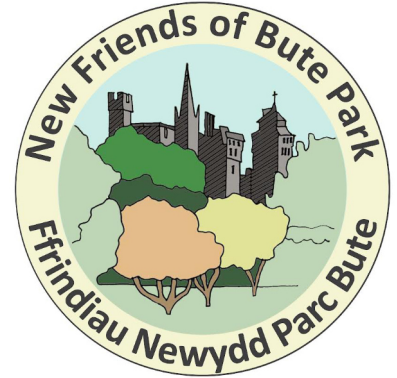


The New Friends of Bute Park

Spring Update 2023

New Biodiversity Project!

The New Friends of Bute Park has been successful in obtaining a biodiversity grant which will enable us to carry out projects in an area behind the Visitor Centre, based in the walled area that is colloquially known as The Secret Garden.



The grant will contribute to the establishment of a wildlife garden with features that will help protect and enhance biodiversity in the area.

We want to build and install a dead hedge, log pile, bug hotel, bird feeders, bird splash, beetle stumpery and a hibernaculum as a home and resting place for toads and slow worms.



Signage will be included to explain what has been done and to help visitors adapt similar ideas for their own gardens.

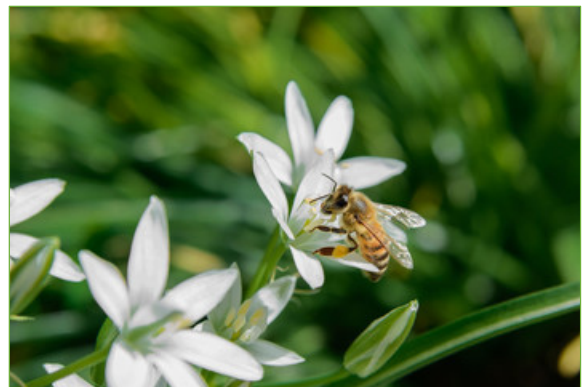
In addition, we will be planting up the existing raised beds with pollinator friendly plants and will be replacing the bird feeding station.

These projects will provide opportunities for New Friends members to build and install the various elements and to come along as volunteers to clean and maintain them. Families and children can get involved in looking after the installations and interacting with the wildlife that come to use them as their home. A genuine hands-on learning experience for the kids!

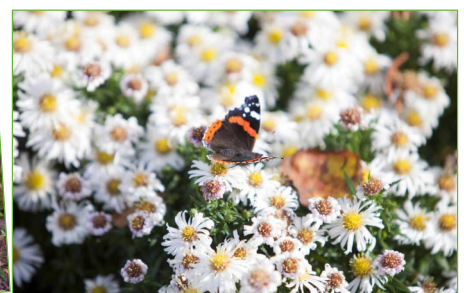
Cody, the New Friends' biodiversity lead, will draw up a design for the

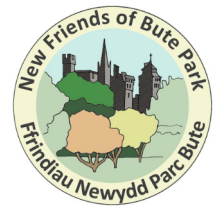
wildlife area and create an exciting and inclusive plan, ensuring that there will be plenty of opportunities for members to work on both areas.

For the planter area, there will be a number of jobs, including adding gravel to level the ground, filling containers with suitable growing medium, planting the seedlings and young plants, and planting a range of climbers against the fencing. There are always jobs in the garden that need to be attended to.



There will be more to do in the wildlife area. Cody will be coordinating and overseeing the building and maintenance of all of the exciting resources to be found there, include creating logpiles/stumperies, hibernaculae, insect hotels, bird-feeding stations and dead-hedges.





Work on the Community Orchard has begun!

November saw the “Plant Back Better’ event designed to replace some of the vandalised trees and also to plant the trees in the smaller of the two orchards outside the Secret Garden. This is a signpost to the larger orchard at Blackweir. Ashley, Cody, Paul B and Ian went along to provide support from the New Friends.



Melissa Boothman, Bute Park Community Orchard; Paul Barrett, New Friends of Bute Park; Christopher Engle, Coed Caerdydd; Cllr Jennifer Burke-Davies, Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks & Events. Photo: Andrew Jeffrey

The event planned for late February to plant the first trees of the main orchard at Blackweir, together with the initial planting of the proposed hedgerow, did not take place.

