

Parklife



The Friends of Kennington Park Newsletter • **Working together to make the park better**

Issue 19 • Summer 2025



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Where does your money go?

On the Friends of Kennington Park team, we are all volunteers. Every membership and every donation helps us to keep pushing for a better park, and to protect this precious space. We want you to know what we do with your subscriptions and donations – so you can see where the money goes

The Friends of Kennington Park is a registered charity, run by a small planning team which reports to a trustee board. All the members of the planning team and all the trustees are unpaid volunteers, working hard to make Kennington Park better.

We work with Lambeth Council to improve the park. We fundraise – for improvements and free events in the park. We organise those events, and manage volunteer gardening. We write newsletters, and post on social media to keep you in touch.

Auditors check our accounts and the Charity Commission approves them – you can see the numbers on our website. But numbers don't tell the whole story ...

We want you to see how we manage to do all the things we do. So here's the low-down on our income, and how we spend it ...

Where does the money come from?

Members pay £6 a year (or just £10 for a whole household). Many members generously add a donation to their fee. We rely on that kindness – to operate without increasing our membership fees. We're especially grateful to

one supporter whose very generous donation, over many years, pays for an expert to lead our volunteer gardening sessions, ensuring the survival of our beautiful plants!

Who manages the park?

A better park costs money – better signs, more bins and benches, new plants and trees.

Of course, most of the money for the park is spent directly by Lambeth Council, from their budget. The Friends work closely with the Council, trying to persuade them to invest more in the park: Lambeth paid for our wonderful new drinking water fountains, and renovated the play-

ground in 2023 – both hugely popular. Sadly, the skatebowl renovation has still not begun. The Youth Activity Zone and new Nature Trail both need money to make them happen. And still no decent toilets!

Additional funding for the park comes from the Council via two schemes, known as PIL (Parks Investment Levy): fees companies pay the Council to use the park for their own events – PIL money paid for the fabulous History Hut, and pays for beautiful new ... *continued on p.2*



Come to our annual get-together!

**Durning Library
Tuesday, Sept 23
7.00pm**

... continued from p.1

benches and bigger bins. And CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy): money paid to the Council by developers of new buildings in the area – CIL money part-funded the new playground.

Fundraising by the Friends

For some park projects, like replanting the flower beds, and cleaning up the war memorial, FoKP organises dedicated fundraising campaigns.

Larger projects require more complex strategies. When the sad old Flower Garden needed a makeover, we initiated a bid, and invested hundreds of hours of volunteer time to win a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Lambeth matched the funds we raised and commissioned the work. The new Flower Garden reopened in 2014, on time and on budget.

Our volunteers find funding from other organisations too. For example, in 2021, money from

Berkeley (developers of Oval Village) kickstarted our first super summer Festival. Big thanks to Southwark Council for helping to fund this year's Festival. Also to Winkworth for their continued support, and the Duchy of Cornwall and other generous local sponsors. And last year, to increase biodiversity in the park, we procured a grant from the CPRE (The Countryside Charity), and volunteers planted 100m of native hedging in the orchard and on the park extension.

So where does the FoKP money go?

Auditing our accounts each year costs about £550. And we pay another £650 for **insurance**, like public liability.

Other costs, like **venue hire** (for our AGM and planning meetings), and buying new and replacement **gardening** and **event equipment**, add up to around £400 per year.

Staying in touch with members and the community is really important. Annual costs include:

- **Website:** £450;
- **Welcome packs**, sent to new members: £100;
- **Parklife** - print & distribution: £550 (supported by Winkworth, who pay for the printing);
- **Printing of event posters** & other park info: £300.

Sometimes the Friends pay for new features for the park from our own funds – like our **Chartist Audio Trail**.

And of course, we run fantastic **free events**: the **Easter Egg Hunt**, **Dog Show**, and especially the **Kennington Park Festival** – a massive hit with local people, and now in its 5th year! These events, and particularly the Festival, are where most of our money goes each year.

Running FoKP and putting on all the events costs well over £14,000 each year. Run jointly with our partner Melanin Health & Wellness,

the Festival – your favourite event of the year! – requires hundreds of hours of volunteer time.

Members matter

Our basic running costs, not including events, are close to £3,000 each year. We currently have 120 magnificent members. **But we need lots more!** Please join us! Already a member? Then please encourage your friends and neighbours to join too – together, we can do great things!

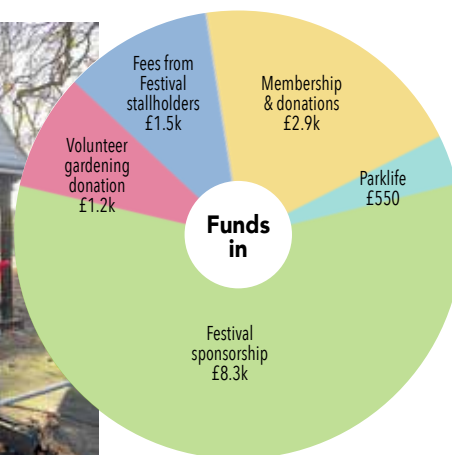
They'll get a membership pack with information about the park. And regular e-bulletins about activities and events coming up. They can get actively involved, volunteer at our gardening sessions, or design and run exciting events. We join in things like Lambeth Heritage Festival, RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, and National Dawn Chorus Day.

And don't forget – we run not one but two fantastic Bat Hunts each year!

