

The Friends of Holland Park
Summer 2025





The Friends of
Holland Park

Your Committee

President Eric Ellul

Chairman Jennie Kettlewell

Secretary Rhoddy Wood

Treasurer Silvi Spasov

Projects Isabelle Beaumont

Governance Nigel Brockmann

Art Exhibition Sandra French

Editor Joy Puritz

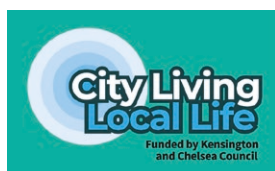
Data & Technology Phillip Fei Hou

Database Manager Graham Franklin

Website Nicholas Hopkins

Our website address: www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org

Registered as a Charity, No. 281348



**The Friends would like to thank RBKC City Living/Local life
for the generous funding of this newsletter.**

Summer party in the park



Monday, 21 July 2025, 6-8pm in the marquee, east of the Dutch Garden

We have already had some delightfully warm days so let's hope we get a fine summer evening to celebrate our Friends' party in the park. The date is Mon. 21 July, the time is 6pm until 8pm and the place is the marquee at the east end of the Dutch Garden. Access is from the Dutch Garden only. We are most grateful to James Clutton, CEO of Opera Holland Park, for loaning us their smart marquee for the event. That means we will be protected from hot sun or sharp showers and whatever the weather decides to do.



Marquee in the Dutch Garden

There will be refreshing Pimm's fruit cup, tasty canapés and good company, all with the splendid view of the Dutch Garden summer planting.

This is the one event of our year that is only open to Friends and their immediate guests, but not the general public. Do come and

celebrate with us! Tickets are £25 each, can be booked on our website or on the enclosed form. The car park will be free after 6.30pm. Please do book your tickets early as we need to plan the catering.

Isabelle Beaumont – new trustee

We are delighted that Isabelle Beaumont has agreed to become a trustee of The Friends.

I first met Isabelle some years ago when we were both taking part in the RBKC Tuesday walk. She must have sensed my interest in her involvement with The Friends because she told me that her time was committed to her work projects but that would not always be the case. After many enjoyable conversations Isabelle was co-opted as a trustee on 4 March 2025 and was voted as a trustee by members at the AGM on 9 April.

Isabelle's role with The Friends is 'Projects'. We have been working together on the conservation of the Old Dairy for the past year, and her experience of the architecture of historic buildings has been of great benefit, as has her ability to manage complex



Isabelle Beaumont

projects. She was a chartered architect who ran her own business which specialised in a multi-disciplinary approach to work. This included projects for both private and public sector clients, one of which was English Heritage. Having 'retired' from her consultancy business, she had been looking for an organisation she could enjoy working with and which shared her values. It is good news for us that she felt The Friends fitted what she wanted.

She is leading the Old Dairy project for The Friends, working with RBKC's head of parks projects, Sarah Brion. She has also taken on responsibility for managing promotion and bookings for our Blue Badge tours.

Welcome Isabelle and we look forward to working with you as a trustee.

Jennie Kettlewell

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.

The clock in the Stable Yard tower

The Friends have received a number of emails saying that the Stable Yard clock had stopped, which it does every so often. Parks Management had been contacting specialists and getting quotes to do a repair when the park's Small Works Team, aka Scott and Louis, said they might be able to help. They delved into the mechanism and got it working in no time. Then they let on that they had looked after it for a couple of decades and knew it pretty well.



Stable Yard Clock

Tender plant thrives

Some years ago, idverde's plant nursery technician, John Becker, was heard to say that he would like to see a *Geranium maderensis* in the Mediterranean Bed. Well he's achieved that and it's no mean feat. It's a tender plant from Madeira and might be expected to survive in the gentle climate of the glass house, but it's quite another thing for it to survive outside. Survive it has and it has surpassed itself this spring with a gorgeous floral display. Well done John.



Geranium maderensis in the Mediterranean Bed.



Scarce Fungus Weevil.