After careful consideration it was decided the delay the activity to prioritise drawing up a clear agreement between the Council and Community Orchard group to ensure absolute clarity of relationships going forward in what is clearly intended by all concerned to be a long-term project.

While the agreement is being finalised, work continues to be carried out to identify the most appropriate plants for the proposed hedgerow to act as a windbreak for the young trees and a clear boundary line as well as providing a harvest and nutrition for the soil.

Among the hedgerow plants being considered are: hazel, blackthorn, crab

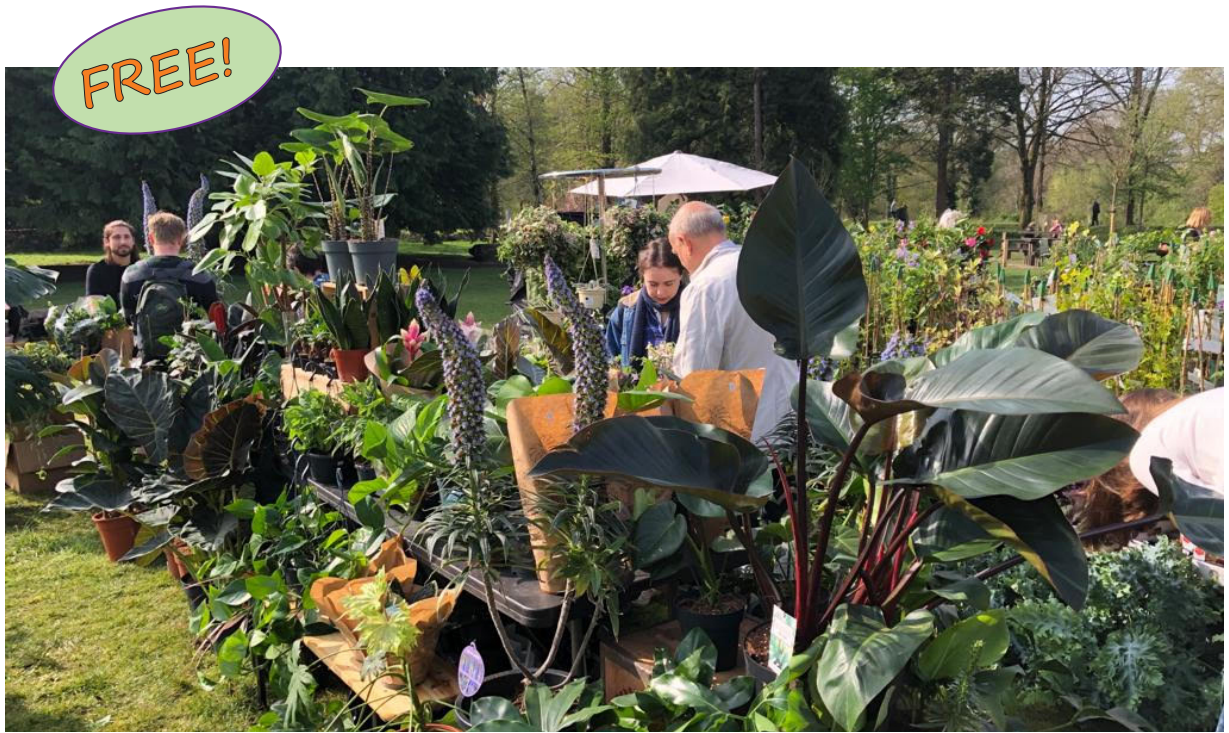
apple, elder, dog rose, rowan, hawthorn, dogwood, wild cherry, silver birch, field maple, sessile oak and grey willow. The intention would be to supplement these with others including Italian alder, sea buckthorn and other nitrogen fixers, dwarf pomegranate, edible fuschias and other fruiting plants, and some evergreens.

Recognition goes to Cody who, with the support of Coed Caerdydd, are the main players in the ‘hands-on’ activity.



Bute Park Open Day

Saturday 15th April 2023 10am 'til 4pm



Bute Park is holding its annual Spring Open Day on Saturday 15th April.

