



The Friends of Holland Park
Summer 2020

Hi there kids!



This page is for you, with fabulous things to discover about Holland Park and fun activities to do.

Colour in this beautiful butterfly

There are different types of butterfly and each has its own special pattern on its wings so that they can recognise other butterflies of their own type. Below is a Peacock Butterfly with marks on its wings that are like the 'eye' marks on a peacock's train feathers. Have a careful look at the coloured picture of the butterfly and notice the beautiful markings on its wings. Then copy the coloured pattern onto the drawing below.



Mixed up poem!

*Violets are red and roses are blue
I love yellow trees
And green primroses too.*

The person who wrote this poem has got all mixed up with the colours and put them in the wrong places. I don't think that blue roses can be right. Have a go at moving the colour words so they are next to the right plant. **Answer** ✓

Answer:
Violets are blue and roses are red
I love green trees
And yellow primroses too.



Freddie Fox says:
"Did you know?"

Long before people had cars, the owners of Holland House used to arrive in a carriage pulled by horses.

The horses were kept in the Old Stable Yard just south of the café. Walk between the gate posts and into the yard. Imagine it is 200 years ago in the year 1820. On your right there were stalls for the horses. In front of you there were spaces for the carriages. What do you think it would feel like to harness the horses to a carriage and drive it up to the big house?



Why are ladybirds red?

Brightly coloured insects or animals often taste bad to the predators that eat them and some are really poisonous.

The bright colour is to warn off the birds or predators and let them know that the tasty-looking insect could make them sick if they eat it. The little red ladybird with black spots leaks a yellow liquid when it is threatened. It is a defence because the yellow stuff tastes really, really nasty. It won't hurt you if you touch it, but birds definitely get the message that bright spotted things are not at all nice to eat!



Dear Friends

Like me, you will have spent most of your time at home over the past months. I hope you are well and have managed the challenge of being within four walls for all or much of the day. Some of you have visited the park, which has remained open, and sent news or photos; thank you. Some of you have decided not to visit and must be missing the wonderful spring show. Now that the government has withdrawn its 'stay-at-home' guidance, the idverde gardeners have returned to work and are tackling the weeds with gusto. The Parks Police and the idverde maintenance team have been



Jennie Kettlewell

present in the park throughout the lockdown, and we are most grateful for their hard work and cheerful smiles. Distancing is difficult in a public space and we ask all of you that you do your best, even if you find some others are less considerate.

One day things will get back to something approaching normal, though it will be gradual, and I look forward to meeting you all again at an event, or just out for a stroll. Until then, keep well and keep cheerful.

Jennie Kettlewell, Chairman

Events this Year

Until we hear from the Government we do not know if any of our planned events can be run in 2020. We do not know whether any 'gatherings' will be permitted and, if so, whether numbers will be limited within the confines of a venue. Our approach is to fix provisional dates, book the venues and then decide nearer the time if the events can take place.

8 July, Pimm's in the Park party: Cancelled. The marquee has not been erected this year.

16 September, Ancora Duo: We have had to postpone this concert, which usually takes place during our spring art exhibition. It is a popular event, so we have made a provisional booking with Anne Allen (flute) and Sarah Freestone (guitar). The next newsletter will be too late to let you know, so keep an eye on our website and park notice boards. We will e-mail those of you who have given us your permission to use your e-mail address.

20 October, Autumn talk: We have planned a talk about artist, Rebecca Byrne's, project to create paintings and new tile designs inspired by Holland

Park's historic Florentine tiles. Rebecca and two other speakers will show us examples of paintings and designs, old and new, before a discussion is opened up to the audience. This will take place in the Kensington Central Library lecture theatre and will be free to attend, although tickets must be booked. Once again, we cannot confirm this event until we hear more from the Government. More in the next newsletter, including details of the exhibition of Rebecca's paintings in The Ice House during October.

6 December, Christmas carol concert: We do hope that by Christmas restrictions will be lifted sufficiently for us to welcome Philip Simms and The Tallis Chamber Choir for their twenty-first Christmas Concert with us. It is always a cheering display of talent and fun.

Ecology walks and talks: As with everything else, the programme of interesting wildlife walks and talks, many sponsored by The Friends, is on hold. If permitted, they might resume later in the year. Keep up with news on www.rbkc.gov.uk/ecology.