Bug hunt success

Some children taking part in bug hunting in the Wildlife Enclosure of the park one April morning found a Scarce Fungus Weevil. It is relatively uncommon in London, so a great record for the park! It's a pretty odd looking creature and hard to spot because it does look a bit

like a bird dropping. The children were excited and proud and so was the Ecology team.

The Dipelta's departed

The *Dipelta* Enclosure was so named because within it there was a *Dipelta yunnanensis* shrub, which is a relatively uncommon plant. The species was introduced to the UK from China by George Forrester in 1920. Our *Dipelta* used to flower lustily in May and June, its flowers being creamy white with orange and purple markings. It was one of those plants which are not looked after as part of the formal gardens, nor was it under the care of our tree officers. So it declined over recent years and was strangled by nettles and other rampant growth around its base. We have lost too many of our uncommon plants because they are on no-one's to do list. We would like to see another *Dipelta yunnanensis* bought and cared for.



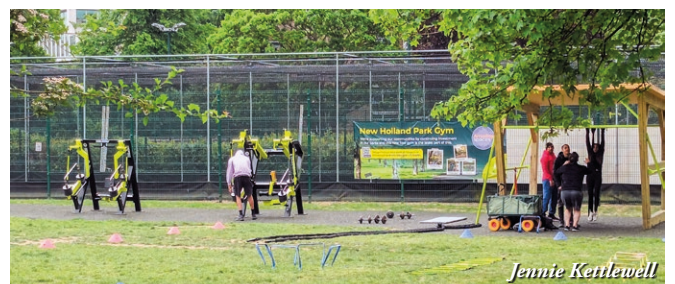
Dipelta flowering in 2013.

Sun Trap wall

The eastern part of the Sun Trap Garden is still fenced off for safety reasons. Work is due shortly to strengthen the wall, possibly by terracing. At the same time, improvements will be carried out to the sloping path that runs down past the Sun Trap lawn to the park gate. This is needed to correct the water flow during heavy rainfall which doesn't work well at present.

Outdoor gym

The outdoor gym has been completely refurbished. You can find this facility at the far south west of the sports field. This gym has a range of fitness equipment, based on what respondents to the consultation said they would like, all set in the leafy greenery of the park. It is proving popular, with one user even claiming to have given up his gym membership because the outdoor gym provided what he wants – and it's free.



Outdoor gym

More than 65 loyal members turned up for the 2025 AGM in The Orangery, to hear an update on park matters and keen to ask questions. All votes were carried.

- Minutes of the 2024 AGM were approved.
- Accounts for 2024 were approved and have since been filed with the Charity Commission.
- All trustees were re-elected: Jennie Kettlewell (Chairman), Silvi Spassov (Treasurer), Rhoddy Wood (Secretary), Nigel Brockmann (governance), Graham Franklin (member database), Sandra French (art exhibition), Nicholas Hopkins (website), Joy Puritz (editor). Two new trustees, Phillip Hou and Isabelle Beaumont were elected.
- Roger Foreman was re-elected as independent examiner.

Nicholas Hopkins reported on achievements in 2024: scoping for the Old Dairy conservation, funding of hedging whips for woodland enclosures, continuation of the proactive tree healthcare programme and funding of wildlife talks organised by the Ecology Service. Some 25 events were carried out by The Friends during 2024, the largest being the Art Exhibition.

Rhoddy Wood reported that 140 members had joined in 2024, compared to 120 in 2023, but the net gain was only 20, due to members moving or failing to renew. Rhoddy thanked Margaret Rhodes and her team of



The Orangery.

newsletter deliverers, who save around £5,000 each year in postage. She also thanked members who helped by telling us when they changed their address, filled in forms correctly and on time.

Chairman, Jennie Kettlewell, explained the progress made so

far this year and plans for improvement in the park: low fence with two openings to be erected around the Walking Man area in April 2026, Natural Flood Management work to start shortly to control excess water during torrential rainfall, peafowl will return to Holland Park this spring with their survival dependent on not being fed by the public. Planning and Listed Building consent had been obtained for the Old Dairy conservation. Isabelle Beaumont is leading the project for The Friends working with Senior Parks Project Manager, Sarah Brion. (See the more detailed information in the article on page 8 of this newsletter.)