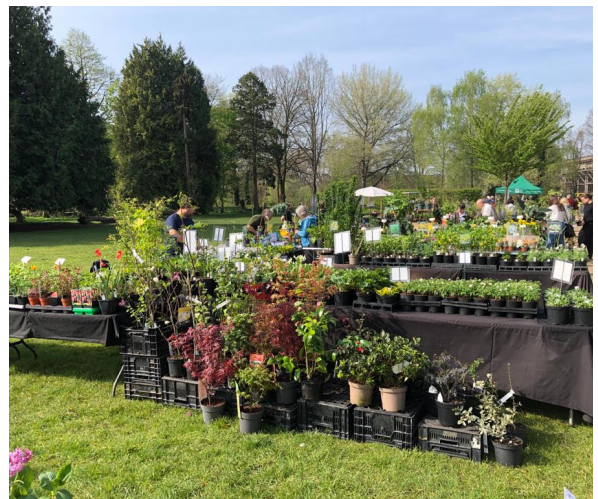
Come along and you'll be able to join in the fun activities for children and families.

There will be plenty of plants available from the Plant Fair to take home to make your garden beautiful and full of colour and the Bute Park Plant Shop will also be open.

You'll be able to take part in tours of the Plant Nursery, too, and see the hard work that goes into raising all of the beautiful bedding plants that you see in all of the Cardiff's parks and planters. It'll be a great opportunity to pick the brains of the nursery staff and get the hints and tips that will help you make a success of your garden borders and containers.

Bute Park staff and the New Friends of Bute Park will be on hand to answer any questions you might have about Bute Park's history and plans for the future, and discuss any of the forthcoming events which might take your fancy.

The Plant Fair will continue on Sunday 16th. All welcome!





Come and try the new Family Activity Packs!

FAMILY ACTIVITY PACKS is an initiative that is being developed by Bute Park's Education Officer, Meriel Jones. It offers a range of activity packs for children to borrow and then use in the park to give them hands-on practical introduction to nature in a fun environment.

There are four themes to choose from: Art in the Park, Minibeast Hunting, Birds in the Park and Trees in the Park. A clear rucksack is collected from the Visitor Centre and contains a variety of writing materials, clipboards, bug pots,

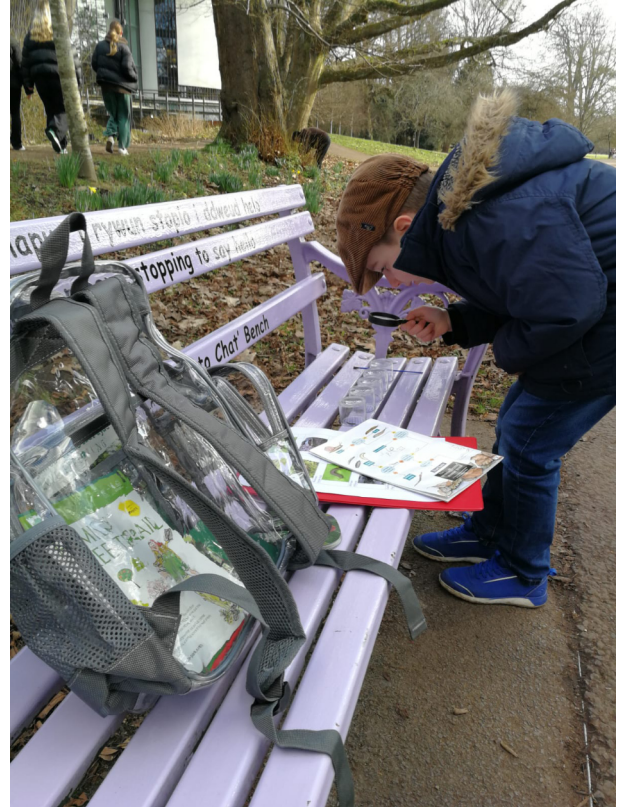


binoculars, magnifying glass and identification sheets. There are colourful



guides on what to look for and where, and how to identify them. It is hoped members of the New Friends can assist with making up and distributing the packs.

