

Winter 2021

Friends of Cuerden Valley Park Newsletter



Issue 5

Introduction from the editor

We gave you advance notice in our last Newsletter that we going to run our first on-line fundraising event by launching a Dog Show. This ran throughout December 2020. It's really good to be able to report that this was very well received and supported by both entrants and sponsors.

We are really grateful to all Friends who shared our Facebook posts on local sites and encouraged friends and family to enter. We were successful in raising £1590 towards the purchase of a ride on tractor/mower for the Park. You will be able to see pictures of the winners on page 2 and on page 3 the tractor the park purchased.

Thoughts from the Chair of the Friends: Jack Spickett

Bill Oddie, of Goodies fame was also a very keen and experienced birder, which resulted in him presenting the early Springwatch programmes. I remember an interview with him when he was asked, if he had to make a choice between losing his sight or hearing which would he choose? His reply surprised the interviewer when he said he would choose to retain his hearing before his sight. 'But surely a birdwatcher would want to keep his sight' the interviewer persisted. Ideally yes, continued Bill, but most birders will often identify the birds around them by their song and calls before they ever see them.

I was reminded of Bill's response this week when, after days of practice trills and calls a Song Thrush finally burst into full song, telling

the world that he was ready for Spring even if it is still only February. In the background a Greater Spotted Woodpecker was drumming out a claim on his territory. I didn't see either of these birds but my ears told me that nature was waking up and I should be looking forward to Spring.

Hopefully David Beattie will be able to resume his dawn chorus walks this year (complete with bacon butty), and I might be able to continue with the exclusive walks for Friends when you can brush up on your identification skills and enjoy what Cuerden Valley offers to the full. So, take off your headphones or earbuds and let the sounds of nature that are all around you into your head and into your heart.

Stay Safe, Jack Spickett

Inside this issue:

Online Dog show Winners	Page 2
Update from our Wildlife Officer	Page 3
The Friends and Rangers take a look at the new tractor	Page 3
Simon Thorpe General Manager Covid, Winter weather and the impact on the Park	Page 4



Friends of Cuerden Valley Park ONLINE DOG SHOW 1st-31st Dec 2020

10 categories:-

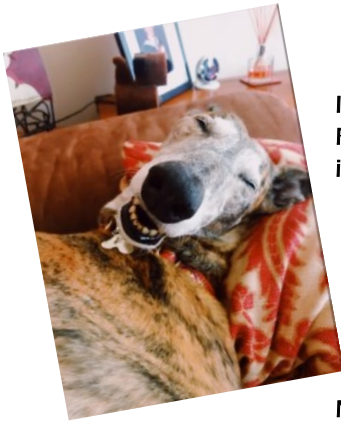
Prettiest Girl | Most Handsome Boy | Best friends | Senior (age 7 & over) | Cutest Puppy
Action Shot | Scruffiest Pouch | Best Rescue | Naughtiest | Most Festive



Kindly SPONSORED BY
Pinewood Veterinary Practice
Chorley, Leyland & Coppull



The Facebook page is still active if you would like to take a look at all the lovely dogs our judges had to choose between. It was not an easy task and we are very grateful to them for the time they gave to do it for us. We would also like to thank all our sponsors and those who donated prizes. They are all listed on the Facebook site. Winners photos below:



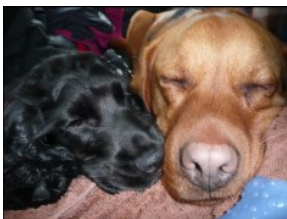
India won Best Rescue and Best in Show



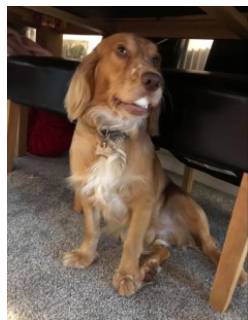
Leo winner of Most Festive and Reserve Best in Show



