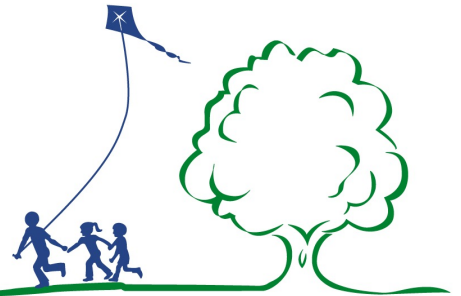


Warley Woods Community Trust



The Pavilion, Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, West Midlands, B67 5ED

Tel: 0121 420 1061 Email: admin@warleywoods.org.uk Web: www.warleywoods.org.uk

26th May 2007

Press Release – release date 1st May 2007

Celebrations as the gates open and the People get their park back

Warley Woods will be celebrating the full reopening of the People's Park to the public on 1st May with a ribbon cutting ceremony to open the new park gates.

Various parts of the park have been inaccessible to the public since November 2006 when contractors began work which has been funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and match funded by Sandwell MBC.

The Woods now has a new driveway which runs from north to south in the park, following the route of the old carriageway, designed by Humphry Repton for the Galton family. This is now accessible to wheeled vehicles – including children's buggies, wheelchairs and bicycles. We have already received news of people who have been able to return to visit the Woods now that they are accessible again.

The grant has also paid for new park railings which make the Woods look loved and cared for. It has also paid for new pathways, bins and benches which compliment the new children's play area.

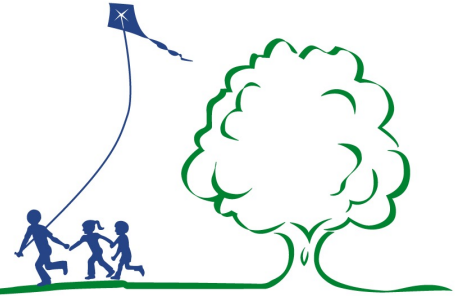
The Heritage Lottery Project still continues until December with more work on paths, tree planting, and a community archaeological dig, but now the main contractors have left the inside of the park it is fully accessible again. The new gates on Abbey Road will be opened to the public providing parking at the meadow end of the Woods.

Viv Cole, Trust Manager said "It has been a busy time in the Woods with contractors and vehicles in several places at once. The public have been very forbearing as various parts of the woods have been out of bounds. It is great to be able to reclaim the park again and we are already receiving many compliments for the improvements that have been made."

Photo opportunity – 1st May 2007, 12 noon. Councillor Steve Eling will be cutting a ribbon on the gates on Lightwoods Hill (opposite Beechwood Road). Parking available at the public car park on Lightwoods Hill. He will be joined by a group of park users – some on wheels – who will benefit from the new driveway. There will then be a walk (or ride) to the far end of the park to open the gates at Abbey Road.

Ends

Warley Woods Community Trust



Notes

- For further information contact: Viv Cole, Trust Manager, 0121 420 1061, 07947 805746, trustmanager@warleywoods.org.uk
- Warley Woods Community Trust (WWCT) is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. WWCT is the only charity in the United Kingdom to have taken responsibility for an urban park. The organisation was formed to take action, following the long term neglect of the park by Birmingham City Council and to ensure local people had a say in what happened to their park.
- The park is leased to Sandwell MBC for 99 years and has been subleased to WWCT for the same period of time.
- It is managed by a Board of Trustees which is made up of local people. The Trust's membership now numbers around 700 individuals.
- The works mentioned in this release are being funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and match funded by Sandwell MBC.
- The Park was named the People's Park after it was saved from becoming sold for housing by public subscription in 1906.
- Photo opportunities: it is possible to arrange for photographs to be taken of tree surgeons at work.