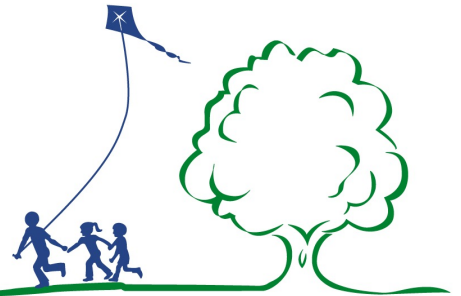


Warley Woods Community Trust



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

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

6th May 2010

Press Release

The Wilderness Launch and Photo Opportunity

Warley Woods Community Trust has recently been giving an official make-over to a space in the park which has a chequered history; an area which had multiple uses in the past and was also the location for an illegal dump of thousands of tonnes of soil and rubble in 2004. Thankfully this area had started to regenerate naturally with the range of plants attracting new birds and insects to the park.

On the advice of local residents, the Trust decided to designate the area for wildlife and to create a new visitor attraction within the park. The Community Trust secured lottery funding from the CommunitySpaces Programme, managed by GroundworkUK which enabled them to survey the area for plants and invertebrates, make it safe, accessible and understandable.

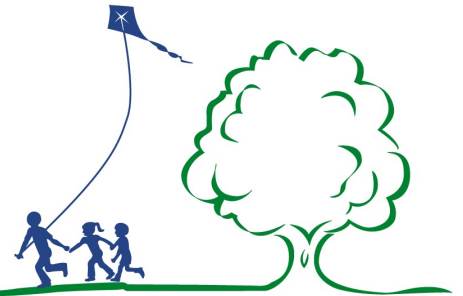
The work on the site has been completed over the Winter and as the plants are starting to resurface and grow after the harsh winter; The Trust will be officially launching The Wilderness on Thursday 13th May at 2pm. This is to help make people aware of this new attraction within the park.

Young people from Lightwoods School will be special guests at the launch where they will meet Paul Stephenson and Mike Bloxham from Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust who will be sharing their research about the plants and wildlife that have their homes on the site. They will be joined by contractors, architect John Challoner, funders, trustees and volunteers from BTCV and other school representatives. The official ribbon will be cut by Steve Eling, Chair of Warley Woods Community Trust. Local residents also have the opportunity to meet the Wildlife experts at 7pm when Mike and Paul will be giving tours of the site.

The entrance to The Wilderness is close to the Harborne Road (opposite Grove Road) pedestrian entrance. Nearest parking is at the Abbey Road entrance (2 minutes walk) or more substantial parking and public toilets at the Lightwoods Hill Car Park (10 minutes walk).

Viv Cole, Trust Manager, said: "It is really great news that this area of the park will finally have some attention and its history will be laid to rest. This area of the park provides something very different from the open parkland, woodland and golf course that make up the rest of the site. It will be managed very differently from other areas of the park and will become a significant wildlife haven in the local area. Now it is completed, we are beginning a programme of inviting local school groups and visitors to see what The Wilderness has to offer. The launch is the first part of this."

Warley Woods Community Trust



Since taking responsibility for the site, Warley Woods Community Trust has created a children's play area and restored the fabric of the park installing pathways, bins, benches and fencing. It has restored the Edwardian Drinking Fountain, refurbished the Pavilion building and created a new long-length pathway around the site. The Wilderness is the Trust's latest improvement project.

Any queries, please call 0121 420 1061

Ends

Notes

- For further information contact: Viv Cole, Trust Manager, 0121 420 1061, 07947 805746, (Monday – Friday) trustmanager@warleywoods.org.uk
- Warley Woods Community Trust (WWCT) is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. WWCT is first charity in the United Kingdom to have taken responsibility for an urban park. The organisation was formed 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 750 individuals and there are over 200 active volunteers.
- The Park was named the People's Park after it was saved from becoming sold for housing by public subscription in 1906.