A busy calendar of events for 2025 includes Blue Badge tours, pop-up events in the Café Yard, bird walks, tree identification walks, the summer party and Christmas Concert.

Thanks were given to the French family for another highly successful art exhibition, to the trustees for their dedication to running the charity, to president Eric Ellul for his support, and to the members for their loyalty.

Spotted in the park



Water-damaged roof over paintings.

We are very disappointed to see that, after many years of asking, the Council has still not made the roof over our wonderful 'marouflages' paintings secure from water ingress. Repairing these canvases is costly and we do not want to risk further damp.

It is hard to know who or what had an argument with this tree. Generally, park visitors enjoy our glorious trees and are respectful towards them. Most of the tree damage in the park is caused by grey squirrels, but it would be one great big squirrel to cause this amount of damage. They strip the bark, and missing bark patches result in a tree being more susceptible to infection, which can result in tree loss.



Scarred tree east of the sports field.



Another great exhibition!

85 artists in The Orangery over nine days, with exceptional weather; there was excellent footfall, and our Feature Artist, Chris Hales, was well received with very healthy sales. 46 artists sold work, an excellent result and overall sales were higher than in 2024.

A huge thank you to *idverde* for transforming The Orangery into an Art Gallery, the trustees, stewards, volunteers and particularly Ilchester Estates for continuing to sponsor the Annual Exhibition.

Without the artists there would not be an exhibition and it was heartwarming to hear from so many that the standard was so high and how wonderful it was to be involved and they would see me next year.

A picture tells a thousand words. Below is a photographic record capturing the essence of this year's exhibition. See you in The Orangery in Spring 2026.

Gordon French



Ask a helpful gardener for directions and zip up a ladder. Get fascinated by the Kyoto Garden which makes you late, so you slide down a snake. The Friends have produced a classic Snakes & Ladders game with a twist. It's based on Holland Park, with illustrations of familiar places, such as the Ilchester Gate, Sibirica Fountain and the Tonda sculpture.

The roll-up 'board' is wipeable and comes in a handy sleeve for storage. Inside the pack is a pouch containing four counters in different colours, a dice and instructions how to play. Suitable for two to four players.



Buy this for yourself or as a gift. It's Available at a cost of £15, from the Holland Park Office in the Stable Yard or from 'The Friends' pop-up desk in the Café Yard on 27 May and 24 June.

This is our very own game, but Snakes & Ladders originated in ancient India and was brought to the UK in the 1890s. The historic version had its roots in morality lessons, on which a player's progression up the board represented a life journey complicated by virtues (ladders) and vices (snakes). But you can play this one just for fun!

Three new discount offers for The Friends!

Lenae Jewellery

LENAE was the vision of Lena Wro, an internationally acclaimed model. The beauty of the sea and rocks in Kefalonia, Greece, inspired her to create jewellery that celebrates nature. The demi-fine jewellery includes earrings, necklaces and bracelets with freshwater pearls and mother-of-pearl set in sterling silver and gold vermeil. Have a look at the beautifully crafted collections at www.lenae.online.



Offer:

15% discount on purchases of jewellery via the Lenae website.

All purchases online with proof of current membership of The Friends by sending a photo of your membership discount card.

Baguette Deli

Located at 1A Hollywood Road in the heart of Chelsea, The Baguette Deli brings authentic French flavours to one of London's most stylish neighbourhoods. From freshly baked baguettes and gourmet sandwiches to delicate pastries and rich coffee, they offer a true taste of France. Whether you're stopping by for a

quick bite or a leisurely meal, the menu will have something to offer. The Café/Deli was the idea of Milan Akani, whose aim is to provide great quality food, with products from France at a great price. Do visit this deli and enjoy its French cuisine. They also cater for events. www.the-baguette-deli.co.uk. Tel: 07932 605 178.

Offer:

15% discount on all purchases from the menu, on presentation of your membership discount card.



