



David Jolley stands down from the post of Hon Sec September 2023

David and his wife Susan came to live on Oldfield Road, next to the legendary Barbara Clarke 40 years ago.

David is a retired Professor of Psycho-Geriatric Medicine. He developed services in Greater Manchester and Wolverhampton and Staffordshire before retiring in his late 60s. The family (daughters Emily and Sarah) have enjoyed life on Oldfield Road, and regular access to the park.

David says: It has been my privilege to serve as Hon Sec for Friends of John Leigh Park since 2014. I am standing aside now only because of a diagnosis of serious and life-limiting illness.

In April 2014 we saw an article in SAM which declared that Trafford MBC planned to close the aviary on the park because of lack of funding. It was estimated that £28,000 per annum was being spent to maintain the aviary and its birds. The challenge was that it might be possible to save the aviary if there were an active Friends Group. The first Friends of John Leigh Park group had been created 2002/2003 in response to a threat that developers wished to take a portion of land next to the bowling green to provide a locked bowling green available only to private members of The Stamford Bowling Club. This threat had been successfully challenged and FoJLP continued as an active influence for some years under the Chairmanship of Adrian Figgis and then Martyn Phelps. But by 2014 Martyn had died and other members of the group had lost commitment or moved away.

We set about reviving FoJLP as an active group – we have a photograph from SAM which features Alan Rydout and Bryan Kelly declaring a determination that the aviary would be saved. By June 2014 we organised a first Big Lunch on the park – with the encouragement of Sarah Walmsley and Judy Collins. People came. Some of us dressed up as for Alice in Wonderland and The Mad Hatter's Tea Party. Maggie and Jim Leslie set out a stall and people signed up to become members. We applied for a grant, in competition with others, and were successful in obtaining money to help pay for the projected costs of food and cleaning materials and vet's bills for the birds. By autumn of 2014 the council had been persuaded that we could run the aviary competently. We were granted a licence to do this. A constitution was agreed and we became formally a Friends Group under the umbrella of Trafford MBC, alongside a number of other Friends groups.

We met weekly at The Wheatsheaf public house – continuing the tradition of the 2002/3 FoJLP. When our licence was granted there was a great celebration at the Wheatsheaf, which was graced by local councillors and Graham (now Sir Graham) Brady. We have received generous support from Sir Graham and from councillors: Michael Young, Alex Williams, Geraldine Coggins, Dan Jerrome and Michael Welton – and from Sean Anstee when he was Leader of the Council.

We have enjoyed good relations with officers of Trafford MBC and Amey: John Stevens, Ged Manning, Chris Baker, Alan Davies, Dave Rome, Rob Reid, Ray Fyvie, Mark Saxon – and others – and with the men and women who come to look after the bins, the grass and trees and shrubs, the toilet, the bowling green and tennis courts. There is helpful support from other Friends groups – most notably from Shelley Quinton MBE of Victoria Park in Stretford.

But mostly we have been fortunate in the support of local people who have become members of FoJLP – many remaining actively involved throughout the past 10 years: Alan Rydout (Chair), Jim Leslie (treasurer), Rob Keen (treasurer), Maggie Leslie (membership secretary and lead on newsletter), Pat Swindley (Neighbourhood Watch, calendars and cards), George Zolkiewski (legal and other matters), Angela Stone (grants and liaison with local businesses), Bryan Kelly (website) and John Thompson.

Latterly Matthew Curnow is Head Gardener. And many people have given and/or continue to give wonderful service: Patricia Moore, Lynn Dwyer, Trevor Stone, Chris Varley, Alan Blinston, Mike Allen, Ros Brown, Delia, Kevin Smith, Toni, Ruth and Andrew Darling, Carole Atkinson, Sandy and Janet Weipers, Peter Yeoman,

Michael Hilton, Bev and Frank Robinson, Beth Evens – and others who perhaps will forgive me as my memory falters.

There have been battles and wonderful achievements: we have been regular contributors to North West in Bloom and Altrincham in Bloom, latterly being graded 'Outstanding' for more than 5 years. We have been a Green Flag park in successive years since 2015.

There have been events every year: Easter Bonnet Parade with Altrincham Church of England School, Big Lunch, Jamming on the Park, Dogs delight, Teddy Bears Picnic, Carols on the Park (with Altrincham Baptist Church (ABC) – now being joined by St George's). During Covid we provided a safe place for people to exercise and ABC 'magiced' an Advent Trail (which may reappear this year). We have hosted Schools Cross Country races in the autumn with Altrincham Athletics Club.

2017 was a very special year – The centenary of the creation of John Leigh Park by the generous donation of the land to the people of Altrincham by John Leigh – who was soon to become Sir John Leigh. Our special Big Lunch included a marching band through the streets of Altrincham and a visit by two of Sir John's surviving grandchildren. Graham Brady planted a Black Mulberry tree. Leslie Turner wrote a history of the park – which is available in print and in extended version on the website.

We have extended our gardening activity to support a planter in Altrincham (latterly beside the hospital), and to cultivate the flower beds on Manchester Road Corner.

We have made money and friends in attending Car Boot Sales at Dunham and at St Margaret's Church, and via eBay and similar facilities.

We have provided placements for Duke of Edinburgh students registered with local schemes.

The derelict toilet block behind Park House was demolished and replaced by a single unit. The land was landscaped and provides the glorious border of Dawn's Bank to greet people as they come in from Oldfield Road

Also, beside the Octagonal Bed there are two interpretation boards which tell of the history and local geography of the park.

