

## Dulwich Society Wildlife Group

5.4.22

Present: Peter Roseveare (Chair), Dave Clark, Glynis Williams, Harry Rutherford, Charles Newman, Emily Montague, Jeff Doodson, Sue Cope, Sigrid Collins

Apologies: Sam Taylor, Stephen Robinson

Sigrid was thanked for hosting the meeting. Greatly appreciated.

### Minutes of meeting 25.1.22

Typos and spelling corrected and agreed as accurate record of meeting. Peter to forward final corrected version to Heather Stubbs for website inclusion.

### Matters Arising:

Terms of Reference: Finalised. Peter to forward for website.

Ponds in Sydenham Woods: Action on hold at present as priority is paths. (info in Sam's report)

Platinum Jubilee Projects: No further information.

Gallery Road Hedge... Meeting discussed where responsibility for the land and for lead on this project. Peter will liaise with other Dulwich Society Executive members, and confirm that John Best, Southwark Trees Officer can provide whips.

Oak Processionary Moth Spraying: Reiteration of last meeting discussion and agreement spraying likely to be detrimental to other species and only to be undertaken with good indication.

Diversity of waterfowl on Dulwich Park Lake...(From DC) Two little grebes in breeding plumage on the lake. Hopefully will breed this year. did not breed last year. Shovelers recently present. Mallard numbers believed to be down because mild winters mean no need for the birds to seek refuge at small urban lakes as can survive in estuaries and coastal margins.

### Reports:

#### Chair (PR)

Peter had been on an exploratory walk/meeting to Greendale along with other Dulwich Society Executive members and representatives of Friends of Greendale and of Friends of Dog Kennel Wood. The group appreciated the wild scrubland features of Greendale. Greenfinch thrive in that area. Whitethroat have been heard there. The astroturf area is a valued local amenity and the Friends of Greendale are wanting to explore the possibility of replacing its use (not necessarily with astroturf) by opening up the St Olave's field for public use when the astroturf public area is built on as part of the Dulwich Hamlet development. Sue Badman has been enquiring about ownership of the St Olave's field field. The possibility of a wildflower meadow on that field is on hold.

The field is an important site for green woodpecker and several gull species. The group recognised that the public recreational aspect of the Greendale open spaces is a priority but the general feeling seemed to be that wildlife benefits will be considered in future changes of use.

Dave, Emily and Peter attended meeting of Friends of Belair Park. First meeting of the group since start of pandemic. Current Chair Martin Heath stepping aside to focus on green aspects of Belair. The cricket pitch is due to be renovated. The regeneration plan for Belair involves an extensive wooded area incorporating glades with picnic benches. Simon Saville and John Best have both been involved in development plans. Wildflowers will be incorporated. Timescale for planting not yet clear but anticipated will be this year. The development will aid drainage. The playing field will be retained. The damp playing field at Belair is currently, and hopefully will remain, a good site for winter thrushes and fox gulls.

#### Sam Taylor LWT (in absentia)

LWT made successful bid to the Big Give Green Match Fund. Aim is to improve the main path network in Sydenham Hill Woods to help reduce trampling and wildlife disturbance away from the paths. Dulwich Society giving £5k of match funding to boost the total match funding pot to £10K. Target is £50K and fundraising live from April 22nd to 29th. During fundraising week Sam will be giving a Bell House zoom talk about the history, wildlife and management of the woods as well as leading a couple of guided walks to explain the plans for the paths and the reasons the work is needed as a result of the high visitor numbers. Posters have gone up asking walkers to keep their dogs on leads in the woods. Bat boxes will be surveyed during April. Butterflies seen during recent warmer weather: Brimstone, Speckled Wood, Red Admiral, Peacock and Comma. Weekly transect survey will be resumed in April. Sparrowhawk spotted on separate occasions recently. Little owls are nesting on a tree on Grange Road. Peregrines have occupied five sites in our local area.

#### Discussion of Sam's report:

importance of dogs being on leads in bird breeding season. There is at present no data to compare effect of dog roaming in the woods with the area of Dulwich Wood closed to the public as there has to date been no opportunity for monitoring. Dave reported that there are studies done elsewhere.

Dave led two dawn walks with Sam in Sydenham Hill Woods and Dulwich Wood. Both walks were surprisingly well attended. (18 and 40 at 5.30am) and a high proportion of attendees were younger adults, which Dave and Sam found very heartening.

#### Lordship Lane/Fireman's Alley Development

Emily and Dave attended a consultation meeting with the architects and local residents. The five story development will have a smaller footprint than the garages which it replaces. Consideration of ecological and green issues are intrinsic to the proposal and Dave considers this does look like a positive development. Landscaping and indigenous hedgerow planting is planned alongside the playground on the estate. Bat boxes had already been incorporated in the plan and Dave reported that the architects agreed to proposal to also incorporate swift and sparrow boxes.

The discussion at this meeting relating to this development registered the potential benefit of further hedgerow planting along the South Circular as a project for the future.

#### Tree Committee. Glynis Williams

Glynis pleased to report that Cleaner Greener Safer bid to further extend the hedge at Dulwich Library has been successful. Pyracantha will be planted along the wooden fencing in the library garden. Thanks to Glynis for her personal commitment to this project.

### Sightings

A Red Legged Partridge in Ruskin Walk was surprisingly reported to Peter and its photograph will appear in his next magazine article. A cock pheasant was also photographed Fawnbrake Avenue. Blackcaps are around. Chiffchaff seen in the Woods. Daniel Greenwood has heard firecrest in Sydenham Woods. Sightings of Kites and Buzzard more frequent.

White tailed eagles from Isle of Wight have been reported over London on number of occasions.

### AOB

Jeff recommended and Dave endorsed recommendation of webinar talk by Professor Mark Fellowes of Reading University entitled Kites, Crows and Calories: Consequences of Feeding Birds. Available on LNHS website or YouTube LNHS site.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday June 7th to be confirmed