Kensington Glam

New owners have taken over what used to be Threads at 256 Kensington High Street. Kensington Glam offers a wide range of beauty services, including facials, massages, nail care, brow and eye treatments, waxing and make up for special events. Please note that their offer is for hair colour treatments only. To book an appointment ring 020 8278 5705. www.kensingtonglam.co.uk

Offer:

15% discount on all hair colour treatments, on presentation of your membership discount card.

Within Holland Park is a hidden gem. The Friends are helping to bring it into public view.

Holland House had its own dairy, a beautifully ornate and unique small space amongst the working outbuildings that supported the house, and the extensive entertaining that took place in the house.

Over the past 18 months The Friends of Holland Park have funded and assembled a dream team of professionals to work on the conservation (not restoration) of the dairy. Given the ownership of the asset and the complexity of working with multiple heritage building trades, the project is being led by RBKC's Parks Team, specifically Sarah Brion, their Senior Project Manager. Sarah is supported by Allies & Morrison (conservation architecture), BDP (heritage lighting) Richard Rogers Conservation (conservation of decorative works), and us, The Friends.

Little work has been done to stabilise the dairy since it was built circa 1852. Years of being unused, its location, and more recently being used as a café store, have contributed to its damaged and dilapidated condition. Once conserved, it will bring the sumptuous decorations back to life and help reduce further deterioration.



Corner of the old dairy.

The unique thing about this project is that, for the first time in its history, the dairy will



Planned site of the viewing window.

be visible to the public. A viewing window is being created to see into the small and fragile space, with lighting to enhance the rich tilework within.

The project has gone from an idea in 2020 to receiving Planning and Listed Building consent in March 2025. Construction tender drawings are ready. Once the last of the funding is in place it is anticipated the on-site works will commence in the autumn and be concluded by January 2026.

The Friends funded £20,000 towards the project in 2024. The trustees have approved another £20,000 towards the project in 2025. Other funds, in the range of £40,000-£55,000, are being sought to cover the cost of the project. The Friends have put in a NCIL (Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy) fund application, as it seems a fitting grant to apply for. At the time of writing, we await the outcome.



Drawing of the planned viewing window

More research is being undertaken by The Friends to gain an understanding of how the dairy might have been used, what it contained: cool milk, butter and cheese? Being adjacent to the Ice House, I like to imagine elaborate ice creams and sorbets too!

Isabelle Beaumont

Blue Badge tours in Holland Park

Holland Park has an interesting history, starting with Holland House, built in 1607. Other estate buildings, such as the Ice House, summer ballroom, orangery, walkways and the dairy followed. Successive owners of the estate decorated these historic assets with carvings, tiles and stone ornaments and then acquired sculptures and statues to adorn their grounds. The

grounds had areas to produce food, such as fish ponds, orchards and a kitchen garden. Any house of note must have formal gardens and tree-lined walks. Holland House had it all and you can hear about it on one of The Friends' tours led by Blue Badge guides, who entertain as well as inform. See the tour dates on page 15 of this newsletter.

We welcome Martin Moore as Holland Park's head gardener. He started his horticultural career as an apprentice with Royal Parks at Regent's Park and stayed there for many years because he loved it. Over that time, he gained his qualifications, but learned as much from practical experience where he enjoyed experimenting with different approaches and designs.

On occasions his employers (for part of the time his employer was *idverde*) loaned him to other sites where his experience could help solve problems. One of those visits just happened to be to Holland Park and he told me he thought at the time 'This is a nice place. I wouldn't mind being head gardener here one day'. But he wasn't looking to move and it was only recently, when he noticed the Holland Park head gardener's role was vacant, that he decided this was what he wanted to do.

It is encouraging that Martin wants to take his time to get to know the park, its history, its quirks and of course to get to know his team before coming up



Martin checking the rose garden.

with ideas. He does look forward to designing planting schemes, though the summer bedding plants for the formal gardens were chosen some time ago, and his turn won't come until winter bedding. He is interested to know the horticultural history of each of the areas so he can be true to the concept while adding his own ideas. We hope he will start with the Mediterranean Bed which is long overdue for completion.

