

## Ten years of Friends of Princes Park

Princes Park is situated in one of the most deprived wards in Liverpool. FOPP was formed in March 2004 at a time when the park had suffered 20 years of neglect. **Our aims are:**

- To enhance Princes Park for the recreational pleasures and health of its users.
- To facilitate local community involvement in the management and maintenance of the park landscape, structures and other features.
- To raise the profile of the park's historic status.

### Highlights of the last 10 years:

Tree planting: We have planted over 2500 trees and shrubs, mostly native species, but recently in 2013 exotic species akin to those which would originally have been planted by Paxton in the 1850s.

2\* Heritage Status: thanks to the perseverance of Jean Grant our first Chair we achieved 2\* Heritage status for the park in 2009.

Lake: the lake is the number one priority for FOPP. We have liaised with parks dept. re mending the leak in the lake and some bank repairs. The lake is currently holding water but has another leak and is a constant risk to the park. We need more water coming into it and have ideas about this. It is very popular for fishing (best in Liverpool!!)

Planting and maintaining: we have planted shrubs above the lake and with BTCV had a Green Gym in 2009 where volunteers cleared bushes and edged paths. We do regular litter picks in the park.

Wildlife: our planting has attracted much more diverse wildlife into the park and this includes many thrushes, goldfinches, woodpeckers, chiffchaffs and bats as well as many woodpigeons.

Improving facilities and infrastructure: working with the Council we have ensured the redevelopment of the Playground using Playbuilder scheme, refurbishments of the (free) tennis courts. We have raised money for new benches and picnic tables. The council has also installed gym equipment in the park.

The Gates: The Sunburst Gates have been completely refurbished and pillars rebuilt. (And became a spontaneous local memorial to Nelson Mandela in December last year. )

Festivals: Brouhaha international festival is held every summer. In addition we have had a health and wellbeing festival in 2009, Intergenerational events with older people and local schools in 2012, and a LIPA production working with local community groups this spring. We plan a Victorian festival in 2015 to celebrate Paxton and launch our Henge.

Parkrun and running course: over 200 people run in the park every Saturday, and with RunEngland and local CCG and health Trusts we now have a designated 5K route in the park.

Henge: with local young people and council youth workers and d social landlords we are building a wooden Henge with a raised platform which will be a place where older teenagers/young people can relax and enjoy the park and its views.

Working with local groups: throughout this time we have worked with local groups and local schools, 2 of which produced a leaflet about the park in 2012. One local school has become a Forrest school and used our tree planting, and we hope to encourage others to do this.

Katy Gardner, Chair FOPP May 2014