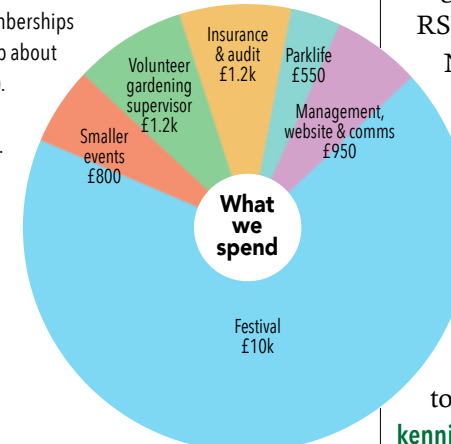
Can you help us? Got an idea about how we can get more members? Or attract more sponsors? Fancy organising an event for us? Get in touch! Email us at friends@kenningtonpark.org



Our **campaigns** to raise funds to clean up the **war memorial** (right), and to revitalise the **tired old rosebeds** (below) were a big **success**.



In a **typical year**, memberships and donations make up about 20% of our funds (left). Our **main income** is from Festival sponsors. And why does the Festival **cost so much** (right)? Because all those **fantastic performers and workshop leaders** need to be paid!



PIL fees paid to Lambeth from commercial events in the park – like the Burberry fashion show (left) – and **CIL money** from local building developments, fund projects like the **History Hut** (above). And new infrastructure for the park, like fab new **benches** (far left), noticeboards and bigger bins. With councils under big **financial pressure**, that's a huge help.



What about our priorities?

Tell us what you think our priorities should be for the next 2-3 years. Should we spend more on equipment and facilities than on events like the Festival and Dog Show?

Or do you want to see more events, like music evenings, or family activities? What about our info boards and trails? Should we add more, like a Nature Trail? We'd love to hear from you. Email us at friends@kenningtonpark.org

Our very popular monthly **volunteer gardening sessions** (left) are generously paid for by an anonymous **benefactor**. But we pay for new and replacement tools from **our own funds**.

Running **events** in the park (above) costs us about **£12k a year**, even with great partners like **Melanin H&W**, and the **Hound Hut**. We want to keep events **free**, so **everyone** can come and enjoy them.

The **old Flower Garden** was looking sad and **neglected**. FoKP **won a grant** from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Lambeth **matched it**. The pond was reinstated, a new **sundial** commissioned, and the garden transformed into a flowery **oasis**. It was declared open by our local MPs at a summer ceremony in 2015 (right).



What an Egg-cellent Easter Hunt!

Here's Louise. She's one of the four wonderful women – Louise, Lisa, Kate, and Erika – who ran our Easter Egg Hunt in the park in April. It was the first time any of them had volunteered for the Friends. So we asked Louise how it went, and what they enjoyed most ...

Q What inspired you to volunteer?

A We're local, and in Kennington Park most weekends. My kids are 3 and 6 – they've really benefitted from projects supported by FoKP – the new playground, and fun events like the Dog Show and Festival. Volunteering felt like a great way to give back. And who doesn't enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt?

Q Can you share a memorable moment?

A It's so hard to choose! I really enjoyed setting up – everyone pitching in to make it a success. There was a real buzz as the kids raced around collecting eggs. And they even helped to hide and restock the eggs! It had a lovely community feel.

Q How do you think the event benefited the community and the park?

A The children clearly had a great time – and grown-ups said it was wonderful to have a free event right on the doorstep! Fifty local kids and their families turned up – they met lots of new people, and enjoyed the garden. We did a big litter-pick beforehand to make sure the space was clean and safe. It was lovely to get thank-you emails afterwards from people who really enjoyed the day.

Q What would you say to other local people who are thinking about volunteering?

A I'd highly recommend it! The Friends made it easy, with clear instructions. And I met people I still chat to in the park. I'll definitely be helping out again!

If you have an idea for a small event in the park, and would love to run it for us, send us an email, at friends@kenningtonpark.org – we'd love to hear from you!

Join our planning team – the Friends need you!

A nd then, there were five!
You'll notice that since our last issue, there are fewer of us: Mark was getting very busy at work, so he had to stand down. Happily, he's still with FoKP – but now as a trustee.

As for the rest of us – we love being part of the FoKP family! And it's even better when you can get involved in making the decisions, deciding on next steps, and helping to grow the Friends!

Some of us have been on the planning team for several

years – and we would love some new people to join the team! An input of fresh, new ideas could be just what we need!

Fancy getting more involved? Are you good with social media and comms? Or could you run our website? And of course, you'll be able to help us work out what our priorities will be over the next couple of years.

Or perhaps you've got ideas for new initiatives or events in the park – we'd love to have you on board.

Are you an ideas person? Or a good organiser? We need more people like

you in our little team!

If you'd like to join our select group, please do email us at friends@kenningtonpark.org



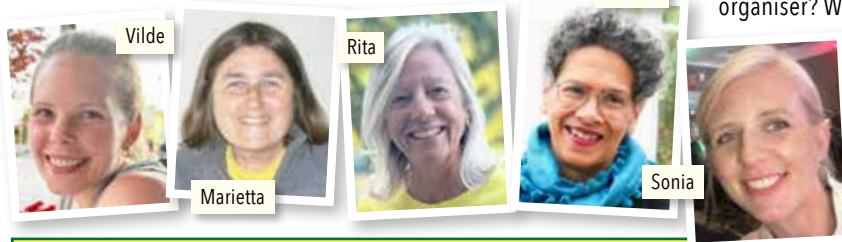
The park piggy-bank on our front cover is by **Jessica Goomaral Cutting**, a British Mongolian artist & animator from UAL

jessica.g.cutting@gmail.com
[@jessicas_dreams_](https://www.instagram.com/jessicas_dreams_)

Design Marnie Searchwell

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