



*The Friends of Holland Park*  
Winter 2025



The Friends of  
Holland Park

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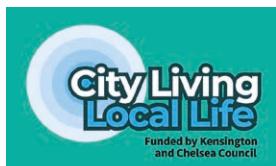
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Our website address: [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org)

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

# Christmas Concert



Sunday, 7 December in the Holland Park Orangery. 7.00pm



We are delighted that Douglas Somers-Lee and his Ariel Consort of London will once again be ringing in the Christmas season with their annual Friends' Concert. Douglas promises us a veritable feast of words and music, featuring favourite carols and less-familiar treats from around Europe, interspersed with readings, both entertaining and inspirational, not forgetting the opportunity for all of us to raise our

voices to greet the coming Yuletide. If you've been to these events before, you will know what fun they are, and if you haven't, this is your chance to find out!

At the end of the concert, we will be treated to a glass or two of mulled wine and some tasty seasonal treats. 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 note that this year's concert starts at 7.00pm. The car park is free after 6.30pm. and the car park gates will be closed promptly when the concert starts. Latecomers may not be able to gain entry to the park.**

## Festive event in Holland Park



L-R: Met Police horses at a previous event; Setting up the Wishing Tree in 2024; The Friends' stall at a previous event.

On Saturday 29 November The Friends will celebrate the festive season with an event in Holland Park's Café Yard. We will have a free activity for children to enjoy. There will be a festive fir tree, supplied by Rassells, 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 event can write a 'best wishes' message on one of 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.

Best of all, we will be visited by The Worshipful the Mayor and Mayoress of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr. Tom Bennett and his wife Mrs Beatrice Bennett. They will arrive in their official car at around 11.30am and join in the festivities.

If their duties allow, two of the Met police horse division will visit us on horseback. There will be carrots available for children to feed to the horses, provided adults check first with the police riders. There will also be Polo mints to feed to the horses, not to the police, who prefer coffee!

Our stall will have Christmas cards and small Christmas gifts for sale, such as flowered Holland Park tea towels and a Holland Park themed Snakes & Ladders game. And there will be a whole table of tempting cakes for sale from Holland Park Café.

Come and say 'hello'. Join in the fun and it's an opportunity to ask any questions you have about Holland Park or The Friends. We will be at the stall from 10am to 3.00pm.

## Conservation of Holland Park's Old Dairy

In early October The Friends heard that we were successful in our application for NCIL (Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy) funding. This much-needed award helps us fund the work to conserve the ornate Old Dairy. This will allow all users of the park, and future generations, to have a chance to see it via a new viewing window.

We would like to thank all those at RBKC that helped us with their advice and support of the application to enable this achievement.

Quietly in parallel, Sarah Brion, Senior Project Manager in the Parks team placed the heritage conservation and maintenance work out for tender. With help from our Heritage architects, a list of suitable contractors and suppliers was compiled. The tender is due back in mid-November. After which we will firm up on when the work will start.

A purchase order has also been raised for the specialist conservator who will work on the Old Dairy. He is currently preparing method statements for the conservation work.

## Drinking Water fountain near the Stable Yard

The drinking water fountain, originally donated by The Friends, will be refreshed in November. The masonry pillar will be cleaned, and the two existing fountains will be replaced with a new stainless steel water bottle filler on one side, and a new replacement drinking fountain on the other side. This fountain is much used and we are sure



Drinking fountain.



Floor tiles in Dairy.

that the improvements will be appreciated.

## Holland Park Toilets

In our Autumn newsletter we wrote that there had been some dissatisfaction with aspects of the recently relocated toilets on the East face of the Stable Yard building. Old buildings are always complicated to work with, but the RBKC Parks team have found a way to make an

improvement by rehanging the door on the female toilets, so that it opens inwards. This will hopefully ameliorate congestion that sometimes occurs in the 'lobby area' within the entrance doors to the toilets. Feedback, positive and negative, is always appreciated and can be registered on the RBKC website.

## Planting, caring then thriving



PC Nick Henry lending a hand with the planting

In November 2022 four Kentucky Coffee trees and four Southern Nettle trees were planted along the northern flank of the sports field. All were bought as large trees. Large trees need large tree pits and these were dug by the RBKC grave digger! The trees were well planted by Bartletts with pc Nicholas Henry of the Parks Police lending a hand. What is important is that the eight trees have been looked after since that time by the *idverde* team who have watered them when needed, cleared the weeds from round the trunk and kept chestnut fencing in place to protect the trees. All the trees are well established and have thrived, so the chestnut fencing can now be removed.

