



Going underground: A Thames Water tanker in place for the drainage inspection at Cherry Tree Wood.

Thames Water investigates flooding in Cherry Tree Wood

By John Lawrence

A team from Thames Water spent the whole of Thursday 14 April surveying the drains they are responsible for in Cherry Tree Wood in an effort to work out why the flooding in the park is getting worse year on year.

As we have reported in recent editions, surface water has been lying on large parts of the field through the winter and early spring, and is proving slow to dry up. The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are also alarmed that the flooding has spread to new areas close to the tennis courts.

They appealed directly to Barnet Council and to Thames Water to investigate the flooding before it causes large parts of

the park to become unusable year-round.

Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends, said: "We are

edging closer and closer to understanding the flooding problem. Responsibility for it falls between Barnet Council and Thames. I hope that we will be able to get some practical solutions to this issue in the near future."



Under water: Cherry Tree Wood in 2021

Sensational display of snakes in the grass

By David Melsome

When Archer reader Jan Masson drew our attention to some rare flowers growing on the site of the demolished pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood, we decided to check them out with the people in the know. They are snake's head fritillaries and they were planted by the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood gardeners, along with some native bluebells, after being bought from a sustainable source.

The delicate hanging flowers of the fritillaries have made a wonderful display these last couple of months and they seem to be thriving in the wood's damp conditions.

The wetlands and hay meadows that are their natural habitat are declining so it is important that they can still be protected in favourable pockets. They can also be found in Long Lane Pasture at the opposite end of East Finchley.

Kate Brown, from the Cherry Tree Wood gardeners, said that in total a couple of thousand bulbs were planted back in 2020 after the pavilion's removal. "They take a while to establish and so they are making a splash this year. They have enjoyed the wetness of the wood as they cannot be allowed



In bloom: The snakes head fritillaries

to dry out in winter," she said. Fritillaries bloom from March to April and there are hopes that the wood's bluebells will come good too and flower in May.

Get out into the garden... or somebody else's

By Susan Bennett

The past two years have proved how important gardens and nature are for our well-being. It has taken until recently for science to catch up with what so many of us already knew. The National Garden Scheme has raised money for nursing charities since 1927 by "opening gardens of quality, character and interest to the public".

I volunteer as Assistant County Organiser, encouraging owners to share their creativity and passion with visitors. Our new website ngs.org.uk makes it possible for people around the globe to access information and beautiful images of gardens, as well as to learn about recent partnerships with The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, and the Queen's Woodland Trust "Green Canopy" initiative marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

More gardens, more charities

The NGS is broadening its horizons and supporting smaller projects as well as being a main benefactor to Macmillan, Marie Curie, Parkinson's UK, Hospice UK and other major charities.

More than 3,500 gardens will open this year. Together with plant sales, homemade cakes have always been a huge draw. Our president Dame Mary Berry says: "We're inviting everyone. It doesn't matter whether your garden is large or small, tidy or untidy. Join in and help raise funds for vital nursing and health charities that so many of us, our family and friends often rely on in times of need."

Do join in at ngs.org.uk/gardenparty. You can arrange afternoon tea or Prosecco by candlelight (no one sees the weeds). You can even ask for support with posters and invitations and download patterns for bunting.

In your neighbourhood

Meanwhile, there are some wonderful local gardens to visit to inspire you, including ours, with a Baroque temple, oriental tea house and carp pond. Our plant sale is a huge

draw, as are my partner Earl's delicious cakes. Our garden at 5 St Regis Close, N10 2DE opens Sunday 26 June and Sunday 31 July from 2pm to 6.30pm. Admission is £4, children free.

Other open gardens are: Sunday 5 June, 19 Coolhurst Road, N8, 2pm-6pm, admission £4; Sunday 12 June, 66 Abbots Gardens, N2, (London Gardens Society award winner), 2pm-6pm, admission £4; Sunday 19 June, 92 and 100 Hampstead Way, NW11, 2pm-6pm, combined admission £8. Pre-booking essential at www.ngs.org.uk



Splashes of colour: Susan and Earl's spectacular garden in Muswell Hill is open for viewing.

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