AGM

As you know, we had to cancel our AGM, planned for 22 April this year. The Charity Commission has been informed and we wait to hear if there is a deadline by which we must hold the meeting. Gatherings are still not permitted and we do not know when they will be, so we have not planned a new date. In the meantime, the Report and Accounts for 2019 have been approved by the trustees and the Independent Examiner. More news in our Autumn newsletter.

Holland House conservation

Planning and Listed Building consent have been obtained for the conservation work, and the next stage is the tendering process to choose a contractor to do the work. Covid-19 has slowed things down, but it is hoped that a contractor will be in place by mid-September. Work can then be commenced this autumn, so that all is completed before Opera Holland Park start their build in March 2021.

Conservation of historic tiles

On hold due to Covid-19.

Road resurfacing

The first stage has been completed and the road north of the Earl's Court gate has a fine new surface and neat edging. Green Drive, the road that runs between the Ilchester Gate, across the front of Holland House to the Duchess of Bedford Gate is due to start during the last week in May and should be well under way by the time you read this.



Resurfaced Earl's Court path

RBKC

Holland Park Café is now open for take-away only. Likely hours are 10 am to 4.30 pm, but this might vary. Outside seating is not open.

Toilets

Public toilets in the park will re-open and drinking fountains will be switched on once Park Management is satisfied risks to park users and cleaning staff have been considered and mitigated. Best practice is being shared with Parks for London and other boroughs. They might already be open by the time you read this. The much needed refurbishment of the toilets is temporarily on hold because it is likely that the approved design will need to be amended due to the impact of Covid-19, i.e. the need for sensor taps/touch-free features etc.



Jennie Kettlewell

Sun Trap gate

Sun Trap entrance

Work is recommencing to repair the north wall. The Sun Trap gate is being removed for restoration; have you ever noticed what a fine gate it is? We will have to put up with some rather unsightly Heras fencing until this is done.



Green woodpecker (from our bird guide)

Carrie Starren's Gift to The Friends

Actually, it is her second gift. The first was her very generous fulfilment of our commission to write *The Families of Holland House*, a book much appreciated by The Friends. The second..... well let's go back to the start.

Carrie was born and educated in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. She was Local Studies Librarian from 1990 to 2000 and has since run her own company, specialising in research, talks and exhibitions on West London local history.

Throughout this career she has amassed a fascinating collection of information on Holland House, the people who lived there and the grounds: now Holland Park. She very kindly asked if The Friends would like her collection. We would. So off I went to meet Carrie and collect the files. As you can imagine, Carrie, having been a Local Studies Librarian, had all the material beautifully organised in labelled files, with notes on who held copyright if we wanted to use anything. It has made fascinating reading for me during lockdown. One task that remains is to digitise all the many slides. Another gift was both volumes of the Ilchester's *Chronicles of Holland House*. So, The Friends now own some excellent historical records. THANK YOU VERY MUCH, Carrie.

Jennie Kettlewell

Member, David Jeffreys reports that, this year, there are more blackcaps and chiffchaffs in the park than he can ever remember. At least two chaffinches have established territories. He heard a green woodpecker on 27 May: the first time for some weeks, and member, Tasso Leventis, thinks they are breeding in the park. Nuthatches are present much of time and are probably breeding here. The moorhen on Lord Holland's pond had a chick but is still sitting, and you can sometimes see the chick under Mum. The moorhens on the Wildlife Enclosure pond have had chicks, but it is difficult to see much over the fence and through the now tall vegetation. There are plenty of starlings around that certainly have bred.

Take the opportunity to go bird spotting in the park with the aid of our guide: *The Birds of Holland Park and their Precious Habitats*. This can be bought on The Friends' website or from Rhoddy Wood on 020 7602 0304 or rhoddy.wood@virgin.net

All this is heartening news and wonderful to see. We might be in lockdown, but the birds are not.

Jennie Kettlewell



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Orangery during lockdown

What an unusual and unsettled period we have all been experiencing over the past few months. For the first time in 37 years there was no Friends of Holland Park Art Exhibition: the Orangery was empty.

After all the pre-administration was completed, to have to cancel was very disappointing. I know we all look forward to the event, and the wonderful weather would have drawn a lot of visitors and some great sales. Well, next year. Thank you to all the artists for donating your registration fee, it was very much appreciated.

We also felt sorry for this year's Feature Artist, Annie Leach, who had been working hard to complete her exhibition pieces. Hold them for next year Annie!

To all the artists who were working on their artworks, it will be a bigger and better exhibition next year.

