



**August 2023**



### **It's here!**

It's been a long time coming, all the way from South Africa via Bristol, but our new truck is finally here.



And it was put to good use on the very next day, transporting tools for the volunteers who were clearing the pavement along Bromley Road.

The truck is a Toyota Hilux with a manufacturer- approved tipping body and is ULEZ compliant.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the cost. It is so important to our management of the Commons, and to Jonathan and Toby's daily lives, and we are really grateful to all of you.

## **Tree Management**



The Peace Tree, at the top of the High Street opposite Hornbrook House car park, recently lost a large branch. It is a horse chestnut and was planted in 1919 to mark the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. After an assessment, Chislehurst Tree Care recommended some work to reduce the size and weight of the

crown. The work has now been carried out, together with some re-shaping, so that the tree can continue to be an attractive feature of Chislehurst.



During our routine monitoring of the trees on the Commons, we recently found evidence of a fungal disease known as sooty bark disease, which is affecting a number of our sycamore trees. Sooty bark disease (SBD) is a fungal infection which is characterised by black/ brown blotchy patches on the trunk and branches. The fungus can remain dormant in a tree for a long time until it comes under stress, such as the drought during last year's very hot summer. Squirrel damage is another possible cause of the fungus becoming active. Once the disease becomes active it can progress very quickly, eventually killing the tree. Most of the trees identified were in good health in 2022.

A number of dead and dying sycamore trees were initially found on the A222 (Bromley Road and Bromley Lane) in the area close to the War Memorial traffic lights. In all, a total of over 30 sycamore trees, including a good few very large trees, have now been found in a range of locations around the Commons showing varying stages of the disease.

A local firm of Arboricultural Association approved tree surgeons, Tree Craft, was commissioned to prepare a formal report for us on the outbreak, together with recommended courses of action. We need to fell all of the affected trees. Work has started on this already, and we have made a planning application to the London Borough of Bromley in respect of felling those trees which are subject to planning. The Tree Craft report forms the basis of our planning application. Getting the work done on Bromley Road, close to the traffic lights, is going to be difficult, as traffic control will be needed.

**The work involved in dealing with this and other tree diseases such as ash dieback is specialised and costly!**



The 180 acres of common land in Chislehurst are well used by the community, free and open to all at all times, within the bye-laws.

They are also home to an amazing variety of wildlife.

We are very fortunate that the Commons are protected under an Act of Parliament.

However, the Act made no provision for funding, and we rely on the generosity of local people.

We have two full-time Keepers, whose knowledge and dedication are invaluable. Everyone else who works to preserve and maintain the area does so voluntarily.

**If you would like to support our work,**

**you can donate via our website**

**[www.chislehurstcommons.uk](http://www.chislehurstcommons.uk)**

**or via PayPal Giving**

**Thank you!**



We have already enjoyed some wonderful community events on the Commons in this Coronation year, and there is another one to look forward to on Saturday September 23rd.

Booking is now open for this fantastic Art Event with all proceeds going to Chislehurst Commons.

Full details of the event and how to apply for tickets can be found at the end of this newsletter.

## **Green Flag Award**



We are proud to announce that we have again been awarded the Green Flag, an internationally recognised quality benchmark for the management of community green spaces.

It is a testament to the hard work of the Chislehurst Commons Team of Keepers, Trustees and Volunteers, who undertake many varied tasks – attending the regular working party, litter-picking, managing our social media, helping with social events, liaising with other environmental groups, providing expert advice, surveying wildlife, installing and monitoring bird boxes, fundraising – all part of the team that works to ensure the Commons remain free and open to all 24/7, now and into the future.

***THANKS TO THEM ALL!***

**Congratulations to Peter and Marilyn!**



Peter Edwards, our Assistant Keeper until his retirement last September, and

Marilyn were married on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> July.

We are sure you will all join us in sending the happy couple our best wishes for their future together.

Peter continues to send us wonderful photos of the wildlife on the Commons and attends working party sessions.

## Working Party



This month the working party volunteers have spent time clearing encroaching undergrowth and overhanging branches from pavements.

They have also raked grass at the Ramblers Rest. As reported in our last newsletter, we are working to restore this area to good acid grassland by depriving the soil of nutrients.



Harebells are good indicators of acid grassland, and they can be seen at various sites on the Commons at the moment.

## Butterflies

In the last few weeks, the Big Butterfly Count, organised by Butterfly Conservation, has been taking place to assess the health of our environment by counting the number and type of butterflies seen.

The butterflies below have all been recorded on our Commons in July.