This is the principle behind the park's tree planting:

- Plant a limited number of trees every two years. The *idverde* team have been trained on tree planting by one of the RBKC tree officers.
- It starts with the space and the right tree is chosen to fill it from a tree 'wish list'.
- The trees are watered for the first two years.
- The newly planted trees are monitored by *idverde* to check if any treatment is needed and that the trees are growing straight.

## Cracked pillar on the upper walkway

A brick pillar on the upper walkway on the west side of the café yard has separated from its base and the result is that a structural survey is being carried out so that the necessary repairs can be implemented to the pillar as well as the long-awaited work to prevent water ingress above the camouflage paintings. We hope this will happen quickly and the two canvases, which have been repaired and are in storage, can be re-installed in their rightful place.



*Jennie Kettlewell*  
Damage to ceiling above marouflages.

## Celebrating Success with completion of the Horticulture Course

We are delighted to celebrate Pete Page's successful completion of the Introduction to Horticulture Course, held in the inspiring setting of Holland Park. Pete is one of Holland Park's hardworking gardeners.

Led by Gerry Kelsey, *idverde*'s Community and Training Manager, whose strong theoretical knowledge and practical expertise shaped the programme, the course offered participants a comprehensive foundation in essential horticultural skills. From plant identification and pruning techniques to the care and maintenance of flower beds, each session was designed to build confidence and hands-on experience.



*Pete Page (left) and Gerry Kelsey.*

Importantly, the course also equips students with the right theoretical tools to support their future careers in horticulture — blending practical know-how with a solid understanding of plant science, design principles, and environmental awareness.

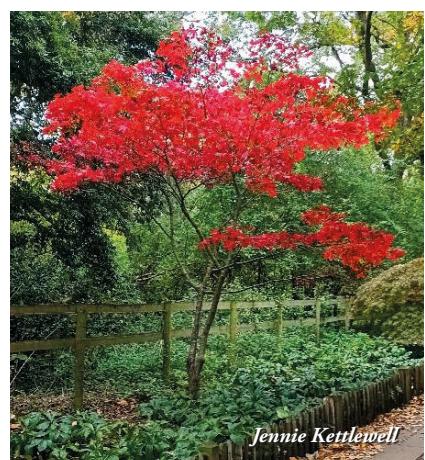
Pete was joined by other candidates from across the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), all contributing to a collaborative and inspiring learning environment.

Congratulations to Pete and all participants — we look forward to seeing how their green journeys continue to flourish! Congratulations are also due to Gerry for his dedication to helping others learn.

## Stunningly Red



This autumn we have seen unusually vibrant colours, as the leaves of Holland Park's trees turned spectacularly red and gold. Photosynthesis slows in autumn and the green from chlorophyll starts to disappear, leaving underlying oranges and yellow pigments called carotenoids. Some trees create new red and purple pigments in autumn, with a chemical called anthocyanin. This year has been dry and sunny and the more sunlight a leaf is exposed to the more sugar is produced. The more sugars there are in a leaf, the redder the leaf becomes.



It has been a particularly successful year for businesses wanting to join our Friends & Neighbours scheme to offer a discount to our members.

Our most recent partner is The Belvedere Restaurant, in Holland Park itself, who offer 10% discount on food and drink on Tuesday to Friday evenings. The Belvedere is sited in the historic building that used to be the Summer Ballroom for Holland House. In 2022 it was painstakingly redecorated to echo the original splendour of the building, and is



Interior of Belvedere Restaurant.

now a warm and welcoming space with seating on the ground floor, mezzanine and terrace overlooking the Iris Garden.

16 more partners provide discounts for Friends of Holland Park. Please consider these businesses when you are buying your Christmas presents, want a treat for yourself, or are looking for somewhere to book for a Christmas meal or children's party. Further details can be found on our website: [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org).

## Challenged by a mushroom



Willow Shield.

Dr Mark Spencer was on his customary enthusiastic form when he led the Fungi Foray event on Sunday 19 October. He started by saying: "It's been so dry this year that we won't find much." But we did and it was interesting.

First up was a Willow Shield (*Pluteus salicinus*) with a silvery-grey cap, found on a piece of decaying wood.

Then one of the group pointed out a cluster of Glistening Ink Cap (*Caprinus micaceus*) and Mark showed us the reflective mica-like flecks on the cap, which presumably account for the 'glistening' in the species name.

Next we found False Deathcap (*Amanita Citrina*). The pale cap was speckled with little ochre-brown patches.

