

Message from the Chairman

A very Happy Christmas to you all. Thank you for your continuing support and attending our events.

We need to celebrate, improve and defend the UK's parks! Our local green spaces are vital for everyone and every community, for all age groups and all interests! They are an essential and unique service promoting relaxation, recreation and play, wildlife and bio-diversity, attractive walking, green jobs and skills, heritage, health and social well-being, and community cohesion.

The new car parking charges are disappointing and short-sighted of those who wish to deprive Billericay residents of a much-loved & vital aspect of our lives.

A Happy New Year to you all – we hope that the park continues to bring you health, happiness and enjoyment over the coming twelve months!

A Merry Christmas to everyone!

Charles Novis – Chairman

Carols in the Park Saturday December 13th



Come and join us in the park to celebrate Christmas. Music will be provided by Forging Men and carol sheets will be provided. Meet for mince pies and mulled wine just before sunset from 3.30pm, near the Bowls Pavilion. Carols begin at 4pm. Wrap up well & bring a torch with you! Everyone welcome! If weather is questionable on the day, please check our website!

Photography Competition

We have sadly had fewer entries for this year's photo competition. The winners will be announced early in the New Year.

Meanwhile the 2026 Photography Competition starts in January, so perhaps some of you may catch a few wintry scenes in the park this winter. The closing date is October 31st 2026 at midnight. Details will soon be on our website: www.lakemeadows.org.uk

The Spirit of the Child in the Park

Our new sculpture, by John Doubleday, was unveiled by him and our secretary Rosie in a short ceremony on Tuesday November 18th. Our gardeners and committee members, met with with two local councillors, Mayflower Rotary Club members and staff from Neighbourhood (Parks) Services to witness the sculpture being revealed.



The spiral pathway leads the Child upwards from the water to the sky, meeting some 20 creatures on the journey, whilst encouraging an interest in the natural world. Made of 'ciment fondu' the sculpture has a slate wash at present, which will enable the work to weather gradually.

'A present from the children of the past to the children of the present and future'. and is designed to complement the original statue. it is hoped that children will once again enjoy finding the hidden creatures.

Christmas Wordsearch

E	P	I	P	H	A	N	Y	A	D	G	N	I	X	O	B	E
S	U	A	L	C	N	S	N	O	I	T	A	R	O	C	E	D
M	A	G	I	W	I	A	X	R	E	E	D	N	I	E	R	K
U	C	X	G	O	B	N	I	V	Y	E	K	R	U	T	R	H
Z	H	Y	H	P	O	T	H	G	I	N	D	I	M	Q	I	O
H	R	A	T	F	R	A	N	K	I	N	C	E	N	S	E	L
T	I	N	S	E	L	Z	Y	U	L	E	T	I	D	E	S	L
A	S	T	N	E	S	E	R	P	Y	R	A	M	T	S	R	Y
E	T	H	G	I	L	E	L	D	N	A	C	Y	N	L	E	J
R	M	E	R	R	Y	L	G	E	V	E	D	R	E	O	T	K
W	A	K	Y	T	A	V	I	T	A	N	L	R	V	R	N	C
U	S	D	R	A	C	E	F	L	E	O	O	H	D	A	I	A
S	L	E	I	G	H	S	T	D	L	O	G	S	A	C	W	S

Advent	Gift	Presents
Berries	Gold	Reindeer
Boxing Day	Holly	Robin
Cards	Ivy	Sack
Candlelight	Lights	Santa
Carols	Logs	Sleighs
Christmas	Magi	Tinsel
Claus	Mary	Turkey
Decorations	Merry	Winter
Elves	Midnight	Wreath
Epiphany	Myrrh	Yuletide
Frankincense	Nativity	

The Gardeners have continued to meet regularly every Tuesday morning to look after all the garden areas. They will be finishing for the winter after their annual tool-cleaning and coffee morning in early December. Our thanks to each and every one of them! They do a sterling job and are frequently rewarded by very complementary comments from passers by.

The geraniums did particularly well in the raised bed this year, despite the hot, dry summer. It was decided to leave them in as long as they were flowering, but recent frosts mean they will now have to be dug up. The bed will be left fallow over winter and replanted next May. Do come and help us in the Spring! We can always do with more helpers!

Children's Corner

Q. What do monkeys sing at Christmas time? **A.** Jungle bells.

Q. What do elves do when they get home from school? **A.** Gnome work.

Q. Knock, knock.

A. Who's there?

Q. Olive

A. Olive Who?

A. Olive the other reindeer.

Q. How many gifts are there in the carol 'The Twelve days of Christmas'? The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter!



Mistletoe is a hemiparasitic plant that grows high up on a variety of trees, including the silver maple in the Garden of the Child. There are up to 1500 species of mistletoe around the world.

One of the earliest mentions of mistletoe is in Norse mythology. It's reputed that

Balder (son of Odin) (364) was killed with a spear made of mistletoe, which led to Balder's mother, Frigg, banishing mistletoe to the tops of the trees.

It has been widely used in medicine for treating both epilepsy and tumours, and in sorcery too, with tales of its use to keep witches at bay & as a love potion.

The tradition of hanging it indoors at Christmas supposedly goes back to ancient Druid times. It is meant to have mystical powers, which bring good luck to the house and fend off evil spirits.

The name mistletoe comes from 'mistel-tān', meaning a 'different twig'. It was once considered to be sacred and symbolises love, peace, fertility and life. It stays green all year, bearing its white fruit even in winter, so ancient people believed it was a powerful symbol of renewal and protection.

Mistletoe was hung on the old English decoration, the Christmas Bough or Kissing Bough, which was first made during Tudor times. People would wear mistletoe charms for good luck and protection from witches and evil spirits. Mistletoe was hung over doorways, ensuring only happiness could enter.

The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe was first recorded in the early 1700s. The custom at the time was that a man was able to kiss any woman underneath the mistletoe, and a berry would be picked with each kiss. It was good luck to accept and bad luck not to. Times may have changed since then, but the Christmas charm of mistletoe lives on. Although the white berries are poisonous, a kiss under the mistletoe soon became a popular tradition.

National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces

promotes the voluntary sector concerned with the protection and improvement of the UK's parks and open green spaces of all kinds as public facilities and resources for the benefit of the public. It does this by providing advocacy, advice and information to its members and the wider public in support of its' charitable objects. It acts as an umbrella for Friends Groups Forums and other stakeholders of public open spaces nationally. FoLM is a member.

Copies of this newsletter for our postal members have been printed by the Co-op Funeralcare Billericay, whom we should like to thank for their generosity & continued support.