

A photograph of a path lined with snow-covered trees in a park. The trees are heavily laden with snow, creating a dense canopy over the path. The path is a mix of snow and dark earth, with a few people walking in the distance. The overall scene is a serene winter landscape.

*The Friends of Holland Park*  
*Winter 2023*



The Friends of  
Holland Park

## Your Committee

**President** Eric Ellul

**Chairman** Jennie Kettlewell

**Secretary** Rhoddy Wood

**Treasurer** Silvi Spassov

**Governance** Nigel Brockmann

**Editor** Joy Puritz

**Website** Nicholas Hopkins

**Art Exhibition** Sandra French

**Database Manager** Graham Franklin

Our website address: [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org)

Registered as a Charity, No. 281348

### OUR ADVERTISERS

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.

Sunday, 10 December in the Holland Park Orangery. 7.30pm

We hope you already have the date of our Christmas Concert in your diary. Douglas Somers-Lee will entertain us with his Ariel Consort of London this year. Douglas has sung in the Tallis Chamber Choir for many years and shared conducting with Philip Simms in 2021 and 2022, so you will recognise him. You will notice some familiar faces among the singers and there will be new singers from the Ariel choir.

Douglas has been planning the programme for us and tells us that: 'It will include some Christmas favourites, with a dash of music from Advent. As always, there will be the opportunity for the audience



to raise their voices to some familiar tunes.' We will of course miss Philip Simms and Lizzy Groves after all these years of glorious music, but we are reassured that our Christmas Concert can continue in a form that is familiar and appreciated.

After the concert we will be treated to delicious canapés and a glass or two of wine. Tickets, at £27, can be ordered on our website ([www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org)), or on the order form enclosed with this newsletter. Please don't leave it until the last minute to book, as that makes it difficult for us to plan.

## Festive event in Holland Park

On Saturday, 2 December, The Friends will be running a festive pop-up stall in Holland Park's Café Yard. We will be there to catch up with members and other visitors to the park, and will have Christmas cards for sale, as well as tea towels printed with pretty paintings of either wild flowers or autumn berries. There is also a jute shopper with a tree design, and note cards, all of which make lovely Christmas gifts. Tasty festive treats from the Holland Park Café will also be on sale on our stall.



*Met Police with their horses at the 2022 Festive Event.*

Just to add to the excitement, two of the Met's police on horseback hope to visit us. There will be carrots

available for children to feed to the horses, provided adults check first with the police riders.

Rassells has provided a festive fir tree, which will become our 'wishing tree'. Some people are less fortunate and do not have a friend or relative to wish them well over the festive season. Any visitor to our stall can write a best wishes message on the coloured

labels provided and tie it onto the tree. Once it is decorated with best wishes labels, the tree will be donated to a local charity or care home.

Come and say 'hello'. We will be at the stall from 10am to 3.00pm.

## Winter Closures

Heavy usage means grass areas of the park will be closed in turn so that they can recover. This winter it's the turn of the Daffodil Lawn, and the area round the Walking Man statue. The Daffodil Lawn will be closed until April 2024. The Walking Man area will be closed for tree care work at the end of this year and then allowed to recover for a month or two.

## Friends' podcast

The council is organising several podcasts about Holland Park to go on its RBKC website. One of these podcasts will be about The Friends and our work for the park. We'll let you know when it goes live.

**Kyoto pond clean up**

The Kyoto Garden was closed for three days in October, so that the pond could be emptied, then scrubbed out, before being re-filled. So, what happened to the koi carp? What looked like a children’s paddling pool, but was actually a temporary fish pond, was erected in the garden. When the main pond was refilled, some of the old pond water, complete with the good bacteria that nourish the fish, was included. That’s how the fish like it. If the water were to be cleaned of all bacteria, for example water direct from the mains, the fish would probably become ill because tap water has chlorine in it and that kills all the good bacteria.

Visitors are asked not to feed the fish, or birds in the Kyoto Garden, or elsewhere in the park. The wildlife doesn’t need it and it can cause harm.