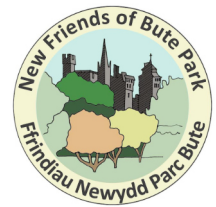
The project will not be available until later in the year, on days when the Visitor Centre is open, but I trialled it the other week with my grandson, Ash, who opted – not surprisingly – for the Minibeast Hunting. We were guided to search in piles of leaves, under logs and around the base of trees and successfully transferred a centipede, a wood louse, 2 caterpillars, an



ant and a harvestman spider to bug pots with magnifying lids. After studying them quite intently he then worked through the identification process and took great delight in getting most of them right.

The bugs were then replaced, unharmed and the bag and equipment taken to the Visitor Centre with a pencil and notepad for Ash to keep. All in all, an enjoyable and successful bug hunt which a six- and-a-half year-old enjoyed immensely. Ian Body





The Feeder Canal

Some people may be surprised to learn that experts say that out of the five most picturesque canal journeys in Britain, Wales has two of them. These are the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal from Goitre Wharf, and the Llangollen Canal from Whitchurch Marina. There was a Glamorganshire Canal that was begun in 1790 and which ran along the valley of the River Taff from Merthyr Tydfil to the sea at Cardiff, and transported iron, steel and coal to the docks before the advent of the railways and making it one of the most important canals in the world. However, the final section of this canal was closed in 1951, although volunteers are now working towards the restoration of the only remaining double-lock system in the Pontypridd area.



From the later part of the 19th century to the early part of the 20th century where Churchill Way is now located, the feeder canal was open and ran down a tree-lined boulevard. Then in the late 40s it was covered over to cope with the traffic that was then increasing with the growing popularity of the motor car. Happily, the canal is now being partially uncovered along Churchill Way, with plans to continue this as far as possible right down to the docks. This will enable some of the blue and green of Bute Park to be extended into the city centre and in case we forget the importance of canals until quite recently, Ralph Waldo Emerson, the 19th century American philosopher is recorded as saying,

“The crowning fortune of a man is to be born to some pursuit which finds him employment and happiness, whether it be to make baskets, or broadswords, or canals, or statues, or songs”.

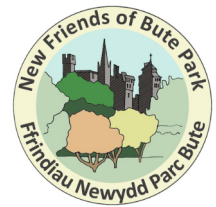
So what does this have to do with Bute Park? Well, you may have noticed a stretch of water resembling a canal which goes from the River Taff at Blackweir southwards to the castle, then following the northern part of the castle, before disappearing under North Road. There is a path that goes alongside the canal in Bute Park, which allows walkers to see a wide variety of flora and fauna like giant rhubarb, originally from South America, and indigenous water birds, dragonflies and butterflies.



The canal then reappears beside Stuttgarter Strasse before it runs into a culvert leading to what is now called Churchill Way, then down Mill Lane and from there on to the docks.

Strangely enough, this canal wasn't built for transport but was constructed in the 1830s to provide a continuous supply of water for Cardiff Docks so that ships could navigate even when the tide was out.





Other News

Paul Davies

It is with sadness that we report on the sudden death, after Christmas, of Paul Davies, a member of the New Friends of Bute Park inaugural committee. The path to bringing the Friends organisation back into action was not an easy one, carried out as it was throughout the Covid lockdowns, but Paul was one of four initial enthusiasts who were determined to make it happen.

Paul brought considerable experience to the committee, given his involvement in a wide variety of community-based activities. He had a deep commitment to conservation as evidenced by his additional role as Chair of the Friends of Cardiff Reservoirs and his regular practical volunteering with conservation work in a number of locations.

Beyond this Paul was also heavily involved in a range of other social and community groups from the Cardiff Arms Park Choir, St. John the Baptist City Parish Church, the Rotary Club of Cardiff, the Labour Party and a devotion to Cardiff Rugby, rarely missing a game.



Paul Davies, centre front, with some of the other New Friends committee members.

Paul's approach was demonstrated by his willingness to roll his sleeves up and volunteer while, at the same time, holding to account those tasked with managing and preserving the parks and open spaces around Cardiff.

Many people in Cardiff have benefitted from the commitment he displayed.

The Bute Park Plant Shop is now Open for Business



The Bute Park Plant Shop [Plant shop - Bute Park \(bute-park.com\)](http://bute-park.com) has now re-opened. It is open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday 10 – 3pm. Currently in stock are a range of seasonal bedding plants, potted spring bulbs, foliage plants, houseplants, shrubs and perennials. Check the Bute Park website and social media feeds for more information on their latest stock over the coming weeks.