The big trunk of the fallen Hybrid Poplar in Chestnut Walk sported a meaty bracket fungus. It looked solid but, on closer inspection, it was made up of tightly-packed tubes.

Finally there was a mystery that even Mark, as a forensic botanist, could not solve. The specimen was photographed, collected and is now drying out in the Ecology Centre while an identification is awaited from an even higher authority. Maybe it will be a first for Holland Park. We don't know but will provide you with the information when we have it.



Glistening Ink Cap.

# 2026 Art Exhibition



Since our last exhibition I have really felt the unsettling nature of our times and, to escape the news and its repercussions, I disappear into my painting. To sit before a blank canvas with an idea in mind and developing that idea into a painting is all I need to survive. I hope you feel the same way, have been busy creating and only need this call to action to enter The Friends of Holland Park Annual Art Exhibition! Please register/pay the registration fee so I can send you the information/exhibit details forms.



© French

The conditions of entry remain the same. Friends who are artists, and artists who become Friends, are invited to exhibit up to a total of ten works in the main exhibition. This can 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 70cm x 100cm (including cardboard mounts but no wooden mounts). Or it can be made up of ten three-dimensional objects such as ceramics, stoneware and small sculptures. The minimum sale price for works in the main exhibition is £75. Artists can also enter the Mini-Market of small works on offer at £65 or under, this includes cards and craft items but no paintings. 35% of the money from the sale of your artworks goes

Friday, 21 November 2025

Artist registration open. (A registration form is enclosed with this newsletter)

Friday, 13 March, 2026

Final date for completed artist exhibits forms to be received to allow catalogue listing

Friday, 10 April

Artist deliver artworks to the Orangery, Holland Park 8.30-11am  
*Artists will be required to sign the catalogue to certify that all details shown are correct.*

Friday, 10 April

Hanging & Judging 11am – 6pm

Friday, 10 April

Artist Reception 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Saturday, 11 April  
to Sunday, 19 April

Exhibition open to the public. 10.30am to 6pm  
**Continues for 9 days from 10.30am to 6pm with entry FREE OF CHARGE.**

Sunday, 19 April

Artists and buyers collect works, 6.15pm – 7pm

Monday 20 April

Artists and buyers collect works, 9am – 11am

to The Friends, so that they can continue the important work they do in Holland Park.

Friends interested in exhibiting in the Art Exhibition, the Mini-Market, or both, need to register and pay £15 entry fee before they receive their 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 on-line, you must complete the order form enclosed with the newsletter and pay the £15 entry fee.

REGISTRATION OPENS ON FRIDAY 21 November. Artists who have registered for the main exhibition may include works in the Mini-Market at no additional cost. Please register as soon as possible, as space is limited.

Information about the exhibition is available on our website 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 details regarding the 2026 exhibition, feature artist and sponsorship will be outline in the spring newsletter.

*Gordon French*

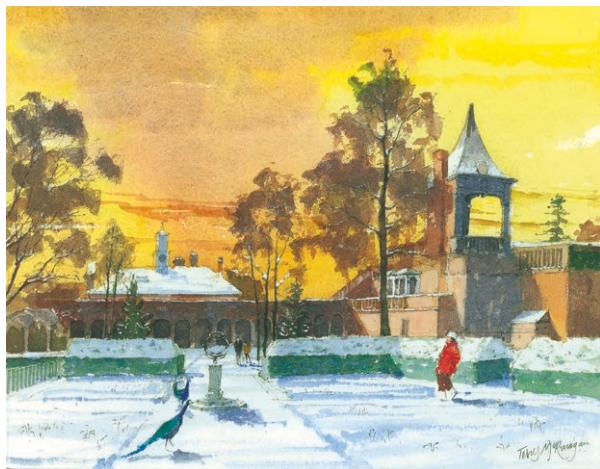
## Art Exhibition 2026 Timetable

Last minute gifts are often a challenge when you visit friends and family over the festive season. So why not have a look at what The Friends have to offer. There are two designs of cotton tea towel; one showing paintings of some of the flowers growing wild in Holland Park and the other with paintings of autumn fruits in the park. The packs of 'Holland House through the trees' greetings cards makes an excellent gift, as does the handy jute shopper decorated with a tree motif. There is a new pack of post cards of each of the 11 camouflage paintings. And how about treating someone to a gift of our Holland Park Snakes and Ladders game.