Creatively this has been a very good period for my family, and I hope you have been able to use the lockdown to work on new or existing projects. During the year in London I paint, but on my holidays, one in summer and one at Christmas, I usually write. Throughout the lockdown I have had the opportunity to complete a script I have been working on for two years.

Sandra, Alex and I live near Holland Park and have been walking through it almost daily. The park has been such an asset to our neighbourhood during this period; we are indeed fortunate to have such a wonderful green space.

Let us all continue to take care and stay safe. I look forward to working on the 2021 exhibition with you all.

Dates for your diary: the 2021 exhibition will be held 10th to 18th April, and all the usual artist details will be available in the autumn newsletter.

Gordon French



Gordon and Sandra at work

Ring-necked parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*), or rose-ringed parakeets, as they are also known, can be seen everywhere today in London parks and gardens; brightly coloured and with hooked beaks, they are unlike any native British bird. The species is to be found widely from Senegal to Burma. The ones we see in Britain have been proved by genetic testing to be natives of northern India and Pakistan, where they learned to survive in the foothills of the Himalayas, and are considered to be a hybrid of two Asian subspecies: *P.k. borealis* and *P.k. manillensis*. Perhaps it is because of their hardy natures that they have settled in northern Europe. They are now the most northerly breeding parrot species in the world.

The actual date of introduction is debatable. They were certainly present in the wider London area in the 1970s, mainly in the west and south of the capital. By the year 2000 they had reached Blackheath, South London, with sizeable populations also present to the west of the capital. They were first recorded in Holland Park in 2004, with the first breeding record in the park in 2006. Nowadays they are present throughout much of the south-east of England, and the population has spread to other urban areas, with birds even being recorded in Scottish cities, though these are likely to be due to further escapes rather than to the population expanding from London.

How they came to settle in England is open to question. One story, quite unfounded, is that they were released having been brought to England to lend colour to the film *The African Queen*, which was shot at the Isleworth Studios in 1951. More reliable records dating from the 1960s suggest that breeding pairs were released from private collections brought by colonial families returning from India; and there would have been any number of pet releases over the years. It is also thought that some escaped from aviaries during the great storm of 1987. From then on they established themselves in feral populations, most likely



Ring-necked parakeet

surviving on food put out for native birds. There are now thought to be up to 50,000 individuals in the UK, with the majority being present in and around Greater London and immediate areas of the Home Counties. There is also another discrete population on the Isle of Thanet in North-East Kent.

Parakeets are noisy, boisterous, agile birds. People tend either to hate them or to love them. They are voracious consumers of all kinds of fruit, which is why they are not popular with fruit farmers. They nest in holes in trees, which they are too lazy to dig out for themselves, so they compete with native birds such as starlings, jackdaws and nuthatches for ready-made holes. These colourful immigrants are to be seen in all London boroughs. In West London, flocks of them roost at night together with other birds at Wormwood Scrubs. From here they disperse every day to pursue their search for food in parks and gardens including, of course, Holland Park. There is a tree near Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens where a flock gathers daily to take food from outstretched hands. The birds will work at fruit stuck on branches but prefer bird seed. The greatest population concentration remains in the London area and its surroundings, especially in winter. This has led to an increase in the population of birds of prey here too: sparrowhawks, peregrine falcons and hobbies have been observed preying on the parakeets.

Having been resident in the British Isles for at least half a century, ring-necked parakeets are now classified as naturalised British birds. Like all birds living wild in Britain, they are protected by law. The species can be controlled under licence only in isolated cases where they pose a threat to commercial interests, such as fruit farms. The RSPB consider it important that the spread of the parakeets is monitored in relation to native species, and any potential negative impacts assessed.

Kathleen Hall with ornithologist Bill Haines

All of us must now have read about the benefits of nature, especially as a haven in a dense urban environment. The advantages of exercise are obvious but, when we slow down and look at the beauty around us we experience physical wellbeing and mental calm.



Jennie Kettlewell

The park's woodlands are a wonderful place to pause and reflect. We ask joggers to please be considerate and respect the tranquillity so many enjoy.

Natural green space in Holland Park

Just sitting in the sunshine with friends is a pleasure we can enjoy once again, but please follow guidelines for safety during Covid-19.

