

Manor House Gardens Users' Group

Chair's report 2008-09

Where else to start but with last month's Party in the Park, celebrating Jimmy Mizen. It reflected our aspirations and energy better than anything else could have.

It was great that the Mizen family chose the park as a symbol of what we might call community "harmony", and the hard work put in by Glendale's Gemma Marston, Baz Golin, Angela Joy and Aysin Djemil, in particular, but everyone else, as well, made it a great success. We have a resource that serves the local community well.

The restoration of Manor House Library has been the other really significant event. Not only is it wonderful to have had it reopen so we regain the service, but it now truly feels like it belongs with the park. Our thanks to Sue Byford for her hard work, together with Peter Richardson and Ralph White.

Last year's big issue was largely in abeyance this year. Northbrook's planned expansion and use of the park was put on hold. We succeeded in forcing the council to backtrack, with the position now being that no decisions have been made and our sub-group likely to resume negotiations with the school and council in the autumn.

Regular events such as the Farmers' Market continue to provide a magnet to attract more visitors, with events such as the Lee Green Local Assembly Day on 4 July benefiting from being held at the same time.

This year was also marked by the acquisition of another park bench, this time thanks to a major contribution from Lee Green Locality Fund, courtesy of our councillors and the Assembly.

We also, almost without noticing, can celebrate another Green Flag - our eighth - apparently regular winners now only get assessed every two years.

No year can pass by without paying tribute to Pistachios in the Park, not only in providing a hub at which to gather, but also a presence that adds to people's sense of security that its patrons provide. Glendale, too, deserve thanks for their work, particularly as their contract comes to an end this year. We wish them well in the upcoming parks contract process.

Lastly, my thanks to the other officers - Angela, Rosalyn and Elizabeth - all of whom helped to make my job easier.

Jim Mallory

Chair, Manor House Gardens Users' Group