*Temporary tank for Koi carp.*

**Holland Park Café**

Following ‘The Friends’ contact with the council to express concerns about some aspects of the proposed new lease, a meeting was called between council officers, councillors and the chairman of The Friends, Jennie Kettlewell. We were reassured to hear that the terms that impact on the park would be negotiated with whoever is chosen as the future operator of the café to ensure the lease is appropriate to the running of the park. The Friends were to be kept in touch with progress, before the proposal goes to the RBKC Leadership Team in December for a decision. It is understood that the new lease will start from April 2024. Since the meeting on 7 September, we have heard no more.

**Lord Holland statue**

Over the years, this statue has attracted dust, general grime and the unfortunate result of pigeons sitting on Lord Holland’s head. Recently, specialists were brought in to clean up the bronze, which started with a jet wash. The work will be completed when the weather is more clement.



*Jet-washing the statue*

**Open-air gym and golf practice area**

The open-air gym, to be found at the extreme south west of the sports field, is about to undergo improvement. It has been extremely popular and this means that the equipment is coming to the end of its life. The same applies to the golf practice area. The council has held well-publicised on-site meetings in October to hear the views of those who use the facility. There is an on-line questionnaire, but the deadline is 27 November, shortly after you receive this newsletter.

If you want your view to be heard, act quickly by completing the survey on Holland Park | Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea ([rbkc.gov.uk](http://rbkc.gov.uk)). If you need a hard copy or have queries, please contact the Parks Project team via email [parksprojects@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:parksprojects@rbkc.gov.uk) or by phone 07971 391404.

**Marouflages**

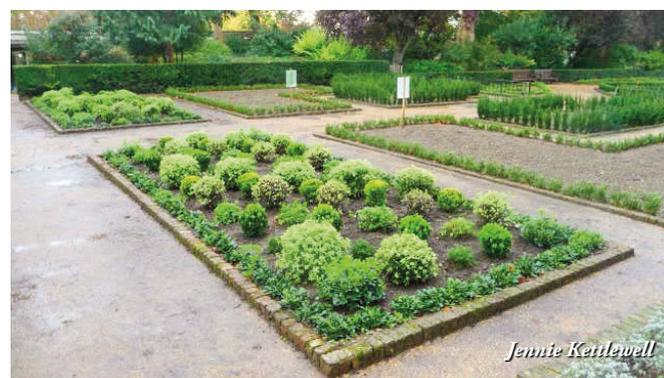
We have always called them ‘The Murals’, but they are ‘marouflages’ because they are painted on canvas and not on the plaster wall. The conservation expert will remove panels 1 and 2 in March for repair work to the canvas itself. We are waiting to hear when Mao Wen Biao will retouch the surface of the other nine panels, which should be as soon as possible so that they don’t deteriorate further.

The sad box hedges, demolished by the box tree caterpillar, that edged the formal beds have been dug up and the beds emptied of plants. A clean start for all the new hedging, which has been beautifully planted in nice straight lines. We are expecting A-Boards that will tell park visitors what the new species are and what is where, because it is a clever design.



Neat yew hedging

There is apparently almost half a kilometre of hedging, too risky to replace with more box, because the ravenous little caterpillar is widespread in London. Wisley trials showed no clear winner as a replacement, so four species were chosen for edging the Dutch Garden beds, to see which fared best. These are *Lonicera nitida*, *Ilex crenata* (Japanese holly), *Taxus baccata* (yew), and *Pittosporum tobira*. The beds in each of the four corners of the garden are edged with *Pittosporum tobira* and planted with *Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Golf Ball', *Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Tom Thumb', *Podocarpus nivalis* 'Kilworth Cream', *Osmanthus burkwoodii*,



Corner bed with mixed box replacement plants.

## The smell of damp earth

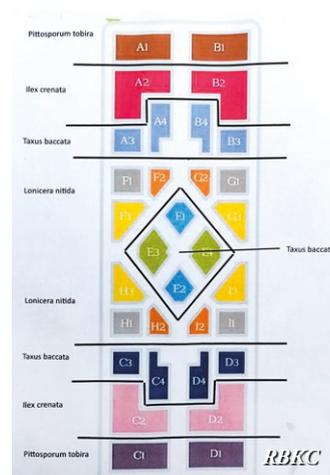
idverde's John Becker has learnt a new word and wants to share it. Right now, it's his favourite word. Petrichor. Know what it means? Apparently, it's 'the earthy scent produced when rain falls on dry soil. The pleasant smell that often accompanies the first rain after a long period of warm, dry weather.' The word comes from the Greek words 'petra', meaning stone, and 'ichor' which is the golden fluid that is the blood of the gods in Greek mythology. Thank you John.