He has discovered a few large plants languishing in the Nursery Yard and he feels they should be liberated and planted out in the park for all to see. We look forward to seeing the *Camellia sinensis* (tea bush) back in the Camellia Bed where it was planted some years ago, after The Friends bought the shrub from the Tregothnan tea estate in Cornwall.

He is quite clearly enthusiastic about plants and he is just the person to ensure Holland Park remains a very special place.

Jennie Kettlewell

Stunning display of tulips



Odd one out.


It is hard to produce an awesome display of bulbs in the formal gardens, year after year, but this spring's tulips were as good as it gets. The Dutch Garden was a colourful mix of pink tulips and blue forget-me-nots and we were told some tens of thousands of bulbs had been planted.

The Armillary Sphere Garden was a chequerboard of white tulips, interspersed with black, with some 2,000 bulbs in each of the four beds. What charmed the many visitors enjoying the tulips was that, in many of the beds, one rogue tulip had popped up from a previous year. Just one red splash of colour among the pinks or the whites.

Save me I'm wild

THE STRUCTURE OF WILD FLOWERS

Signed prints & handmade cards



CHelsea GALLERIES 67 PORTOBELLO ROAD
EVERY SATURDAY 10AM - 4PM
www.savemeimwild.com

Hi there kids!

Page funded by

CityLiving
Local Life
Holland

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

NATURE QUIZ



Nature is weird and wonderful, but do you know the answer to these questions? Tick one answer from the choice of three. The correct answers are shown below the quiz.



Did you know?

1 What is the name for group of squirrels?	<input type="checkbox"/> A squash <input type="checkbox"/> A scurry <input type="checkbox"/> A brush
2 How many wings does a bee have?	<input type="checkbox"/> Two <input type="checkbox"/> Three <input type="checkbox"/> Four
3 What is a jelly ear?	<input type="checkbox"/> A sore ear <input type="checkbox"/> A mushroom <input type="checkbox"/> A pudding
4 Which flower turns to face the sun?	<input type="checkbox"/> A daisy <input type="checkbox"/> A lupin <input type="checkbox"/> A sunflower
5 What part of a plant grows underground?	<input type="checkbox"/> A root <input type="checkbox"/> A stalk <input type="checkbox"/> A twig
6 What type of creature is a koi?	<input type="checkbox"/> A butterfly <input type="checkbox"/> A fish <input type="checkbox"/> A lizard
7 Which of these creatures is nocturnal?	<input type="checkbox"/> A fox <input type="checkbox"/> A rabbit <input type="checkbox"/> A dormouse
8 How many spines does a hedgehog have?	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 5,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 1,000
9 What are frogs' eggs called?	<input type="checkbox"/> Frogspit <input type="checkbox"/> Frogspawn <input type="checkbox"/> Frogsoup
10 What colour are dandelions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Blue <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow <input type="checkbox"/> Red

Answers: 1: scurry, 2: four, 3: mushroom, 4: sunflower, 5: root, 6: fish, 7: dormouse, 8: 5,000, 9: frogspawn, 10: yellow.



Under the arches

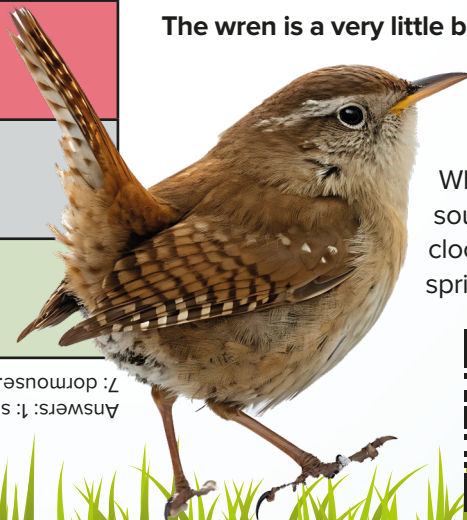
A long, long time ago, the people who lived in Holland House liked big parties.