Enjoying green space on the Sun Trap lawn



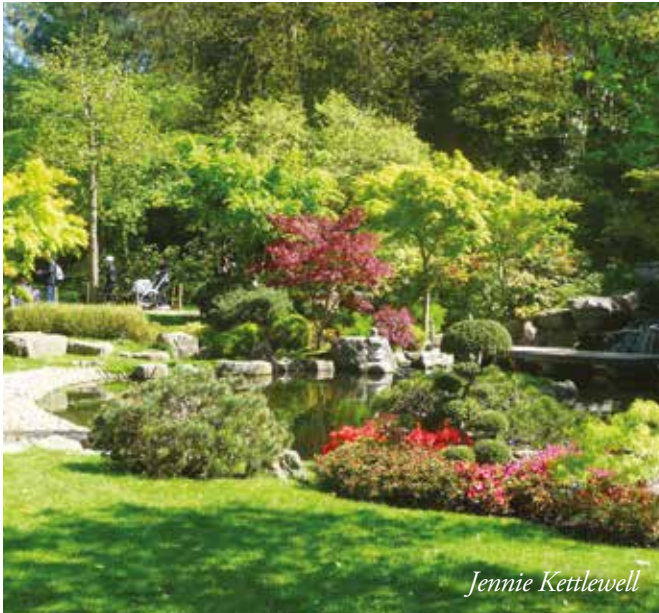
Jennie Kettlewell



Jennie Kettlewell

The Met. Police still visit occasionally and their horses really appreciate a bit of green grass and a change from hard streets.

Met. Police horses on the North Lawn



Jennie Kettlewell

The Kyoto Garden is designed as a Japanese strolling garden. The concept is to walk slowly and reflect on what you see.

The Kyoto Garden

When we respect our wildlife and allow it space, the birds and small mammals also enjoy the calm of the park.

Fox in Holland Park



Mike Martyn-Johns



RBKC

The Ecology Service ran a trial mindfulness session, before the need for social distancing. We hope there will be more mindfulness sessions in future.

Mindfulness in nature

We are fortunate to have woodlands and other lovely green spaces in our park. We need to make sure they are appropriately maintained and remain tranquil.

Jennie Kettlewell



Over the last month you might have noticed someone litter-picking in Holland Park, usually early in the morning. Andrew Lee is 17 years old and is currently at Westminster School. He intends to study medicine and was scheduled to do a volunteering placement with St Thomas' Hospital, but the pandemic put a stop to that. His school ethos had taught him to give something back to society, so he considered how else he could contribute, and chose to combine his

passion for the environment with raising money for St Thomas'. He is visiting Holland Park each day for 30 days to help keep the footpaths litter-free.

Although idverde's regular park maintenance team do their job and keep the paths clear of the worst rubbish, there are far more people in the park during the pandemic and therefore more rubbish. Andrew says: 'By helping clean up the litter, I hope to benefit local animals and plants, and make easier the efforts of others to stay healthy and active during these challenging times.'

Even better, he loves the park and is very interested in the trees.

He has greatly appreciated the support given by members of the Council and by The Friends of Holland Park. By the time you read this, his project might be completed, but his Just Giving page is probably still open, so why not support Andrew, Holland Park and St Thomas' Hospital.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/andrew-lee45>

How your Newsletter was Distributed

Some of you might have wondered how we got our newsletter distributed in the present emergency, especially as we had to plan it to work even if we had to do it during full lockdown. Usually over twenty deliverers gather, not all at once but in an unregulated flow, in Rhoddy's flat and there receive their address labels and count out the correct numbers of newsletters, envelopes and any inserts. Some sit down and immediately fill their envelopes while chatting cheerfully to others. Some prefer to do the filling at home but all end up walking or bicycling to put the newsletters through individual doors.

All deliverers are asked each time whether they are free, and this time Rhoddy asked especially early to understand who would be willing if the counted but not stuffed envelopes and contents were left outside

Rhoddy's flat door in named bags to be picked up. They would need to be filled at home and could then be delivered as part of exercise. About a quarter of the usual deliverers declined, either because they were not in London or because they were self isolating and not going out at all or because they just would not feel safe. The remainder felt they could do it without breaching social distancing, and sounded happy to do it. Our sincere thanks to them and also to a few extra people who spontaneously asked if they could help. They all deserve a clap.

