



THE FRIENDS OF  
REGENT'S PARK

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NEWSLETTER  
AUGUST 1993

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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1. MEMBERS' MEETING 21st SEPTEMBER 1993

Mr. David Welch, Chief Executive of the Royal Parks Agency, has agreed to talk to us about the issues raised by the Jenkins Committee Report. The meeting will be held at the Zoo Meeting Room at 5.30pm for 6pm. The meeting will also provide an opportunity for the Members to approve the Constitution of the Friends of Regent's Park. *A Copies*

2. CONCERT, WEDNESDAY 24th NOVEMBER 1993

*Asm?*  
*Ticket price?* The Royal College of Music <sup>has</sup> invited The Friends to participate in organising a concert to be held in its Duke's Hall at 6pm. The ticket price will also entitle the purchaser to a buffet supper and further details can be obtained from our Treasurer, Michael Goldhill, at 5 Nottingham Terrace, London, NW1.

ROYAL PARKS REVIEW  
REGENTS'S PARK AND PRIMROSE HILL

The Committee, chaired by Dame Jennifer Jenkins, has submitted its Report to the Secretary of State. The following is a summary of its main proposals starting with the suggestion that there should be an agreed strategy for Regent's Park so that the Parkland and the surrounding Nash Terraces should be considered "as an integral piece of urban design."

Despite the inspired elegance of Nash's original development, the Committee notes that -

"in recent years, Regent's Park has been so starved of resources that it has been difficult to find money to paint the public lavatories, let alone carry out such needed capital repairs."

77

The committee proposes that there should be a "presumption" against additional new buildings in the Park, or additions to existing ones, and that the Crown Estate, which in effect is the landlord of the Villas in the Park, should make a financial contribution to the Park's maintenance and improvement.

There is a recommendation that the Royal Parks should draw up a landscape management plan because - "short termism in parks only leads over time to decline which can then take years to restore." Your Committee is in complete agreement with this aim and we wrote to Mr. David Welch, the Chief Executive of the Royal Parks Agency, asking that he, through the responsible Minister, press the Treasury to allow Regent's Park to keep all of the income the Royal Parks Agency might generate in excess of budget. He has replied saying that the present arrangement is that his Agency may keep half of any surplus which, apparently, is a more generous position than other Agencies enjoy, but he adds that the retention of all surplus income remains his long term ambition.

As for the Zoo, the Jenkins Committee recommends that the Zoo's option to take on ten further acres within the Park as a tenant should be withdrawn, and that the boundaries and overall landscaping between the Zoo and the Park should be improved. *revised plan*

The current inadequacy of Map Boards and other Signs is noted and the recommendation is for a comprehensive and well designed graphics system to reflect the historic character of the Park and its ecology. There can be little doubt that the present state of the Signs in the Park are out of date and inadequate.

The Committee commissioned market research about dogs in the Park. Interestingly, 97% of Park users thought that dog owners should clear up any mess deposited by their dogs, and more than 90% favoured fines for failure in this respect.

Pressure for regulation is particularly strong in relation to Primrose Hill where the dog population regularly being exercised is prolific. However, complete regulation is still some way off as the Committee's recommendation is no more than - "Park management should retain flexibility in adjusting controls on dogs in areas with specific problems."

On the vexed question of parking, the Committee recommends that pay and display parking control should be introduced, rather than unsightly meters, to promote the policy goal of making spaces available for Park users and discouraging all day commuter parking. The Gloucester Slips carpark has space for 300 cars and 6 coaches and since 1989 this space has been licensed to the Zoo to boost its income. It is recommended that this should not be a long term arrangement and that Regent's Park should, in due course, receive all of this income as a license fee or at least obtain a fixed percentage of the income.

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#### CYCLING

The official position is that no cycling is allowed except on the Park roads and, within the Park, by children up to the age of 10. In reality, cycling is quite widespread sometimes to the alarm of pedestrians. Traffic consultants are looking at the possibility of creating new cycling routes, particularly a north/south route parallel to the Broad Walk as far as Chester Road, and a special lane on the Inner and Outer Circles. The Jenkins Committee recommends that - "Park regulations must be regularly enforced to create a climate of opinion in which cyclists keep to designated routes." This may be a difficult aim to realise. When we asked the Park Police about enforcement statistics, they said that from January to April 1993 94 cyclists had been warned and 4 had been taken to Court.

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Finally, something about geese.

"The Department of the Environment should urgently formulate a national policy for the control of Canada and Greylag geese. In the meantime, the Royal Parks should continue efforts to reduce local numbers."



## THE ZOO

Members may have read in the press that following a substantial private donation the Zoo has applied for permission to develop the Children's Zoo area and plans and other graphics about this proposed development will be on display on 21st September at the meeting we are having in the Zoo Meeting Room.

Members will be interested in the following statement from Dr. Joe Gipps, Director of the Zoo, which we are quoting with his permission. It comes from a letter he wrote to the Chairman of the Regent's Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee on 2nd August this year.

"We have no desire or need for more land, and our Business Plan shows development within our existing boundaries. The only circumstances in which the boundaries would end up being moved would be the result of proposals to improve the landscape, and to soften the somewhat harsh boundary that now exists between Zoo and Park."

Peter Denton of the London Zoo, who also sits on our Committee, has provided us with details of the Zoo's plans for a new aviary for the rare Hyacinthine Macaw. The aviary is to be sited 8.7 metres from the Zoo's eastern boundary with Regent's Park and close to the existing Parrot House. Extensive landscaping is proposed in the area immediately to the rear of the aviary facing Regent's Park.

Hyacinthine Macaws are exceedingly rare and there is an international and national co-operative breeding programme in which London Zoo already plays a part. These Macaws come from South America and a climbing plant, also from South America, possibly an *Abutilon Megapotamicum*, will be used both inside and outside the aviary area climbing up and over a dwarf wall.

Peter Denton adds - "The aviary has been designed with a spacious flight area to encourage the birds to get lots of exercise, a factor which is now thought to be very important in their breeding success. The Zoo is about to submit a Planning Application for this project and it is proposed to use funds raised in the Save Our Zoo campaign to pay for the aviary.

Concentrating on a high profile conservation species, this new aviary will be a symbol of the rejuvenation of London Zoo following a very difficult period."