They invited their friends to dances in their summer ballroom. That's the building which is now the Belvedere Restaurant. They wanted to stay dry in their fine clothes if it rained, so they walked under the arches in front of the café and past where the paintings are.

Bonkers bird song



The wren is a very little bird with a very loud voice.

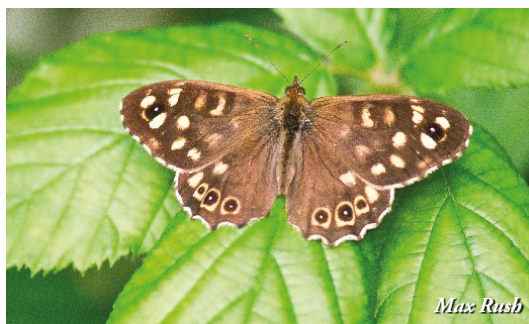


You usually hear it before you see it. Its song is a burst of beautiful music with thrilling trills. When it is cross, it makes a churr sound which is like the noise of clockwork running down. It sings in spring so listen out for it.



Scan this QR code to listen to a wren singing.

With the sunny weather, you may well have noticed a flutter of butterflies in the park. The Ecology Service maintains a butterfly recording transect – a set route walked each week between April and September – to monitor butterfly species and populations in the park. This data helps us understand which species are doing particularly well in the park, which may be most impacted by climate or habitat changes, and where we should focus biodiversity efforts, such as by ensuring there are enough food plants available to support different species. The data we collect also feeds into the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, which analyses how butterfly populations are changing nationally.



Butterfly in Holland Park.

The challenging weather conditions of 2024 had a significant impact on butterfly populations; we recorded a 55% reduction in numbers in Holland Park compared to 2023, a decline that was reflected nationally. The good news is that invertebrates are generally very adaptable, and several species of butterfly have been able to bounce back in

recent years. This year's monitoring season has already recorded higher numbers compared to 2024, so fingers crossed it will be a great year for butterflies.

If you are interested in volunteering to help monitor butterflies in the park, please email ecology.centre@rbkc.gov.uk for more information.

Alice Laughton

Egyptian geese

The pair of Egyptian geese are back in the Kyoto Garden and, for the first time, they have their goslings with them. It's a heart-warming sight. Though called a goose, this species is related to the shelduck, but is larger, with longer legs and stands more upright. Its main feature is a dark brown patch around the eye which makes it look as if it is wearing spectacles. So, it's a duck not a goose, but its young are called goslings and not ducklings. Bit of a conundrum that!

These geese are wild and all park visitors are asked not to feed them. Posters in the park, explaining why it

is harmful to feed wildlife, are at last up in the park. A more detailed explanation can be found on the RBKC website see QR code. It is often not the food itself, but the interaction with humans, that causes harm. The fine may be £1,000 and it applies to feeding any wildlife, including heron, peafowl, squirrels, pigeons, parakeets and fish.



Egyptian goose with gosling



After a very long time planning, at last trees are being planted in Holland Park.

We agree with the approach taken and that is to start with identifying spaces where there is appropriate room for a tree. Only when there is a specific space in mind do we start to think about what tree might thrive there. The Friends have long had a 'wish list' of trees, so some species get chosen from that, but not all the trees we would like to have are available to buy.

Buying uncommon trees is very frustrating. Being uncommon, not many people buy them and, because there is little demand, nurseries don't grow them. So those who do want to buy them, can't and are caught in a vicious circle. Monica Castelino, RBKC Parks Manager, has developed a spreadsheet system of tree spaces, trees we want for those spaces, trees available to buy and trees not yet available but we will continue searching for.

The good news is that four trees have been planted so far. Two *Exochorda serratifolia* 'Snow White' have been planted in the grass margin of the D Garden in place of two failed silver birches. This small tree

is free-flowering with pure white petals. A *Chitalpa tashkentensis* 'Summer Bells' has been planted just west of the Tots' Playground in place of a failed mulberry. We will be able to enjoy its pale pink flowers from summer to autumn. And a *Juglens nigra* (Black Walnut) has been planted in place of the huge Bolle's poplar just inside the Ilchester Gate.