Best Friends: Bella and Archie



Naughtiest: Max



Cutest Puppy: Moth



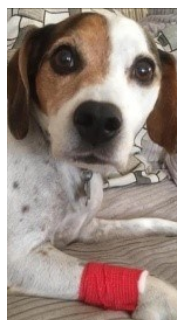
Best Action: Blue and Sashsa



Prettiest Girl: Nala



Scruffiest Dirtiest: Albus



Seniors: Jak

Most Handsome: Trushka



Update from our Wildlife Officer, David Beattie

Cuerden Wildlife

One of the lessons we have all learned in the last year is how nature is good for our well-being. Many of us have been taking advantage of our Park by using it for our permitted exercise. Despite a cold and snowy couple of months we have noticed so much colour. A regular user waited 4 hours to get a wonderful photo of a kingfisher. Others have noted Scarlet Elfcup, Yellow Brain Fungus and on the lake a pair of Mandarin ducks. A plethora of snowdrops herald spring is not too far away and hopefully, thanks to the vaccine we will soon have our restrictions eased.



Kingfisher

Scarlet Elfcup



Thanks again for your reports and pictures of the delights of our Park.

Pair Mandarin ducks



Some of the Committee took their exercise at the park so the Rangers could show us the newly purchased Tractor with mowing deck.



Bill the Senior ranger explained to us how this multi-functional piece of kit will enable them to do so many jobs more easily.



We were also lucky enough to have Millie and Ruby to share the experience with us to represent the fund raising success of the online Dog Show.



Update from Simon Thorpe, General Manager of the Park

It's been a long deep Winter by recent standards and while our fingers are thawing out the Park remains rather wet and muddy after a series of floods and storms. The damage done by flooding, and intensive use by our visitors for whom the Park remains one of few escapes during lockdown, is a cause for concern to us all. We're working hard to secure grant funding to carry out repairs and improvements to your Park.



The Heritage Emergency Funding we received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund has now come to an end.

You can't have failed to notice our updated branded car park entrance barriers, and we've updated the orientation maps in the Notice Boards across the car parks and other locations in the Park, with some countryside code do's and don'ts. We are keeping the portaloos at Berkeley Drive on hire for as long as we can and hope lockdown restrictions are lifted so we can open the indoor toilets soon. One of the challenges facing charities has been how to adapt their fundraising to life without physical events. We spent some of our grant with consultants guiding us through how this can be done and there will be more news on this later in the year.

Covid 19 has driven us to review what we do and how we do it. Unfortunately we've

had to make one post redundant, and I would like to thank Les Cryer who left us in February, who was behind many of our popular events such as the beer festival and farmer's markets, for all the work she did to improve and sustain the Park.

Public Health England's statement about Improving Access to Greenspace (2020) is recognition that parks play an important role in the physical and mental health of the nation. Fields in Trust calculated that parks and greenspaces save the NHS around £111 million each year by reducing the number of GP visits. The value that parks make to our society and economy from wellbeing benefits has been calculated at £34.2 billion per year. Such a shame then, that they are often near the bottom of the list of funding priorities.

Perhaps that will change as we emerge from Covid lockdown and we all begin to evaluate what is important in our lives. Environment and mental health issues have

never been higher on the public agenda. There are already positive signs and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Parks and Greenspaces will be debating Levelling up Access to Parks and Greenspaces at its next meeting in March.

I would like to thank the Committee members who have been really busy lately meeting and planning new ideas to help the Park and our supporters. Congratulations to the Dog Show winners and a thank you to everyone who took part and helped us purchase a new compact tractor to mow the grass. My team and I am doing our best to make sure that Cuerden Valley Park can continue to have a positive impact on the communities we serve. Thank you for supporting us by being a Friend.

Tell us what you think?

If you have any ideas, comments or suggestions about the newsletter, fundraising events or volunteering please email newsletter@cuerdenvalleypark.org

Editor Sheila Tuffrey