This year we have again picked two designs of Christmas card 'Arcade and Sundial', with its golden sky, shows the small pine trees beyond the steps which were transplanted from the park's display at Chelsea Flower Show around the time of the Millennium. We are repeating The Stable Yard, which was so popular last year. Both cards are by Terry McKivragan, who painted many of the earlier Holland Park cards.

The standard greeting on all Christmas cards is 'With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year', but you can choose to ask for them blank. We hold a supply of our chosen two card designs, with greetings, in two sizes. We also have the option of a mixed pack:

- Standard, 152 mm x 197 mm format at £7.25 for five.
- Smaller, 118 mm x 168 mm at £12.50 for ten.



*Christmas card designs: Stable Yard (top),  
Arcade and Sundial (above).*

You can use the order form with this newsletter, or order from The Friends' website [thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://thefriendsofhollandpark.org). Snakes & Ladders is not available on-line or via the order form but can be bought from the Park Reception Office.

All cards and merchandise are available to buy from the Park Reception Office in the Stable Yard.

- Mixed packs of ten designs of Holland Park from past years, at £6.50. These will be mostly the larger size and in three or four different designs.

If your newsletter is hand delivered (no stamp), our delivery of Christmas cards is free. If your newsletter is delivered by post, we have to charge an additional £2.10 per ten cards, or a single pack of five large. Please note that sending the order to The Friends, instead of direct to Mountbatten, gets The Friends an extra discount, unless overprinting is required. If you do order direct, please remember to say which charity you would like Mountbatten to donate to. Naturally we would hope it was The Friends, but you are free to choose any charity.

Christmas cards will be available by the time you receive this newsletter. Please order as soon as possible so that the publisher can estimate in advance how many to print. We will keep some in stock, but delivery gets slower when we have to print more, especially towards the end of the season.

To order Christmas cards or merchandise:

So many park visitors have asked this year if the *Aesculus Hippocastanum* (Horse Chestnut) trees are dying, because their leaves were brown and crispy long before autumn.

Fortunately, the leaves that are brown and dead before their time are not a sign that the trees are on their way out, but are a result of drought. RBKC Tree Officer, Jessica Stocks, tells us: "Horse chestnuts go into dormancy earlier than other species for a few reasons. Firstly, they are non-native and are therefore less evolved to our weather patterns. They prefer a drier climate and the increasingly drier conditions in the UK seem to have resulted in far fewer instances of bacterial canker. But drought places great stress on a tree's vascular system so there is a limit to how dry it can get. Secondly, the leaves are constantly affected by leaf miner which limits the trees' ability to photosynthesise as effectively. Therefore, the trees get relatively less energy and a low-energy/stressed tree will go into dormancy earlier to conserve stores. So,



Brown and crispy horse chestnut leaves.

the trees are not dying, but the signs are reflective of natural adaptations to the growing conditions."

Jessica fulfils the important role of monitoring the park's many trees. Nothing is felled without good reason and, for preference, she will keep checking on trees if she thinks disease may be taking a hold and preserve them as long as it is safe to do so. We agree that trees are one of the delights that make Holland Park so special and we need to ensure that continues for future generations.

The Friends do what we can to boost the health of Horse Chestnuts in Holland Park. Twice each year, we fund tree specialists, Bartletts, to carry out a soil drench of the four big trees on the margin of the car park, with a view to reducing the effect of the leaf miner. They also spray the bark of the whole row of trees in Chestnut Avenue to encourage the tree to put out its own natural defences against canker, so it is interesting to hear that canker has been less prevalent this year.

## Bird-ringing demonstration

Professional ornithologist, Bill Haines, was delighted to find a group of 30 enthusiasts waiting for him when he arrived to set up the mist nets for the bird-ringing demonstration in Holland Park at 7.30am on Saturday 25 October. He was kept busy for the whole event, both by a steady supply of birds for ringing and an equally steady supply of visitors. It was good to see children showing so much interest in the netting, weighing, sexing, health-checking and finally ringing of a range of

species including blackbird, goldcrest, long tailed tits, blackcaps, coal tit and a wren. The goldcrest, Britain's smallest bird, was so tiny and delicate that one can scarcely believe the species braves migration across the North Sea.

The comment was made that Holland Park has a particularly rich bird population. This is due to our very well managed habitats, courtesy of the RBKC Ecology Service.



L-R: Long tailed tit; Male and female Blackcaps; Coal tit.

# Hi there kids!

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

## Flower fit



This beautiful flower is a Gloriosa superba.

It is usually found in tropical Africa but this one was grown by our clever gardeners in the Holland Park glass house. In the picture above there is a square missing. Which of the squares below fits the missing part of the picture? To make it more difficult, we have rotated some of the squares!