Not such good news is that tree pests and diseases continue to be rampant throughout the UK, and Holland Park is not immune. The large lime next to the Mimosa at the back of The Belvedere Restaurant has a fatal fungal growth and has just been felled. The remaining tree in the grass margin to the west of the Kyoto Garden is marked for felling. A beautiful beech by the outdoor gym also had fungal growth and is no more. But then, over the long life of the Holland House grounds, trees have come and gone. When we lose trees, that does provide an opportunity for planting new, and possibly less usual species from our wish list. The outlook is now promising and we hope the next tree to be planted will be an *Aralia elata* (Japanese Angelica) in place of the miserable Cork Oak which was never the right tree for the Daffodil Lawn.



Exochorda



Chitalpa in flower.



Exochorda in flower



Chitalpa



Felling the big lime.

Fox cubs

As most of you know, we have wild foxes in Holland Park. They usually keep out of the way of people and raise their cubs in comparative tranquillity. One year they made their den in the Nursery Yard compost heap and the cubs could be spotted peering

inquisitively round the mound of compost to keep an eye on the gardeners. This year the Ecology Service team discovered a family of fox cubs in the Wildlife Enclosure. Three cubs bounced up the path to have a look and seemed remarkably unafraid.

Dr Mark Spencer once again led the well-attended spring wildflower walk in Holland Park. His 'tutorials' are always fascinating due to his deep scientific knowledge, leavened with quirky stories and enthusiastic delivery.

He talked fast, taught us interesting facts about the plants we came across, large and small, and we covered a huge amount in the two hours we had. If you want all the detail, you must come to his next event. That will be at 6pm on Tuesday 10 July and you must book early on Eventbrite as they do get booked up.

The group was delighted to hear Mark declare his congratulations on how the wild areas of the park are being looked after. Keeping control of the Cow Parsley in Arboretum 1 is paying off. Cutting back that pushy plant after flowering is working as intended and other wild flowers are beginning to come to the fore. We enjoyed seeing pretty Red Campion coming back



3-Cornered Leek

where it used to thrive. He was also very much in favour of the clearance work being done in the woodland enclosures. This is being carried out in line with the Woodland Management Plan designed by Alice Laughton, head of RBKC's Ecology Service.



Red Campion

serious invaders. It started its spread in Cornwall in the 1850s and is now found growing throughout the UK, where it is becoming a serious problem and is now listed as an invasive non-native species under Schedule 9 of the UK Wildlife and Countryside Act. This means it's an offence to cause it to grow in the wild, either by dumping garden waste, planting it or growing it where it can escape from a garden into the wild. Because of its quick-spreading and invasive nature, it's not advisable to plant three-cornered leek in gardens, even though it's not an offence to buy or sell it. For many years it has

grown in the damper areas of the Wildlife Enclosure and is now virtually impossible to eradicate. It can, and probably should be eliminated where it is creeping into formal flower beds. If left to thrive, it will become a very big problem in future.

Two interesting tales were new to the group. The daisy (*Bellis*) got its name because its flowers close up at night, so was once known as the Day's Eye. And Green Alkanet doesn't seem the right name for a very blue flower. Its correct name was Evergreen Alkanet (it is evergreen) but the name was wrongly transcribed way back in time and it has never been corrected.



Green Alkanet

Jennie Kettlewell

Spring birdsong

The birdsong in the park this spring has been glorious. There is something wonderful about going on an early evening walk to look at wild flowers, then getting stopped in one's tracks by the melodious sound of a black cap. It was close to the Kyoto Garden and it was loud. There were plenty other birds making their presence known and we enjoyed them all.

David Darrell-Lambert, the ornithologist who led the Dawn Chorus walk on 11 May, gave some welcome news to the enthusiastic group who turned up at 5am to hear the birds wake up. He said he was greatly impressed with the number and variety of bird species to be found in Holland Park – unusual for central London. This is no accident and was thought to be due to our carefully tended habitats, under the guidance of the RBKC Ecology Service.