*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Minima Aurea', *Euonymus japonicus* 'Microphyllus'. These are set out in a pattern to show off the differing leaf colours of the plants from dark green to golden. All are compact varieties.

The idverde team have done a terrific job of this very large task and it looks most attractive, and very green. This winter, there will be no bedding or bulbs, and the Dutch Garden will be 'work in progress' until the new plants have established and we can enjoy the customary spring display of colour.

The diagram on the right shows what hedging plants are where.

The beds round the Armillary Sphere have a cheery planting of winter violas, with purple and yellow 'faces'. Viola is the name for the genus which includes the pansies. Sometimes the names viola and pansy are used interchangeably, though some choose to differentiate. It conjures up a charming image that the name pansy derives from the French word, **pensée**, which means **thought**. For centuries, the flower has been regarded as a symbol of remembrance.



Dutch Garden planting plan.

A little to the west, the beds of the Napoleon Garden are edged with *Teucrium x lucidrys* and *Heuchera* and filled with orange wallflowers.



Viola 'Tiger Face'

You will know idverde's Marc Sinclair from his very skilled pruning of the park's shrubs and small trees. But you may not know that Marc was an ace skateboarder in his late teens. The Design Museum's current exhibition on the design evolution of the skateboard has brought his fame back into the spotlight.



*Marc with Jeremy Henderson at the London Calling Event.*

In the museum's shop, one can buy a booklet called 'Skateboard x London Calling!'. Have a look through that and you will find an interview of Marc and his colleague Jeremy Henderson, reprinted from the September 1979 issue of Skateboarder magazine. There is also a quote saying: 'Sinclair was a special one. Possibly the most naturally gifted.'

but that got smashed up with aggressive skating and he started making his own. Eventually, his skill led to travelling in Europe and the Middle East, as a professional, to give demonstrations. Marc also emphasised the importance of style, rather than just tricks. That style has resulted in signed photos of him doing a 'Frontside Layback', available on line for £100.

London Calling was a tribute event, staged in August 2023, to show respect to those 1970s UK-based skateboarders that laid the foundations for arguably the best and most influential skate scene outside California. Marc was at the event, where he met up with many friends from his early skateboarding days and was on a panel to 'spill the beans' about the early days of the sport to an audience of enthusiasts.

One quote about Marc was that 'He skates with an artist's instinct'. He hasn't lost that artistic instinct, but we now benefit from it with exquisitely pruned shrubs in the Kyoto Garden.

*Jennie Kettlewell*



*© London Calling  
Original photo of Marc © James Cassinus*

*Vans' Covent Garden shopfront, showing photo of Marc doing a frontside layback.*

The interview tells us that Marc started skating in California when, aged 12, he went on holiday with his parents. They bought him his first skateboard,



*© rests with the photographer*

*Marc showing his artistry.*



When you are thinking of small presents to give family and friends, do have a look at what The Friends have on sale. There are two cotton tea towels; one showing paintings of some of the flowers that grow wild in Holland Park and the other with paintings of autumn fruits in the park. The greetings cards 'Holland House through the trees' make an excellent gift, as does the handy jute shopper decorated with a tree motif.



'Holland House through the Trees'. Christmas cards are available from the Park Reception Office, The Friends' website or can be purchased with the order form in this newsletter. Prices of all our cards and merchandise are on the order form.

The local retailers in our Friends & Neighbours discount scheme offer lots of ideas for presents: stylish gifts from The Design Museum

All are available to buy from the Park Reception Office in the Stable Yard, from our website [thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://thefriendsofhollandpark.org), or send a cheque with the order form included with this newsletter.

