

# FRIENDS OF BECKETT PARK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

## MARCH 2025

**COUNCIL FINANCES** The Council's resources are very stretched. In Beckett Park they cut the grass, empty litter bins, fell dangerous trees, and maintain the playground. For almost everything else – tree and bulb planting, bench provision, woodland management, path clearance, graffiti removal, litter picking, etc. – the Friends volunteer to do the work, raising funds as required.

**TENNIS COURTS** We are delighted that our tennis courts have been refurbished by the Lawn Tennis Association. There is an online booking system, and the courts are well-used.



**PONDS** We've completed the pond in the copse north of the playground. We constructed a 'dead hedge' and fence to limit access, then dug out the pond which we hope will attract amphibians and other wildlife. This year we are starting to develop a pond/wetland area on the western edge of the western copse – we have already constructed a 'dead hedge'.



*Completed 'playground' pond*



*Southern approach to pond*





*Site of proposed pond in western copse*

**TREE PLANTING** We continue to replace mature trees lost to disease and old age. In the last year we've planted several more ornamental trees along the main path, one of which was sponsored as a memorial by a local family.



**NEW WOODLAND** The new woodland planted two winters ago near Queenswood Road is now beginning to get established.



**ORCHARD** We've added more apple trees to our new orchard in the south-east corner of the meadow. There are now sixteen. When the trees are established apples will be free to pick.



**WATER RUNOFF AND DRAINAGE** Water from springs and saturated ground continues to flow across the main path and onto Queenswood Road, creating a hazard in frosty weather (see Google Earth image). Last year we asked the Council to look into solutions, but we have heard nothing further. Our proposed new pond may reduce this problem slightly.



**SPONSORED TREES AND BENCHES** This year we installed one sponsored memorial bench and planted one sponsored memorial tree.





**VANDALISM AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR** We've been fortunate not to experience serious vandalism. However In the last couple of years fires have been lit almost weekly, usually fuelled by books stolen from the local Little Free Library, and pieces of the playground safety surface are frequently ripped up. Recently several timber tree guards have been destroyed, though fortunately the trees have been largely undamaged. We also experience speeding electric bikes and occasional quad bikes.

**SATURDAY VOLUNTEERS** Our small band of volunteers meet most Saturday mornings to construct benches, plant trees, and generally keep the park in good order. We need more volunteers, as we have only four or five regulars, most of whom are getting old! We love working in our beautiful park, and it's rewarding to see the park improve year by year. If you'd like to join the Saturday task mailing list please let us know – there's no obligation to come every week.

