grant (part of the Manor House PACT project<sup>25</sup>) ELL started running the first ever accredited course in Forest Gardening, and indeed are enrolling for the 2015 intake as I write. The council and parks staff themselves

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21 'Taste' by Kate Colquhoun

22 MetMuseum.org - The Metropolitan Museum of Art

23 TreeCouncil.org.uk

24 UrbanHarvest.wikispaces.com/Acorns

25 ManorHousePact.org.uk

started taking the subject more seriously when it came with the respectability of a horticultural qualification.

Incidentally, the 2013 spreadsheet we created showing the particularly interesting subset of Barcham's catalogue is still available for anyone to use.

### **Tree care**

One of our projects over the last few years has been to monitor and improve tree survival rates. As the Tree Trust for Haringey<sup>26</sup> will (wearily) tell you it's easy to get money, enthusiasm and column inches for tree planting, but not for follow-up care.

A call to the Tree Trust's large mailing list unearthed some hitherto unknown local tree enthusiasts, who were delighted to take the lead on this.

We looked at the main causes of tree failure and took measures to tackle them, guided by the advice of the Tree Council<sup>27</sup>. We're also particularly grateful for the extensive experience and documentation of the 'Tree Musketeers' of Hackney. We distribute their printable tree care guide<sup>28</sup> to all new staff and volunteers.

We identified two main issues: physical damage and physiological – particularly water stress.

The latter has been successfully dealt with by mulching. We've found that a young tree, planted in early autumn and kept permanently very well mulched will rarely if ever need extra watering to get established. We mulch to a *minimum* radius of 1 metre and keep it between 5 and 10cm deep, always starting with a light-blocking layer of cardboard or other biodegradable material. We ignore warnings about nitrogen loss from using fresh woodchip: It's not in direct contact with the soil, and anyway the local dogs helpfully ensure that there is plenty of nitrogen around trees.

The effort required to keep the mulch topped up is trivial compared to the alternative, which would be watering in dry spells and/or replacing lost trees. On regular workdays we find that volunteers particularly enjoy mulching trees. It's an easy way to get fresh air, exercise, and the satisfaction of being useful without having to get involved with too much expertise or sharp implements. And of course the kids love barrowing the wood chip around.

Often seen as an afterthought in other parks, and intermittently maintained, this mulching is the most important part of our tree-care regime. It gives the roots a stable ambient temperature and moisture level as well as protecting from grass competition. Inspired by good practise observed at Kew Gardens and in Bruce Castle Park, we keep a large permanent mulched area around established trees too, to protect the roots from compaction.

Next we looked at the problem of physical damage to trees, both deliberate and accidental. The three main culprits were dogs, people and grass-cutting machinery. We can't afford to put heavy-duty tree guards around every tree, and there's not a lot we can do about deliberate vandalism so, pragmatically, we concentrated on the others.

Although the dogs get all the attention, at least as much tree damage is done by grass-cutting machinery<sup>29</sup>. But thanks to our rigorous mulching regime, no strimmer or mower now needs to get closer than a metre to the trunk. So that issue was easily resolved!

Dog damage is a thorny problem, so we looked for a thorny solution. We are favouring spiny cultivars – some of the exotic hawthorns in particular are spectacularly spiky. Our rationale is that if dogs attack, we want the trees to be able to defend themselves. We deliberately leave suckers around the base of the trunk, which makes it harder to find clean strips of bark for dogs to get their teeth into.

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26 TTFH.org.uk

27 Section 5 of The Tree Warden Handbook: *Managing and caring for trees*

28 SustainableHackney.org.uk/TM/Resources

29 See the Tree Musketeers' gruesome photo gallery

## Map ref F

### The Dog-free wildlife & teaching area

Step into our little wild zone. We had already been learning to respect the needs of non-human and non-canine park users, and in some areas we'd relaxed the mowing regime and created habitat piles. Then a couple of years ago, a guest speaker from the London Wildlife Trust inspired us to give the flora and fauna this more substantial refuge. Our enthusiastic hedge-layers created a boundary and we put up an explanatory sign politely asking people to respect it.

After it had benefitted from a few months' benign neglect, we realised what a great teaching resource we had. It's the perfect place for nature walks focussed on birds, insects, wildflowers, foraging or herbal medicine, all of which are very popular.

But (you ask) aren't all these activities a headache to administer?

Well not any more. Since the Friends of Parks Forum set up its 'Walk & Talk' webpage, we arrange an activity almost every month, because it's just so easy to organise. The idea was born during a regular Friends of Parks meeting, when we observed that a lot of groups were duplicating effort arranging visits from experts on similar topics. So we pooled our information and ended up with a respectably large list of enthusiasts willing to travel to different parts of the borough and lead workshops or walks on foraging, weaving with various materials, bird spotting, bats, wild flowers, tree ID, herbal medicine, entomology, coppicing etc. As is the nature of such things, the list keeps growing as people hear about it and offer their area of interest. In this park we try to schedule activities for the second Saturday of the month, so all locals know there'll be something interesting going on, and can keep that day free in their diary.