There is a selection of Holland Park Christmas cards, with a new design for this year, 'Holland House from the formal gardens'. It is a view we all know well and combines two of the best loved features of the park. It is again by Clare Weatherill, who painted the card

shop, presents for the home from Lipp, plants and flowers from Rassells, and picture framing from Gallery 19. The Kensington Health Club and Spa offers beauty treatments. Or enjoy some holiday cheer at one of the restaurants and cafés in our scheme. The Holland Park Café has festive chocolates, Florentine biscuits, mince pies, stollen logs, gingerbread trees and more. All the participants in our programme support us with a special price for our members' and we should support the participants in return. A full list of our Neighbours and discounts offered is on the Friends' website.

## Caddisfly like the park's clean water!

Matthew Rose, one of the Ecology Team education officers, says: "We were thrilled to find a cased Caddisfly larva during our last school pond dipping session for the year. These amazing insects start their life underwater inside a case made from natural material collected and stuck together with silk (different species tend to specialise in different materials for their case). The case both protects and camouflages the insect until it pupates and then emerges as a moth-like adult fly, also known as a Sedge fly. Other than seeing their brilliant building skills, it's great to find Caddisflies as they will only live in clean water, meaning Holland Park's wildlife pond is in good condition."



## The cancelled Quiz Night

Sadly, we had to cancel our October Quiz Night because we didn't have enough bookings. Feedback from members told us that you were apprehensive that you would not know all the answers to the questions about Holland Park and felt embarrassed that you should. The plan was to work in teams, and the questions would have been multiple-choice, so we hope it would have been fun, not a test! We've listened and are considering running a Quiz Night in the new year, but with general knowledge questions

and just a few about Holland Park. Keep an eye on The Friends' notice boards in the park for updates.

What makes it difficult for us to organise events is the recent trend for booking at the very last minute. We can't plan the catering, seating etc. and we don't know if we are going to get sufficient ticket sales. On occasions that will mean we cancel, when it is possible bookings would have come in. It's no good just planning to come, if we don't know that. You need to book!



*Art Exhibition showing Mini Market and browsers.*

I am so pleased to begin preparations for the 40th Friends of Holland Park Annual Art Exhibition, particularly as it coincides with the tenth year that I, and my family, have been involved in its organisation. The French family are extremely proud to continue this association with The Friends, a partnership that reflects our shared values of creativity and community.

Over the last two years we have introduced large plants, supplied by *idverde*, into The Orangery and they look superb. We will continue to find ways of enhancing the presentation of the space; but the truth is you, the artists, are the exhibition! The public comes for the art, whether they are a friend, saw the exhibition poster on a noticeboard, or were just walking past The Orangery and saw it open. 35% of the money from the sale of your artworks goes to The Friends, so that they can continue the important work they do in Holland Park. So, this is a call to action, artists! Please register and pay the registration fee, so I can send you the information/exhibit details forms. I want to see those red dots in April!

The conditions of entry are as before: Friends who are artists, and artists who become Friends, are invited to exhibit up to ten

works. This should be made up of two framed works to hang on the walls, and up to eight unframed works for display in the browser print stands, the latter with a maximum size 70 x 100cm (including cardboard mounts but no wooden mounts). Friends are also invited to exhibit up to ten three-dimensional objects such as ceramics, stoneware and small sculptures for the main exhibition. The minimum sale price for the works in the main exhibition will be £75. Artists can enter the Mini-Market of small works on offer at £65 and under, this includes cards and craft items, but no paintings.



*Gordon French at Art Exhibition reception.*

Friends interested in exhibiting in the art exhibition, the Mini-Market, or both, need to register and pay £15 entry fee before they receive the artist exhibits forms. The easiest way to register and pay is on our website, [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org). If you do not pay online you must complete the order form enclosed with the newsletter and pay the £15 entry fee.

**REGISTRATION OPENS ON FRIDAY 1ST DECEMBER.** Artists who have registered for the main exhibition may include works in the Mini-Market at no additional cost. Please register



*Main Art Exhibition.*

as soon as possible, as space is limited.

Information about the exhibition is available on our website [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org) or from me, Gordon French, 19 Kensington Court Place London W8 5BJ; email: [gordon.l.french@gmail.com](mailto:gordon.l.french@gmail.com). telephone 020 7937 7222. All the information regarding the 2024 exhibition, feature

artist and sponsorship will be detailed in the spring newsletter.

Let's make the 40th exhibition something extra special. I look forward to seeing you in The Orangery.