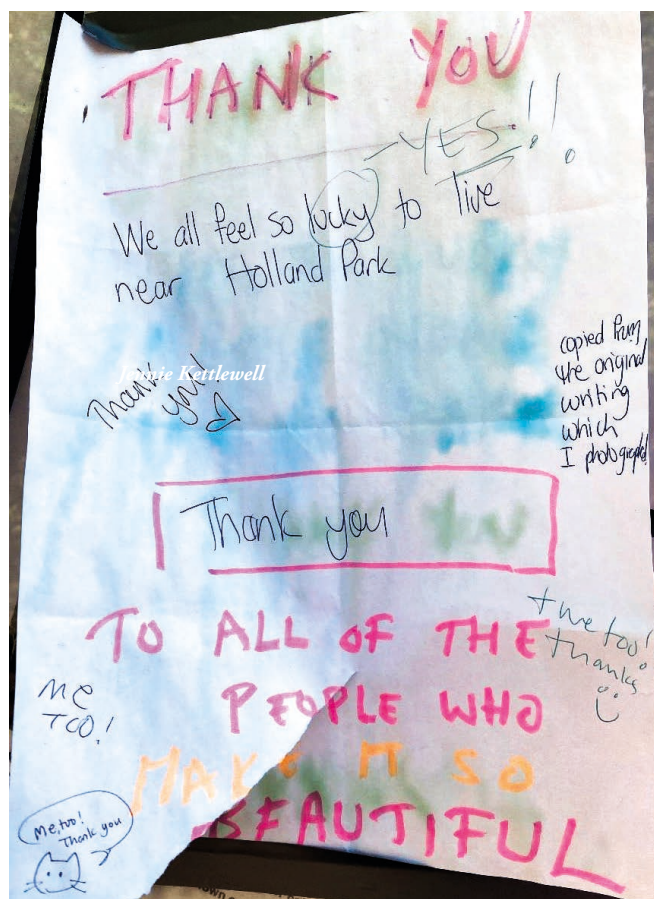
Even so it might be possible that a few rounds will not be covered, so if your newsletter arrives atypically with a stamp, that is why.

Rhoddy Wood

Hi everyone! We know that a lot of you have been able to visit the park throughout these difficult times, and we felt it worth keeping a record about what you have especially appreciated and how it has helped you. You might like to say this in either words or pictures. So, we are planning in the autumn issue to print a selection of your views. All our newsletters are kept in the Local Studies section of the public library in Hornton Street, so your feelings about Holland Park during Covid-19 will be available for historians down the ages.

To help us manage the project, all contributions should follow these guidelines:

1. Anyone may contribute, members or non-members. We welcome under 16s who should state their age and provide the name of a parent or guardian through whom we may correspond.
2. All contributors should give their name and contact details, including phone number and e-mail address if possible.
3. All contributions should be original and should be given a title.
4. Written submissions should be not more than 200 words.
5. Pictures can be photographs, drawings or paintings which we hope you might enjoy producing. Each contributor may provide up to 4 items, either as illustrations to their text or as stand-alone items. The size limit is A3, i.e. 11 1/2" x 16" or 29cm x 42cm. If this size is exceeded, the edges will get cut off during reproduction. Please remember they will show much smaller on the page.
6. All contributions will be acknowledged.
7. All contributions will be credited to the authors unless otherwise requested.
8. All contributions will become the property of the Friends and will not be returned.
9. All contributions might be reproduced in whole or in part in the Friends' newsletters and possibly



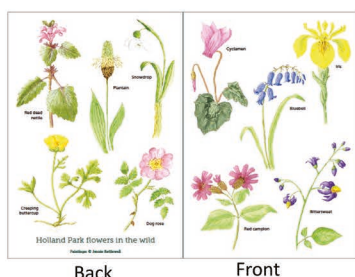
Spontaneous Appreciation Pinned up in the Park

in other of our publications or on merchandise. It should be noted that the newsletters are uploaded in full to our website.

10. Contributions should be sent to Rhoddy Wood, preferably by e-mail at rhoddy.wood@virgin.net or by post to 21 Kenton Court, 356 Kensington High Street, W14 8NN. No signature to be shown may be requested. Pictures should be packed with a piece of cardboard to avoid damage in the post. If anyone wants to hand deliver, it is possible to do this while maintaining social distancing, but please first telephone 020 7602 0304.

11. The closing date for submission is 7 August.

Rhoddy Wood



Greetings card, with paintings on both back and front, but blank inside. includes envelope. 105 x 148 mm

£2.50 each.