The complementary page on the Friends of Parks website is a simple central shared calendar of park activities that all Friends' groups can update. Accessible from individual Friends' websites and from the council website too, anyone can see at a glance all upcoming events in any Haringey Park. We've been impressed and delighted at what a comprehensive programme we have between us – especially when you consider how many groups are still web-shy! What I particularly like about it is that people with a particular interest can easily pursue it through every park in the borough. Previously this would have taken an unspeakable amount of tedious research.

## Map ref G

We call these the '**Utility Beds**'.

Like all parks, we had beds scattered around the park planted with typical combinations of robust perennials that can withstand neglect and rough treatment. They needed little maintenance, just a bit of tidying and pruning once or twice a year.

We realised that it would be easy to convert this type of bed to a showcase of interesting and useful plants. *Extremely* easy, as many would be exactly the same plants! We ditched the viburnum but retained the bamboo, New Zealand flax, hazel, dogwood and willows. One bed in particular was already full of colourful dogwoods. So we removed a couple of other random shrubs, and shared the cost of £50 worth of cuttings from TheWillowBank.com with the Meadow Orchard Project N8 (who started establishing their weavers' bed in 2011). Now we have a coppice stand of stems of varied colours and thicknesses – a weavers paradise. The only real change in management is that instead of being discarded, the winter prunings are harvested. We've planted some particularly vigorous varieties specifically for living willow structures, which are very popular in local schools and other Haringey parks. Otherwise they usually buy material in from other parts of the country, which seems a bit unnecessary.



Similarly, we added some sweet chestnut to a bed which already contained a lot of hazels, and these are coppiced by a local craftsman who makes hurdles and plant supports to sell locally, and gives them free to the park as payment in kind and free publicity.

When we surveyed park users to see what kind of plants and plant-related activities they were keen on, we discovered a great interest in natural dyeing. Until recently no one felt ready to take this further, but then a student at the Centre for Sustainable Fashion came forwards and offered to create a dye bed as part of her MA Fashion and the Environment project, similar to those set up in at the college's site in Mare Street. So we've set aside a small area, mulched it in preparation for planting (rather than stripping the turf which is just *wrong, wrong, wrong*) and look forward to the results. And of course the other beds that you can see cost no effort at all: All it took to transform a large bed of New Zealand flax, as seen all over the borough, into a productive and educational resource was a sign! After all, this versatile plant underpinned the whole Maori civilisation. The café display its baked goods in baskets woven from it and we use it around the park and café wherever twine or another fastening is needed.

Similarly for the large clump of bamboo. We put up a sign explaining what a fascinating structural material it is, and we use the canes in the demonstration allotment. Also, I think a local sustainable food group is showing interest in eating the shoots...

The London Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers<sup>30</sup> was delighted to hear about these initiatives, wrote a piece about us, and people started to get in touch offering demonstrations, talks and workshops. The great thing about people with a passion is that they love to share it. So in all, mainly by the addition of some explanatory signage, we have transformed some seedy 'supermarket car park' planting schemes into small-scale rivals to anything that Kew or the Eden project can offer.

## Map ref H

Until recently we also had displays of high maintenance bedding plants dotted about the park. Opinion was divided but the majority view of the FoMLP was that they represented everything bad about our horticultural heritage, and they had to go. Formal floral displays, like 'perfect' lawns, evolved as a display of wealth and a demonstration of our power to dominate nature. They have no place in our future vision for MLP. You can tell which side of the argument I was on.

We agreed to replace them with ornamental displays that are more respectful to plants. After all, many typical bedding plants that are treated as disposable decorations - imported, then rudely discarded after flowering - are actually perennials which could be happily established and enjoyed for years.

The first 'Peace Bed' (thus named because designed to conciliate the bedding scheme aficionados) was planted up with primroses and violets, rather than flowers highly bred to be gaudily attractive to the human eye at the expense of their utility to insects. Interplanted with lots of bulbs, they provide a display of flowers staggered throughout the year. In their first year they drooped in the heat of summer, but now they're established they'll cope with more extreme conditions, and have satisfactorily multiplied until no weeds can find a foothold. We remove excess plants and use them to stock the rest of the park.

Each former bedding display has become a different showcase designed to inspire the public with demonstrations of drought-resistant, shade-tolerant, wildlife-friendly and even ornamental edible planting schemes.

## Summary

So we've increased environmental sustainability, educational value, productivity and economic viability while retaining amenity value. And we're very pleased with ourselves! Most

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30 [LondonGuildOfWeavers.org.uk](http://LondonGuildOfWeavers.org.uk)

has been achieved by recognising and harnessing resources that were already available in the local community.

### **Future Plans**

The café serves a range of MLP herbal teas, with its own logo designed by a café customer. These infusions are so easy to produce, and the commercial herbal teas are so ridiculously overpriced, that the café sells our homemade blends for half the price.

In fact we have such an abundance of products that we're seriously considering setting up a MLP gift shop!

Everything would be made out of produce from the park or the local area. For example, pea sticks and bean poles from our coppice and bamboo, hazel and willow plants supports, plants we've propagated, jams and dried fruit , herb teas. We know there are lots of local craftspeople, both professional and amateur, who are delighted to have a chance to exhibit their wares, and we also know that there's a market for locally made sustainable goods. The issue is going to be whether the 'shop' can support itself, either by volunteers being enthusiastic enough to keep it running, or more practically by earning enough income to pay for a dedicated organiser.

You'll have to watch this space.