*Gordon French*

## Art Exhibition 2023 Timetable

Friday, 1 December	Artist registration opens
Friday, 8 March	Final date for artist exhibit details forms to be received to allow catalogue listing
Friday, 5 April	Artists deliver artworks to the Orangery, Holland Park, 8.30 – 11am <i>All artists will be required to sign the catalogue to certify that all details shown are correct</i>
Friday, 5 April	Hanging and judging, 11am – 6pm
Saturday, 6 April	Exhibition open to the public over 9 days
to	10.30am-6pm
Sunday, 14 April	Entry to visit exhibition FREE OF CHARGE
Sunday, 14 April	Artists and buyers collect works, 6.15-7pm
Monday, 15 April	Artists and buyers collect works, 9am-11am

# Hi there **kids!**



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

## Do toffees grow on trees?



**No, but there is a Katsura tree that smells of toffee when the leaves turn orange in autumn.**

There is sugar in the leaves and, as the leaf dies, it gives off a whiff of burnt sugar, just like caramel toffee. You don't have to get close to the tree, as you can smell it in the air. The tree is at the top of the steps into the Kyoto Garden, but you probably won't even be able to tell which tree it is. Just enjoy the toffee smell!

## Conker characters



**A conker grows on a horse chestnut tree. You can find conkers on the ground under the chestnut trees in Holland Park.**

Have a go at making fun conker characters Find a conker which is still in its spikey case, with the conker bursting out of it. Paint some scary eyes and stick them on to the conker.

You can make a conker case hat. Or you can make a conker look a bit like a frog or even a snake!



## Tortoises in Holland Park!

**Tortoises usually move v e r y slowly, but these don't move at all because they are made of bronze metal.**

When the sun shines, the large triangle makes a shadow on the dial which is like a clock face on the ground. As the sun moves round the sky, the shadow moves round the dial, and tells you what time it is.

Wendy Taylor made the sculpture and she called it 'Tortoises with Triangle and Time'.

## Be a top tracker

**You can see squirrels, pigeons, crows, moorhens and ducks in Holland Park and, if you are in the woods early and stay very quiet, you might see a fox.**

Each type of creature has a different shape of foot, designed to help them live their lives. Some, like ducks, need to swim, others need to climb trees. See if you can find any of these footprints in the park.



**Top tip: It's easier to see prints when it's wet or snowy.**

Professional ornithologist, Bill Haines of West London Birding, ran a demonstration of bird ringing in Holland Park's Wildlife Enclosure on Saturday 30 September. This is an annual event, organised by the RBKC Ecology Service and sponsored by The Friends of Holland Park.

The demonstration involved erecting mist nets to capture the birds. These nets are very fine and do not harm the birds, which are captured and ringed under licence. The birds are carefully removed from the nets, and placed into a cloth bag to calm them, before they are ringed, weighed and



*L: Blue tit waiting to be released  
R: Bill ringing a robin.*



*Birds being brought back from the nets  
in cloth bags.*

released. If a bird already has a ring, then the number is recorded.

In all, 51 birds of nine species were captured, most being blue tits and great tits, but also included five blackcaps, six long-tailed tits, six goldcrests and a single coal tit, as well as the inevitable robins and wrens. This was an increase on last year's numbers of 15 birds of six species, and it was certainly a busy morning for Bill, not least because there was a large number of fascinated visitors.

## Subscription Renewals and Membership Cards

Thank you again for all your support and we hope you will want to continue to help through these troublesome times when the park is more appreciated than ever, but also has had extra strains put upon it. Your membership also gives The Friends clout when negotiating with the Council on matters relating to the park's future.

The Friends' subscription year runs from 1 January each year.

- New members, who joined since 1 September 2022, or existing members who have renewed since that date, are already covered for 2023.
- A useful number (about 60%) pay by bank standing order every year on 1 January, so will be covered for 2024.
- Others, who do not pay by bank standing order, have already paid in advance for 2024, because you have paid since 1 September 2023.
- If you do not have a standing order and have not paid since 1 September 2023, your membership needs to be paid for 2024. You can do this using the order form enclosed with this newsletter, or on our website, [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org).