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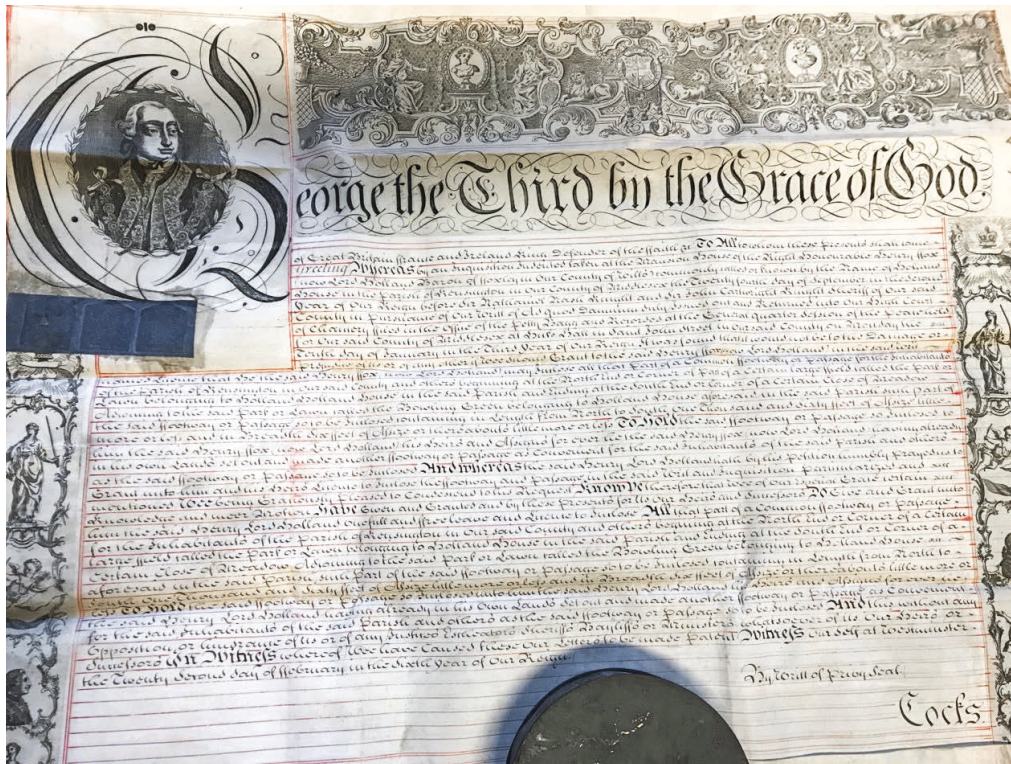
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- Order on-line on www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org +P&P

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Richard Tufnell, Senior Property Manager of Ilchester Estates, entertained us with a most interesting talk at our Winter Warmer on 25th February. He explained the long history of the Ilchester's connection with Holland House before moving on to more recent times. There is still a connection because the residual estate outside the park, known as the Holland Park Estate, is now in the ownership of the 6th Earl of Ilchester's great granddaughter and is managed by Ilchester Estates.

Much of what Richard showed us came from the Ilchester archives at Melbury, Dorset, and was material most of us will not have seen before, and fascinating it was too.



We knew that rights to the public footpath across the front of Holland House were traded for rights to what is now Holland Walk, previously part of the park. It was extraordinary to see a slide of the original grant for the right of way (above) from Kensington High Street in the south to Holland Park Avenue in the north by George III, complete with the massive royal seal.