Brown argus



Purple hairstreak



Small skipper



Small copper



## Ringlet



A white

The various whites are difficult to identify but we think this is either a small white or a green-veined white.

**And finally ..... to the ponds!**



After a slow start, there has been a lot of activity at the ponds and there are several families of moorhens and coots. Here, a young moorhen surveys its surroundings.



Last month we reported on the first family of tufted ducks on the Commons for many years. There is now another family at Rush Pond, this time with 3 babies.

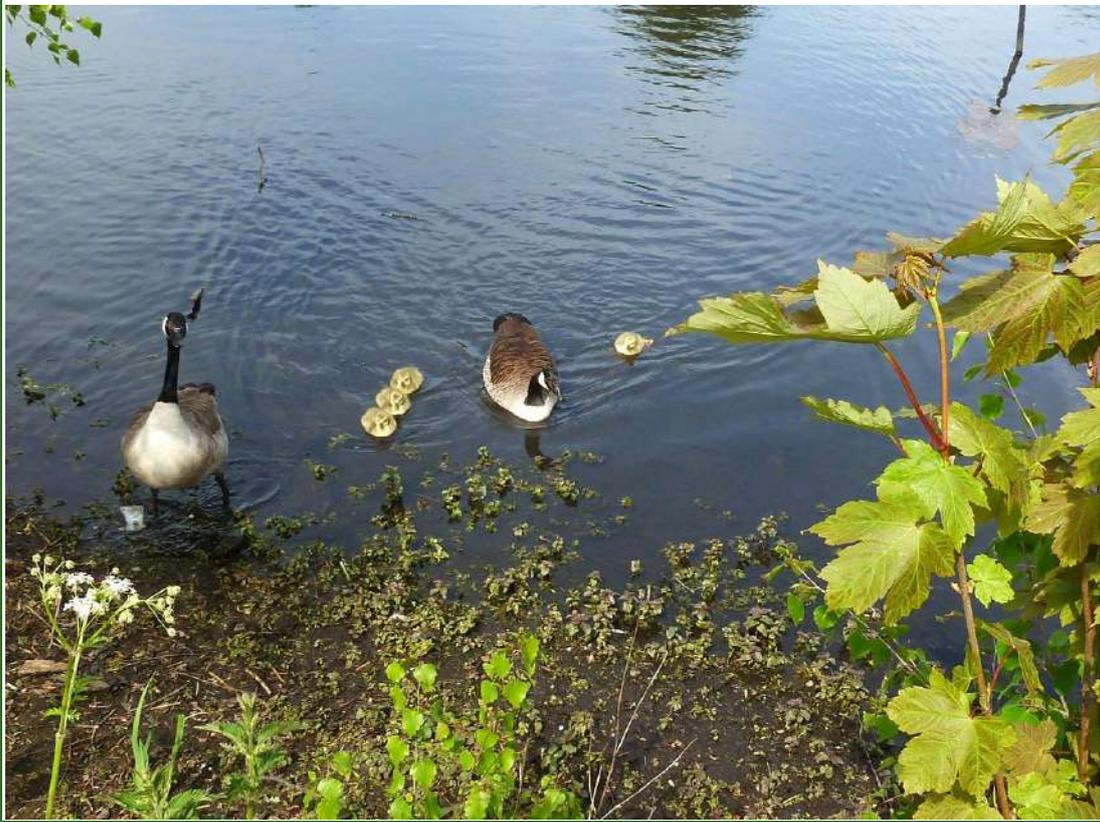


A picture of contentment. The three remaining Egyptian goslings snuggle together.

**Get your bird seed at Champion Wines!**

**We are grateful to Champion Wines for stocking packets of seed on our behalf. This food is healthier for the birds than bread or products made from flour.**

**All proceeds go to Chislehurst Commons.**





### **Jan Hendey**

It is with deep regret that we report the death of Jan Hendey, a long-time supporter of Chislehurst Commons.

Jan was a Trustee of Chislehurst Commons from 1994-2008. Her expert knowledge was invaluable, and we were fortunate that she continued to take an active interest in the Commons after she resigned from the Board.

She was a founder member of the Volunteers Group in the 1990s, and

played an important part in the early stages of the restoration of the heathland on St. Paul's Cray Common.

Jan was also a recorder with the British Bryological Society, and could often be seen out and about carrying out surveys.

Chislehurst has lost a valuable and knowledgeable naturalist whose contribution will not be forgotten.

Her funeral will take place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August, 3:30pm, at Kemnal Park crematorium. All are welcome.