If you do not have a standing order, please check when you last paid and whether your membership is due for renewal. Members who have not kept payments up to date will no longer receive the members' discount card. If in doubt, check with our trustee

Graham Franklin.

It is less trouble, to both you and us, if you pay by standing order. The subscription rates are on the order form in this newsletter.

To pay by standing order, please contact your bank and get it to set up a standing order, payable on 1 January each year to The Friends of Holland Park, Account Number 60636975 Sort Code 20-47-34, at Barclays Bank Kensington Branch.

Your membership card, which entitles you to discounts under our Friends & Neighbours scheme, expires on 15 March 2024. Those who have paid their subscriptions for 2024 will receive replacement cards with their spring newsletter, which will reach them about 1 March. Please be careful opening your newsletter, as the cards can easily fall out and be lost.

*Rhoddy Wood*

Dr Mark Spencer, an experienced consultant botanist, led the October Fungi Foray walk, organised by the RBKC Ecology Service and sponsored by The Friends. He started with a warning: “If you’re thinking of foraging fungi for food, learn from experts (a brief trip out such as today’s walk will not provide you with sufficient knowledge to forage safely. Also, be mindful of bylaws and the potential negative impacts of over-harvesting.” We saw quite a number of species in the West Woodland and Wildlife Enclosures, many of which were spotted by enthusiastic children among the group. Throughout the discovery and description of the fungi we found, Mark enlightened us with fascinating facts.

1. The latest estimate by scientists is that there are around 2 million species of fungi on the planet.
2. Fungi are not classified as plants. They are more closely related to animals. Fungi absorb nutrients from their surroundings, such as dead wood or rotting leaves
3. The majority of the fungus is not just the bit we see (the fruiting body), but the web (mycelium) of minute hair-like filaments (hyphae) under the ground or growing alongside or in living and dead plants (and other organisms).
4. Some fungi, such as the Wrinkled Peach, exude droplets of moisture from their rims and, in some species, these drops are red and look like drops of blood. It is known as ‘guttation’.



*Wrinkled peach (Rhodotus palmatus)*

5. The Fairy Ink Cap (*Coprinopsis disseminatus*) produce a chemical that attracts flies and beetles.
6. King Alfred’s Cakes (*Daldinia concentrica*), when lit, smoulder for quite some time and can be used as firelighters or hand warmers (sometimes a little hot!)



*Conical brittlestem (Psathyrella conopilus)*

7. One fungus, *Cladosporium resinae* thrives on aeroplane fuel and has been called the ‘kerosine fungus’. It can cause problems such as fuel pump failures.
8. With practice, some fungi can be identified by smell and some have quite a pungent aroma (such as like disinfectant or pine resin). The Wrinkled Peach was identified as smelling like dried apricots.
9. Honey fungus (*Armillaria mellea*) can be identified by clumps of hyphae which resemble black bootlaces, found under the bark or round the roots of the trees it eventually kills.
10. You can take a ‘spore print’ of a mushroom. Lay a fresh, mature cap on a clean piece of paper, with the underside of the cap next to the paper. Cover it with a glass or bowl to stop it drying out and leave it over night before revealing the spoor print.

Mark shared an impressive amount of information in two hours. We could have listened for longer.

## Holland Park on BBC Channel 5

BBC Channel 5 ran a series of programmes on ‘The Royal Borough’. Sadly, it focused solely on the rich and famous and did not explain that the borough is made up of a diverse community. We are grateful that Holland Park’s head gardener, Owen Rogers, was filmed giving a more balanced view, when he and his *idverde* team of gardeners explained the gardens and assets of the park, which is open for all to enjoy. Owen starred in the final episode, on a day when the team was under a lot of pressure to finish planting the Napoleon Garden on a sweltering day in September.



*Head gardener, Owen Rogers on camera.*

## Mike Quaia revisits the park



*Mike Quaia with Tim Cox and Helen Tilbury of the Parks Police.*

We had a surprise visit at our pop-up event on 25 October, from Mike Quaia, whose family ran the Holland Park Café before Cooks & Partners. Mike's parents, as well as Mike and his wife Yvonne are remembered with affection as a wonderfully warm Italian family who made the café welcoming and engaged enthusiastically with the Holland Park community. Mike said he had lots of stories he could tell us about the café in those days, but they will have to wait. His focus has changed from running a café to painting and he hopes to enter work in 'The Friends' 2024 Art Exhibition.