Trees and benches have come to the park from generous donations to complement those provided by the Council.

The Ice House at the top of the park was explored by the Archaeology Society.

We fight to keep the tennis courts free and open.

Funds were found by a combination of Trafford MBC monies and generous donations from local people to repair and improve the gateway at Hartley Road which had been damaged by a series of vehicle impacts over the years. We hope that the gateway is now secure – helped by the provision of traffic posts, an appropriate road sign and road markings.

The trim track has been refurbished and is well used.

The equipment in the play areas is kept in good order and repaired as soon as can be - sometimes requiring years of effort before funds can be identified.

We remain unsure about the future of Parkfield to the south of the park.

We grieve the state of The Wheatsheaf pub and pray that a good solution will be found soon.

We welcome the additional number of dogs and dog-walkers which have come with and since Covid – but it is important that both dogs and owners take care and are respectful of the park, other people and other dogs.

There are thoughts and dreams of other developments.

I have been glad to be the Hon Sec of Friends of John Leigh Park. I shall continue to play a part as long as I can, and wish everyone, especially Chris, well for the future.

David Jolley

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Aviary News

A recent donation of two Budgies, Jodo and Kido, have settled in and are mixing well. If you visit the aviary and are trying to spot them, they are both ringed. We now have about approximately 30 Budgies, 10 Cockatiels, and 1 Bourke. There is information about these birds on the aviary. The Aviary is an attraction for young children, usually accompanied by parents and/or grandparents. Local children's nurseries are regular visitors. We give the birds Millet (a Budgie favourite) twice weekly, and is devoured very quickly. Millet has tasty vitamins/ minerals that are given to supplement their normal daily seed serving.

The life span of Budgies is 5-8 years, the Bourke Parakeet 10-15 years and Cockatiels 25 years.

The Friends group have maintained the upkeep of the Aviary since 2014. Membership and Donations help the upkeep of the Aviary.



The Budgies having a feast on yellow millet.



Our Bourke Parakeet. We call him Mr Grumpy!



The Budgies enjoying sharing a piece of celery.

Aviary volunteering.

Aviary duties are carried out daily, under conditions set by Trafford MBC 2014.

Times AM - anything from 7.15 to 10.30

Floors are swept clean and the debris collected.

A mix of mild disinfectant and water is sprinkled on the floor.

While that process is working, the water vessels are cleaned (if dirty) and filled with fresh water.

The food containers are bowls on the floor and seed feeders hung from the ceiling .

The floor is now ready for a scrub (not on your hands and knees) with stiff brushes.

This is then followed by sprinkling fresh water on the floor.

Now the floor is clean, the food and water containers can be placed back in situ.


Periodically the boxes are checked for youngsters (Budgies that is)! .

There are 2 sheds within the aviary, one is a nursery and the other has become a resting place for the Cockatiels.

We need to return everything to the Mess, making sure doors and gates are locked when leaving.

If you are interested in giving aviary volunteering a try, please contact Alan Rydout on 07973620948. We can arrange to show you what's involved and you can see if you like it.

Alan Rydout





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Introducing our new Honorary Secretary

My Name is Chris Walton, a life member of the Friends of John Leigh Park and I was voted in as your new Honorary Secretary after Dave Jolly decided, due to ill health, to step down from the post.

I'm a retired software engineer who lives within a mile of the park. My wife and I have recently got our eighth Golden Retriever and all of them have enjoyed being walked in the park. When I saw that the Friends were looking for a new Secretary I decide to put my name forward. Having been the secretary of Wilmslow Riding Club for thirty years (we still have 3 horses of our own), I thought the skills I had acquired in that role may well be transferable to the park.

I'm looking forward to settling down into the role and meeting lots of people on my walks in our lovely park.

Chris Walton

Devonshire Road Church
Devonshire Road, Broadheath

01619299364

www.altrincham-evangelicalchurch.org

REGULAR SERVICES

SUNDAY	10 am	Communion (except 1 st Sunday of month)
	11 am	Morning service (including Youth & Children's activity)
TUESDAY	10.30 - 12	Prayer & Bible study
WEDS	10.30 - 12	Take-a-Break ladies coffee morning (term time)



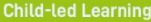


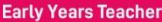

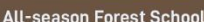

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CAROL SERVICE Sunday 17th Dec 7pm

Stay Curious - Alpha course
starting January 8th

For further info phone Richard on
0161 718 2548

**Altrincham & District Schools
Cross Country Running Events:**
Saturdays, November 18th, and
December 9th. 10am start.

Find us at St George's Parish Centre, Church Walk, Altrincham WA14 4TT

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The Methodist Church

Altrincham Circuit

Join us for Sunday worship from 10.30am
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Timperley - Stockport Road
Hale - Hale Road
Bowdon Vale - Priory Street (10.45am)

Watch our services online
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Visit our cafe at
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10am-2pm

WELCOME - WORSHIP - ACTION



Carols in the Park

Come along, bring a torch and join the singing in a short service with musicians and readings from Altrincham Baptist Church.

Sunday 17th December 4.30pm – 5.15pm.

The Friends of JLP will be selling snacks and hot drinks from their stand. There will be a collection for the Barnabus and Boaz charities for the homeless and vulnerable in Manchester. Advent Trail in the park from early December.



We attended the annual North West in Bloom awards ceremony at Bolton Wanderers' stadium on the 18th of October and were honoured to receive an 'It's Your Neighbourhood' Award - Outstanding Level 5 for the 6th consecutive year! Altrincham received the trophy in the best large town in the North West category!