Local Events Run by Neighbouring Organisations

Summer 2025

Kensington Gardeners' Club

The club provides a programme of talks at St George's Church, Aubrey Walk, as well as garden visits. To book, email susan.vannoorden@ntlworld.com.

Tues. 17-Thurs. 19 June

Garden Holiday

10am coach from Notting Hill Gate for three days of garden visits. Accommodation at The Hampton by Hilton in Canterbury. Return to Notting Hill Gate on Thurs. evening. Email Susan Van Noorden for more information and cost.

Sun. 6 July and Sun. 20 July

Garden Opening National Garden Scheme event - £5 donation. For location details, please contact Susan at the email above.

For further events, check www.kensingtongardeners.co.uk

Opera Holland Park

Further information from www.operahollandpark.com. Tickets will be available by phoning 0300 999 1000.

27,29,31 May. 5,7,12,14 June at 7.30pm

Flying Dutchman by Richard Wagner

3,6,11,13 June at 7.30pm & 8 June at 2pm

Itch by Jonathan Dove

19,21,25,27,28 June at 7.30pm

The Merry Widow by Franz Lehár

24,26 June at 7.30pm

Trial by Jury/A Matter of Misconduct!
by W.S. Gilbert & Arthur Sullivan/Emma Jenkins
and Toby Hession

18,22,24,26,30 July & 1 Aug at 7.30pm

Lucia di Lammermoor by Gaetano Donizetti

19,23,25,29,31 July & 2 Aug at 7.30pm. & 27 July at 2pm.

La traviata by Giuseppe Verdi

The Kensington Society

A programme of lectures, talks, walks and visits is being planned for 2025 and all events, as they are arranged, can be found on www.kensingtonsociety.org/events.

RBKC Active for Life

Full details on 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.

Events in Holland Park

As we approach the summer requests for events are increasing, this is alongside our own full and varied programme. If you are thinking about holding an event in the park, please remember that you must request permission from us first and that we may not always say yes. This is in order to maintain the balance and make sure there are quiet spaces available as much as we can. Event enquires should be sent to specialevents@rbkc.gov.uk.

Parks Management

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. 7 June	Bird Walk. led by Bill Haines. Free to attend. No need to book. Meet by The Friends' noticeboard in the Café Yard.	F	9-10.30am
Wed. 18 June	Tree identification walk in Holland Park, led by Dr Alan Harrington. Free to attend. No need to book. Meet by The Friends' noticeboard in the Café Yard.	F	11am-1pm
Sat. 21 June	Blue Badge guided tour. History of the Gardens. Must book. £10	F	10.30-noon
Sat. 28 June	Butterfly and Moth morning. Free to attend but must book.	ES	10am-noon
Sun. 6 July	RBKC Summer Festival of activity, wellbeing and sports. Holland Park sports field. Free to attend. No need to book.	RBKC	10.30am-4pm
Tues. 10 July	Wild plants of Holland Park walk with Dr Mark Spencer. Free to attend, but must book.	ES	6-8pm
Fri. 18 July	Dragon fly walk. Free to attend, but must book.	ES	11.30am-1.30pm
Mon. 21 July	Pimm's in the Park party for members of the Friends. Tickets @£25 can be bought from The Friends' website, by returning the order form enclosed with this newsletter, or by contacting Margaret Rhodes (see contact details at the start of this newsletter).	F	6-8pm
Sun. 14 Sept.	Blue Badge guided tour. Statues, sculptures and Art in the park. Must book. £10	F	10.30-noon
Tues. 16 Sept.	Herbal Medicine walk. Free to attend, but must book.	ES	5-7pm
Sat. 18 Oct.	Blue Badge guided tour. History of Holland House and the families that lived there. Must book. £10	F	10.30-noon

The Ecology Service (ES) events can be booked on Eventbrite.

The Friends' (F) Blue Badge tours can be booked on our website www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org, or by contacting Isabelle Beaumont on 07549 138 461 or IBeaumontnew@gmail.com. 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.

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 gate at the north east of the Dutch Garden was taken by Jennie Kettlewell in April 2025.



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

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