## History tour for Open Age



*Rowan Freeland entertaining the Open Age group.*

On 11 October, The Friends organised a second tour for members of Open Age. This time, Blue Badge guide, Rowan Freeland, entertained his audience to facts and intriguing stories about Holland House and the families who had lived there. We devised a route that made wheelchair access possible, with regular stops where there was seating to listen to Rowan in comfort. Ewa Donnachie, Outreach & Engagement Coordinator for Open Age, shared the very appreciative feedback, such as "The guide was very good, mixing history with extra amusing tidbits, ending in the surprise revelation which was perfectly delivered. All very enjoyable. Look forward to the next time."

Look out for dates for our 2024 Blue Badge guided tours. The information will be on The Friends' notice boards in the park, and on our website.

## Volunteers



*Volunteer group in Arboretum 1, being briefed by Gerry Kelsey.*

Work has started on implementing Holland Park's Woodland Management Plans. Volunteer teams have been carrying out tasks in Arboretum 1 and the Fox Enclosure, under the guidance of idverde's Gerry Kelsey. After clearing out excess holly and ivy (not all, because these plants are important habitats), they will start to plant hedges round the boundaries of the enclosures. Plants for these hedges will be chosen with biodiversity in mind and we will all enjoy the spring blossoms and autumn fruits.

## Visiting Cat

The park is much appreciated by its many human visitors and this impressive cat has decided it likes the park too. It visits regularly and consents to share the park with human visitors. Is it a Maine Coon?



*Jennie Kettlewell*

## Bountiful berries

This autumn there seems to be a bountiful crop of berries, said to be due to a perfect combination of weather. According to the charity, Plantlife, the warm, dry spring encouraged pollinators to be out and about in the peak flowering times of April and May. Then the warm, wet summer was perfect for fruit development.



*Jennie Kettlewell*



*Jennie Kettlewell*

*L: Myrtle Communis in Dutch Garden; R: Holly berries.*

## Winter 2023

### Kensington Gardeners' Club

The club provides a programme of talks at St George's Church, Aubrey Walk, as well as garden visits. See the website for updates [www.kensingtongardeners.co.uk](http://www.kensingtongardeners.co.uk)  
To book, email [susan.vannoorden@ntlworld.com](mailto:susan.vannoorden@ntlworld.com).

Check the website, as an exciting new programme will be available for 2024.

### The Kensington Society

Keep up-to-date with Kensington Society events on [www.kensingtonsociety.org/events](http://www.kensingtonsociety.org/events).

*Wednesday, 6 December*

#### **Christmas Drinks in the Mayor's Parlour, RBKC Town Hall,**

Precise time in the evening to be confirmed, as is ticket price for members of the Kensington Society and for non-members. Check on website to learn more, register to attend, and pay.

### RBKC Active for Life

Full details on [www.rbkc.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/sports-and-leisure](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/sports-and-leisure), or ring 020 7938 8182  
A varied programme of physical activities in Kensington, from gentle walks to sport.

*Thursdays 10.30-11.30 am.* Meet at the Holland Park Café, then share a leisurely walk in the park.

*Thursdays 3.00-4.00 pm.* Nordic Walking, with guidance for those who have not tried this before. Walking poles provided. Meet by Friends' notice board outside the Stable Yard.

RBKC offer other physical activities such as yoga and tai chi.

### Nordic Walking group

Each Thursday afternoon, the Nordic Walking group meets to do several laps of Holland Park. Anyone can join and the walking poles are provided. At the start of the walk, the group does warm-up exercises. At the end of the walk, the stretch exercises take place round the drinking fountain in the Café Yard.



*Walk leader, Simon Grantham, takes the group through its paces with stretch exercises.*

*Jennie Kettlewell*

## Coins in the Kyoto Pond



*Coins drying out*

*Jennie Kettlewell*

For some reason, visitors to the Kyoto Garden choose to throw coins into the Kyoto Pond. Presumably it is considered to be good luck and people may make a wish as their coin sinks below the water surface. The coins can't stay there forever and need to be cleared out every so often. Even the Trevi Fountain in Rome shuts down for an hour each day so the coins can be swept out.