<https://www.greenacresgroup.co.uk/kemnal-park-contact-2/>

Our beautiful Commons not only provide us with a green space for rest and relaxation, but also give us an opportunity to observe the natural world and its annual cycle at first hand.

We will continue to do our best to maintain and enhance it for present and future generations.

# CHISLEHURST Creates

... the Magic  
of Nature



Saturday  
23rd Sept  
1-5pm

Creative Fun on the Commons  
(Watts Lane/School Rd)

Arts, Crafts & Family Fun  
for children of all ages

Activities • Entertainment • Tea Tent • Face Painting  
Photography/Art competitions and much more!

For ticket information see **Chislehurst Creates**  
on social media or scan the code:

[www.chislehurstcommons.uk](http://www.chislehurstcommons.uk)

Instagram: [chislehurst\\_creates](#) Facebook: [Chislehurst Creates](#) Twitter: [@ChsCreates](#)

Ticket info:



[ticketsource.co.uk/  
chiscommons](http://ticketsource.co.uk/chiscommons)

All proceeds go towards the upkeep  
of our beautiful commons



With huge thanks to our fabulous local sponsors



(More sponsors to be confirmed,  
watch this space!)

Printing services kindly subsidised by Darenth Print & Design Ltd

**Saturday 23rd September, 1-5pm on Chislehurst Common (Watts  
Lane/School Road)**

***Chislehurst Creates*** is an outdoor art festival organised by local volunteers to inspire children and families to get creative on the Common.

This year's theme is '*The Magic of Nature*'. An exciting array of hands-on art activities have been 'conjured up' to spark the imagination and educate young minds about our natural surroundings.

Expect interactive art-making, face painting, refreshments, music and entertainment; an afternoon of creative fun for all the family. You may even find a real magician amongst the crowd. Seek him out and prepare to be amazed.

All profits will go to Chislehurst Commons, the registered charity responsible for the upkeep of the 180 acres of green spaces in the area.

Come along to enjoy the spectacle, soak up the community spirit and help raise much needed funds.

As a community event, ticket prices have been kept as low as possible to cover the activities and art supplies (plus a personalised tote bag to take home those magic-inspired crafts and creations).

Refreshments will be available in the tea tent at an additional cost.

Tickets are available online for a small booking fee, or in person from JDM on Chislehurst High St or The Chislehurst Society (The Old Chapel, between 9-12 on Wednesdays only).

- This event will go ahead whatever the weather. Tickets are non-refundable.
- A ticket is required for each participant intending to make art. Supervising adults and babes in arms go free. A lanyard will be provided for each ticket-holder to identify them as a participant.
- Buy tickets in advance to take advantage of the reduced price: £5 per participant before 26 Aug, £7 from 27 Aug - 22 Sep, £10 on the door.
- Children should be supervised at all times. Volunteers cannot be responsible for their welfare.
- Making art can get messy so please dress accordingly. Organisers cannot be responsible for any damage to clothing.
- Parking is limited so ticket holders are encouraged to arrive on foot where possible.
- Toilet facilities will be available in The Crown Inn on School Road.

For any queries, email [creates@chislehurstcommons.uk](mailto:creates@chislehurstcommons.uk)

*Chislehurst Creates* is made possible by the generosity of our sponsors:

The Cockpit  
The Chislehurst Society

**JDM Estate Agents  
Balloonista  
New Mortgage Solutions  
Studio 212  
The Mills Care Group**



## **Chislehurst Creates - the Magic of Nature!**

**Booking is now open!**

**Click on the link or scan the QR code**

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/chiscommons](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/chiscommons)

### You can now Support Us when You Shop Online

We are now registered with **easyfundraising** which means you can support us when you shop online.

Over 7,000 retailers and services will donate to us when you connect to their websites via **easyfundraising** to shop with them – at no extra cost to you, and you earn all your normal loyalty benefits!

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It's easy to use and these donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us by clicking [here](#)

Simplified instructions on how to use [easyfundraising](#) can be found by clicking [here](#)



You can also support us by using the easyfundraising app available below

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[Click here to access a map of the Commons](#)

**Thanks for this month's photos to – Peter Edwards, Kevin Jennings, Ross Wearn, Mary Wheeler and Peter Woodward.**

**Thanks also to the Editorial Team – Christine Wearn, Ross Wearn and Mary Wheeler.**



**Chislehurst Commons are proud to display the Green Flag Award logo.**

**[If you would care to donate, please click here](#)**

**[or donate online here](#)**

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