Trees - I'm stumped!

Thursday 6th April, 1pm

Join the Bute Park team to look at tree stumps!

- What do you see?
- How old was the tree
- Who lives in and around the stump?
- Do you think the tree will grow again?
- Is there fungi growing on the stump?
- Is there lichen?

Get up close with magnifying glasses

All equipment supplied.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

See Bute Park website for details.





Care about Bute Park? Then come and join us...

NEW FRIENDS OF BUTE PARK are an enthusiastic group of local residents committed to action that supports and enhances the iconic Bute Park in the centre of Cardiff. As well as direct initiatives we also provide a means for the public to influence how the park is operated and how it develops. We work to preserve, protect and promote this special park.

We are a relatively new group, and welcome input from new members who can help us develop our activities and increase the level of member interaction.

Our Annual General Meeting will be on Saturday 13th May from 10.30 to 12.30 in the Bute Park Visitor Centre - the event is open to the public and New Friends members; registration via Eventbrite will be available nearer the time.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1. To protect, conserve and enhance Bute Park as a place of freedom, recreation and enjoyment for the long-term benefit of all sections of the community by working in partnership with Cardiff County Council, other statutory bodies and voluntary groups so that the Park may best serve the local community.
2. To raise the profile and awareness of Bute Park through promotion in the local and wider community.
3. To increase and protect the biodiversity of the park.
4. To promote the use of the park for educational and recreational purposes for the benefit of the wider community.
5. To act as a channel for views and initiatives between the interested public and the Park Management team to increase awareness, access and involvement.
6. To serve as the representative of public and Park users.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Website: Currently the group has a page on the main Bute Park website and at the same time we are developing our own independent website.

In the meantime, visit: <https://bute-park.com/friends-bute-park/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/thenewfriendsofbutepark/>

Email: General enquiries are always welcomed on admin@newfriendsofbutepark.co.uk

Facebook: Just search Facebook for New Friends of Bute Park

HOW WE OPERATE

Supported by a formal constitution, and working closely with the Bute Park Management Team, we have a small committee that is elected at the Annual General Meeting and meets monthly to direct the group's activities on behalf of the wider membership.

As a member you get:

- News and Information – a monthly update on activities
- Newsletter – quarterly colour communication
- Voting rights at the AGM
- Input and feedback on Bute Park proposals and initiatives
- Priority access to events and activities
- The opportunity to influence the way the Park is managed

HOW TO JOIN

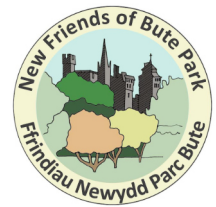
Initial contact should be to our email address of members@newfriendsofbutepark.co.uk to simply tell us you would like to join.

We ask members to pay £10 a year by bank transfer (see below) and to renew that every 12 months, ideally as a standing order.

Co-op Bank, sort code: 08-92-99, account no: 65527858, reference: your name.

Once payment has been made you are a member and will be added to the mailing list (copy of our GDPR policy is available on request) to receive the various updates and information.

Help us to be the public voice of Bute Park.



Upcoming Events

Check the website for updates <https://bute-park.com/whats-on/>

Foodies Festival is the UK's largest touring food and drinks festival, with celebrity chefs, outstanding local street food and huge musical headliners.

foodies FESTIVAL

6th May, 2023 - 8th May, 2023



LETS ROCK 27th May

WALES - THE RETRO FESTIVAL

SOFT CELL / WET WET WET /
TONY HADLEY / HEATHER
SMALL / IMAGINATION / GO
WEST / HEATWAVE / HUE AND
CRY / NIK KERSHAW / FIVE
STAR / HOLLYWOOD BEYOND
/ JUNIOR GISCOMBE / JANET
KAY / NEAL X of SIGUE SIGUE
SPUTNIK / LIVIN JOY /
BLANCMANGE

JACK SAVORETTI SUNDAY 28th MAY

Ovarian Cancer Walk/Run

11th June

Cancer Research UK
Pretty Muddy
+ Race for Life

8th July