This practice raises two questions. Does the metal affect the water, or the fish? The coins are mostly low denomination and we understand that 1p and 2p coins are made from copper-plated steel. Copper can corrode in water, under certain conditions. The coins from the Kyoto Pond are in a poor state, as you can see from the photo. We do not know if the coins have more affect on the water than the water does on the coins. The second question is how can the coins be cleaned so that they can be given to a charity? Theories involve vinegar, salt, tomato ketchup, baking soda, or orange juice. It will take some time then, to get through this mound of coins.

The events listed below are either organised by The Friends (F), or organised by the Ecology Service (ES), most of which are sponsored by The Friends.

Sat. 2 Dec.	<b>Festive event in Holland Park's Café Yard.</b> Friends' stall, selling Christmas cards, greetings cards, pretty Holland Park tea towels and more. Christmas produce from the Café on sale. Festive 'wishing tree'. Children can feed carrots to the Met police horses. Free spotter/quiz activity for children.	F	10am-3pm
Sun. 10 Dec.	<b>Christmas concert:</b> performed in The Orangery by the Ariel Consort of London. £27. (See p1 in this newsletter for details and how to book tickets.)	F	7.30pm

Check for an update on Ecology Service events (ES): *Holland Park Ecology Centre Events* | *Eventbrite*  
Ecology service events can be booked on Eventbrite. Please note that events will not be posted on Eventbrite until around 8 weeks before the date. The programme for 2024 has not yet been published, so check in the new year.

Blue Badge tours of Holland Park's history, historic gardens, art and sculpture in the park, will be run throughout 2024, starting in March. Once dates have been agreed, The Friends' (F) Blue Badge tours can be booked on our website [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org).

Unless otherwise instructed when you book, meet by The Friends' notice board in the Café Yard.

Holland Park Conservation Volunteers (adults) meet on the third Saturday of each month from 10.30am to 3.30 pm. Tasks focus on practical conservation that helps deliver the Ecology Service management plan and might include dead-hedging, scything, pond clearing and maintaining the paths in the Wildlife Enclosure. If you want to join, or find out more, please email Gerry Kelsey, idverde's Training and Community Manager, at [Gerald.Kelsey@idverde.co.uk](mailto:Gerald.Kelsey@idverde.co.uk).

### Donation from United Reform Church

Churches Together in England is part of a national ecumenical organisation that encourages churches from a wide range of traditions to work together in unity. The Kensington branch held their monthly service for September in St Paul's United Reform Church in Bayswater. Member of The Friends, Rev. Sally Thomas, is the Minister of the Kensington URC, and told us the welcome news that the church had decided to donate their retiring collection for this service to The Friends of Holland Park. Chairman of The Friends, Jennie Kettlewell, was invited to give a short talk at the service. We are very grateful for the donation of just under £100.



The cover photo of Holland Park's Chestnut Walk in the snow was taken by Sergeant Helen Tilbury of the RBKC Parks Police in December 2022

## Parks Police

The Parks Police work hard to keep us all safe. Sometimes we need to help them. Notice boards at park entrances show the current time the park gates are locked for the night. If you are in the park late in the day, please check the hour of closing and be sure to leave the park in time. Occasionally people get locked in the park, because it has not occurred to them to check, and then the police get called to let them out. That is not a good use of police time.

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**.



Friends of Holland  
Park Household  
Insurance Scheme

**10%**  
discount for  
all members

## Homes like yours need insurance like ours

Lycetts has nearly 60 years' experience of looking after the insurance needs of our clients. We offer specialist, impartial advice on your personal insurance and wealth management requirements, in addition to an extensive range of products and services for estates, farms, equestrian and commercial enterprises.

**Lycetts**  
Insurance Brokers

0207 398 1660

[jonathan.lloyd@lycetts.co.uk](mailto:jonathan.lloyd@lycetts.co.uk)

[www.lycetts.co.uk](http://www.lycetts.co.uk)

Lycetts is a trading name of Lycett, Browne-Swinburne & Douglass Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.  
Lycetts is a trading name of Lycetts Financial Services Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Proud to protect your home and your valued possessions