

# Ken, 90, completes 50 parkruns in green space he helped save

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Kenneth Leggett walking in Catton Park - Credit: Brittany Woodman

He was the architect behind the transformation of a former plot of arable land into a wildflower haven for people across the city to enjoy.

And at 90-years-old, Kenneth Leggett MBE, of Colkett Drive in Old Catton, has completed his 50th parkrun in the very park he helped turn into an oasis.

Mr Leggett bagged nearly £1m worth of funding to regenerate Catton Park back in 2005.

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Kenneth Leggett enjoying Catton Park - Credit: Brittany Woodman

Mr Leggett, who started looking into grants for the park in 2000, said: "The Catton parkrun is tremendous. It is a wonderful place for the community to meet. You are racing against yourself and you don't mind how fast other people are.

"It is good for me mentally and physically. It is a form of relaxation because of my personal connection with the park. It is very special."



Kenneth Leggett on a Catton Park bench - Credit: Brittany Woodman

Dan Goodwin, co-event director of Catton parkrun, which marks its eighth birthday on October 2, said: "Ken has regularly championed it and encouraged others to take part. The core team at Catton are very proud of his achievement."

Mr Leggett, a great-great grandfather, moved to the area in the 1960s and became involved in saving the 70-acre park after retiring in 1991 as Norfolk County Secretary for the National Farmers Union.

Catton Park, which is intertwined with the 200-history of Catton Hall on the edge of the open space, was opened to the public for the first time in October 2007.



Catton Hall on the edge of Catton Park - Credit: Steve Adams

"I was concerned that someone would buy the meadow in front of the park and develop it and cars were being dumped in the woods," he added.

He is now a tenant of the meadow, which he can see from his back garden, and sublets it.

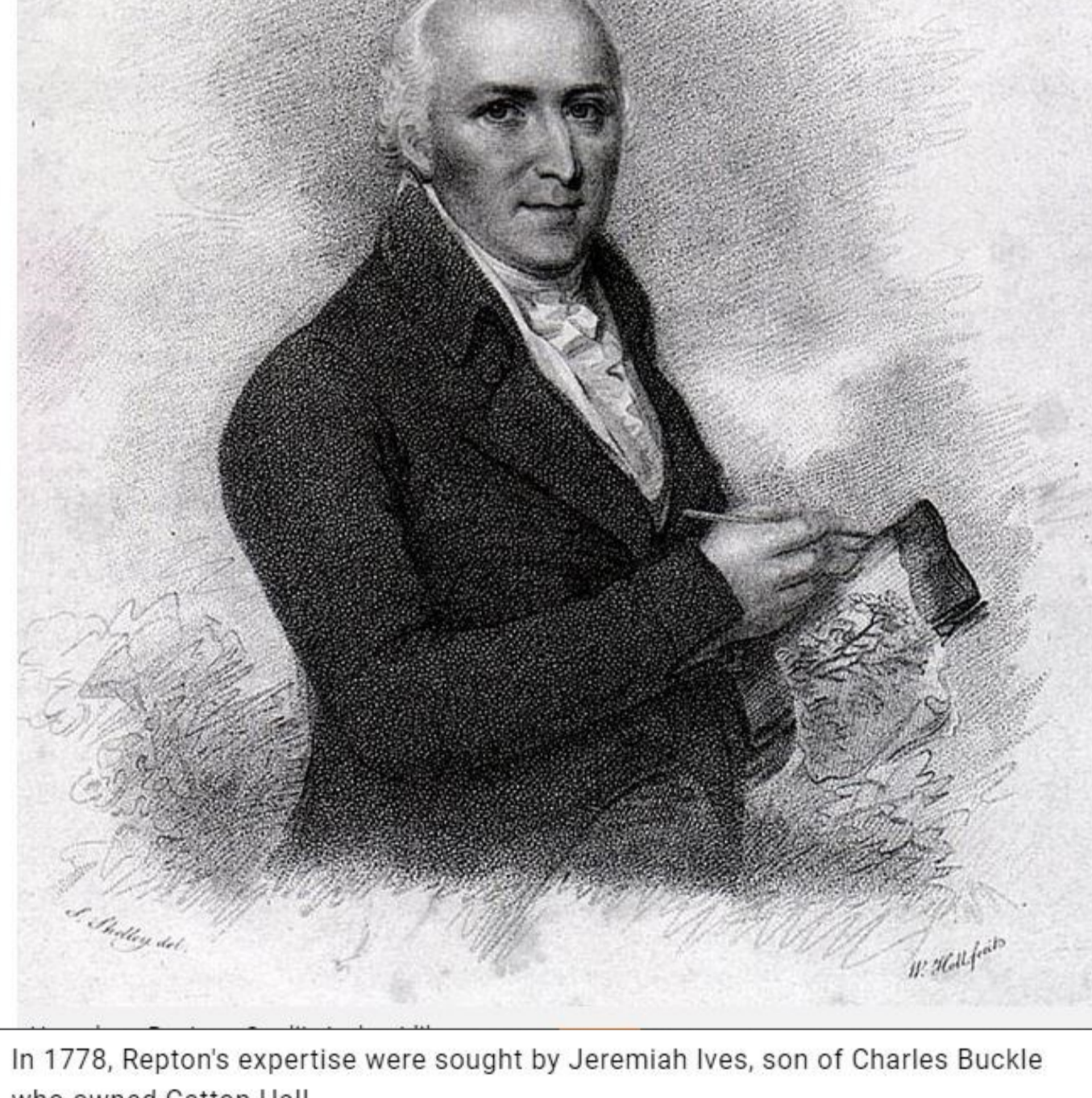
Mr Leggett, who is also a Catton parkrun volunteer, added: "I wanted to secure the future of Catton Park to be a haven for quiet enjoyment for local people."

Some 50 acres of the park are now managed by Old Catton Parish Council and Catton Park Trust with funds raised by Friends of Catton Park.

To join email [friends@cattonpark.com](mailto:friends@cattonpark.com)

## Park history

Dog walkers, runners and walkers can partly enjoy Catton Park thanks to the work of 18th century landscape designer Humphry Repton.



In 1778, Repton's expertise were sought by Jeremiah Ives, son of Charles Buckle who owned Catton Hall.

The park was owned by the Ives family until 1835 and sold to George Brewer, who sold the estate to banker John Henry Gurney in 1852.

It was later taken on by Samuel Gurney Buxton in 1866 and remains in the Buxton family. Norfolk County Council also owns 20 acres.



Kenneth Leggett next to a wooden sculpture of Humphry Repton in Catton Park - Credit: Brittany Woodman

In 1940-46 the estate was used by the army and for food production.