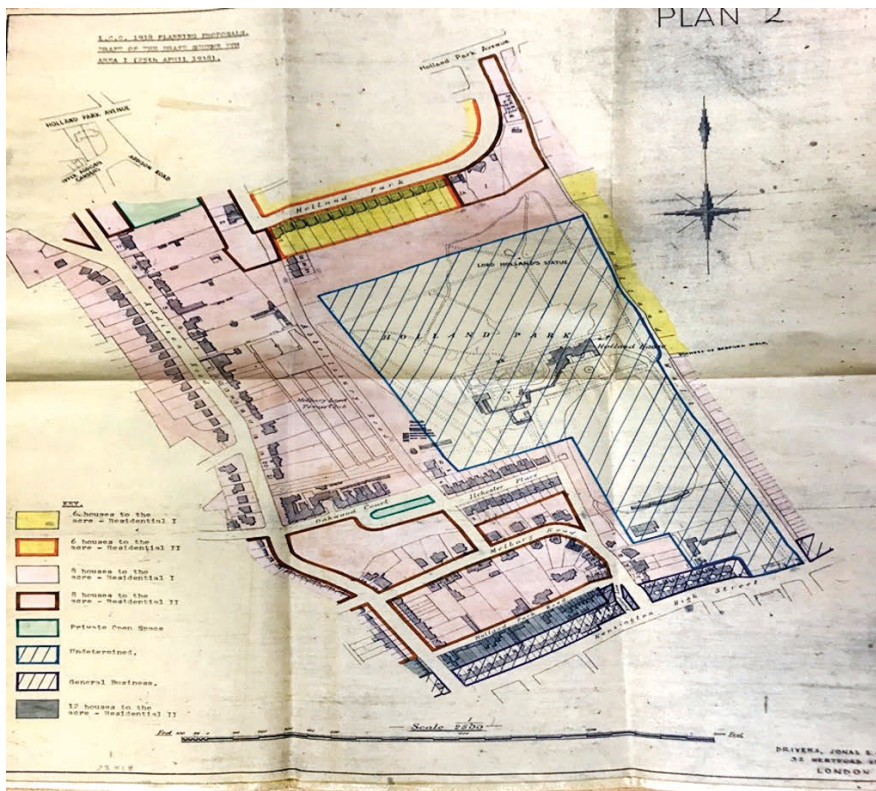
This map shows the residue of the estate that was acquired by Henry Fox-Strangways, with all the land shown in green having been sold. Leighton House and the Tower House on Melbury Road are shown as well as Oak Lodge (sold in 1878), the site of the future Oakwood Court.



This 1911 map (right) shows the estate having been parcelled up into lots for valuation, and presumably development. It includes a substantial part of the north of Holland Park. Lady Holland, living in Holland House, did not approve and, fortunately, the north of the park was never given over to development, which would have meant no woodlands for us.



Another threat to the park, this time in 1953, at the time Holland House and its grounds were sold to the LCC. The plan below shows the estate parcelled up at various densities of housing, ranging from 6-8 houses per acre. The heart of Holland Park, shown as a hatched area, is labelled in the key as 'undetermined'.



Much of the estate was of course sold off over the years since it covered 'the four Manors of Kensington' in the late 16th century, but we might have lost more of it, or even all of it, if commercialism had won over aesthetics.

Words based on Richard Tufnell's talk. The Ilchester Estates hold the copyright for the illustrations.

Jennie Kettlewell

It is difficult to explain the situation. We know what it is at the time of going to press but it will quite likely have changed by the time you get to read this. The Government announced the opening of many types of retail outlet from 15 June, with the exception of cafés, restaurants, bars etc.

Gallery 19 will once again welcome visitors and be open Monday to Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm. Careful safe-distancing measures will be in place.

Holland Park Café: Now open for take away only. Likely hours are 10 am to 4.30 pm but this might vary. Outside seating is not open.

Imagine Spa, Holiday Inn, Kensington: In line with Government advice, the spa is currently closed and will not re-open until July at the earliest. The management is preparing a way of opening in a way that is safe for members. While closed, they are not charging the monthly membership fee.

Jeroboams, Kensington High Street is now open again, with safe-distancing measures. Hours might vary from usual.

Miles & Miles car hire support current Government policy for car travel. A car can be booked on a request basis at 020 7591 0555.

Rassells Garden Centre is also open. Hours are 10.30 am to 4.30 pm daily, except Fridays. They need to keep Fridays clear for them to take stock of their plants, label them up etc.

Romulo Café has re-opened their kitchen and are offering a delivery and take-away service. Ring 020 3141 6390.

The Belvedere, Sadaf, Uli and Il Portico restaurants remain closed until Government guidelines change. Sadaf, Uli and Il Portico offer a take-away service so that you can still enjoy their tasty meals, but in your own home.

The Design Museum Kitchen restaurant was closed earlier this year, while the museum considered its best options for offering food to visitors.



Romulo Café



Rassells Garden Centre

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That we are able to produce this quarterly newsletter for members is in no small measure thanks to the continued support of our advertisers. We are most grateful to them, and would ask you to show your thanks by supporting them, please.

Parks Police

Holland Park is generally a safe place, but we should never be complacent. If you see any antisocial behaviour, such as vandalism, please contact the Parks Police on:


0300 3655 101

Remember three key points:

- Keep yourself out of danger
- Take a description of the person, location and exactly what they are doing
- Contact the Parks Police and report the facts.

The cover photo of the Iris Garden and Ice House was taken by Friend Lisa MacHale on 16 May 2020





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