



Chairman's report 2013 - 2014



WHAT A YEAR !

The Friends of Telford Town Park have just completed 10 full years of operation. It has been an honour and a privilege to have served with the Friends for all of those 10 years, with just one small gap.

This year, as we go forward to the next 10 years the Friends will be undergoing some changes. We have already appointed a new Public Relations Manager, Janice Williams and will by now have appointed both a new Chair and a new Secretary. A new broom sweeps clean so the old saying goes and I am sure that those who follow on will continue to improve the service and value we offer Telford Town Park.

What did we do in the last 12 months?

Well, quite a lot as usual and it encompassed many varied projects and skills.

It had been decided in 2012 that we should celebrate our 10th anniversary in a big way but little did we realise then, just how big it would be! The event turned into Jolly Green Day, a fun filled day for all the family to learn about and enjoy everything that is green and natural about our wonderful park. However, we went further than that and included Telford Green Spaces Partnership in the day as well. TGSP are an umbrella organisation to co-ordinate and help ALL the various groups that look after green spaces in and around the borough of Telford. Believe it or not, there are 19 of them!

Despite the only poor weather day last summer, we managed to find it on Saturday 17 August but with true British spirit we soldiered on and over 1,000 people came along during the day and enjoyed a fabulous day out.....and all for FREE! We were very grateful to various sources of funding without which the day could not have happened.

The icing on the cake though was to happen later when we were shortlisted as one of 3 groups to be considered for a national award for the Best Have a Field Day with 'Join In'.

Last November, along with our new PR Manager, Janice, I travelled to Lords Cricket Ground for a BAFTA style ceremony where we were to learn that we had won! The happy picture is on the right with Graham Le Saux who hosted the evening along with Dave Moorcroft who presented us with the award. A proud moment for the Friends.

The trophy should be on display in the Visitor Centre fairly soon.





Of course we were also involved with lots of other activities during the year..

For example we managed to get quite a bit of hedge laying done. This is an ancient craft for which several of the Friends have had training.

One example can be seen in the second picture down on the left. Just above it was mass daffodil planting session in and around the bandstand area of the park. The fruits of our labours can now be seen. We also had some help from the general public for this activity.

Further down is a digger and a dumper truck. This is the start of the new sensory garden for which we have waited over a year for due to funding difficulties. This was eventually overcome thanks to Nicola the Park Manager and her team who managed to secure the extra funding needed from the Parks for People project, which is part of the Heritage Lottery Fund. We also had financial assistance from, Dobbies Garden World Shrewsbury, Harvester Restaurants, Jewsons, Blockleys Bricks, Enigma Imports Cornwall, Fitzgeralds and of course Telford & Wrekin Council Parks dept. There will be a grand opening later in the year.



Last year we also managed to keep the twin tracks tidy and maintained the Crannog (island) in the south of the park on Grange Pool.



A further coup this year was the sponsorship by the Southwater Event Group, who generously supported us on Jolly Green Day.

From April 2014, the Southwater Event Group will sponsor the Friends annually, which will be a big help with our work. The group owns the Telford International Centre, The International Hotel, the Holiday Inn and the Ramada Hotel locally.

In addition to all other activities, we also attended several of the Parish Councils fun days. The picture on the left shows our stand at Dawley Fun Day before the crowds enveloped it!

At the end of the year, last December we held our seventh Charity Santa Fun Run, which thanks to around 200 runners raised a total of over £2,000 for the RNIB and Guide Dogs. The weather was cool but kind and everyone said what a great morning they had and will be back for the eighth run on Dec 7 this year. We start promoting this event in August, so keep an eye out for the application forms. Santa Suits are provided, so you only have to raise as much cash as you can and turn up on the morning!

Yummy hot mince pies (thanks Asda and Waitrose) and mulled fruit punch are provided as well!



One other success story over the last couple of years has been the gardening group. With all the ongoing council cutbacks it became apparent some time ago that our lovely Chelsea Garden and the Maxell Garden to some extent, were not getting the TLC they needed due to lack of cash. We now have a regular gardening session on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month from 10am till 1pm and newcomers will be most welcome. As with all the other projects in the park, no experience is necessary, so come along for some fresh air and gentle exercise, it will do you and your blood pressure a power of good!

For the future there are plans afoot for a young persons section of the Friends but I will leave that to the next Chairman and his team.

Well it only remains for me to say thank you to the team at the Friends and also to all those members of the public who have supported us this year and we hope you will continue to do so as we move forward to the next 10 years.

Telford Town Park is a precious asset and the envy of many towns around Great Britain, so let's keep it that way,

Best wishes

**Chris Pettman, Chairman,
The Friends of Telford Town Park.**

www.friendsoftelfordtownpark.org

With grateful thanks to:

The Heritage Lottery Fund

Telford & Wrekin Council

Great Dawley Town Council

Madeley Town Council

Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council

Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council

Lawley & Overdale Parish Council

Dobbies Garden World

Jewsons

Blockleys Bricks

Harvester Restaurants

Fitzgeralds

Enigma Imports Cornwall

& numerous Shropshire residents