**Tile me all about it!**



If you go up onto the terrace in front of Holland House you will see some blue and white tiles on a wall.

These tiles show an H, which stands for Holland. That's because the men who owned Holland House hundreds of years ago had the title Baron Holland. The 4 circles that decorate the H represent the Barons' coronet, a type of small crown.

**Oops!** Someone made a mistake when the tiles were put on the wall nearly 200 years ago. One of the tiles is upside down. See if you can find it.

**Why do bees have hairy legs?**

Bees have a job to do. They pollinate our plants, so that the plants produce seeds, berries and fruits, including the food plants we eat.

They move pollen from one plant to another but they don't have bags to carry the pollen in, so they brush against the pollen and it sticks to the hair on their legs in a big

yellow bundle. Honey bees and bumblebees use the hair on their legs to pack pollen into 'pollen baskets'. Most bees have stiff hairs on their legs which they use to clean their body of pollen or dirt. Some bees even have hair on their tongue and two types of bees have hairy eyes! Holland Park grows plants to encourage wild bees but no longer keeps honey bees in hives.





We hope you have enjoyed the benefits of membership over the past year and we thank you for your support, which helps us have a strong voice when we are negotiating work to ensure our fragile park stays as beautiful as it is.

Membership is due for renewal on 1 January each year. Some of you (around 60% of members) make doing this easier for you and for us by arranging a standing order with your bank. Others must remember to renew, or it takes the time of our volunteer trustees to send out reminders.

**For those of you who last paid before 1 September 2025 and do not have a standing order, now is the time to pay for your membership in 2026, using the order form enclosed with this newsletter, or on our website, [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org), or by contacting your bank.**

If in doubt about when you last paid, check with Graham Franklin 07802 761 548, or [ggfranklin3@aol.com](mailto:ggfranklin3@aol.com).

## Well spotted

While taking his customary walk in the park, member Richard Northedge noticed this brick circle and asked what it was. It is the remains of an old well, now made safe. We wonder if is deep enough to serve the park with much-needed water once again, but the park's water table has dropped.



*Jennie Kettlewell*



If you would like to set up a standing order, we can help by supplying a form and sending it to your bank for you. Our bank details are Account No. 60636975 Sort Code 20-47-34. The banks can't always be relied upon to activate the standing order and

it is more reliable if you tell them yourself by your preferred method – telephone, banking app, on-line or by visiting your bank. You will find the amount of your subscription on the enclosed order form. Many of you generously add a donation to your annual subscription e.g. add £3 to make a £9 subscription up to £12 and some do more. That helps us fund more improvements in the park and we thank those that already make donations in this way.

You will notice that your membership discount card, which entitles you to discounts under our Friends & Neighbours scheme, expires on **15 March 2026**. Those who have paid their subscriptions for 2026 will receive a replacement card with their spring newsletter, which will reach them about 1 March.

*Rhoddy Wood*

## Chelsea Open Air Nursery School



*'A Healthy Start to Education, Open Hearts Open Minds'*

**Places available for September**

- **Places available for Rising 3's, 3 and 4 year olds**
- **15 or 30 hour funded education and paid additional hours, term time only**

For more information, please contact the school office:  
**Tel:** 020 7352 8374

**Email:** [info@coans.rbkc.sch.uk](mailto:info@coans.rbkc.sch.uk)

**Website:** [www.coans.rbkc.sch.uk](http://www.coans.rbkc.sch.uk)



I take a country walk almost every day. I wander through woods, watch wildlife and see each season segue into the next. And I do it without leaving town.

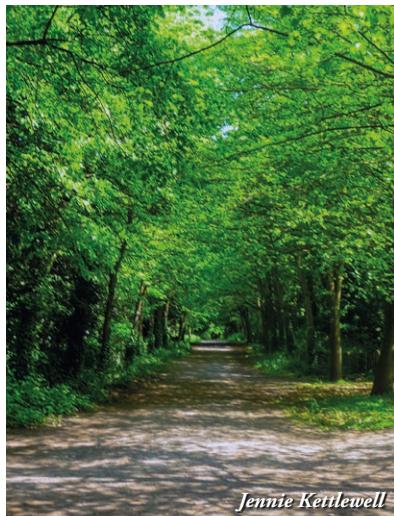
My slice of countryside is the wedge of woodland across Holland Park's northern end. It is a rural retreat from London's urban bustle but also a step back in time: with nothing more modern than park benches here you can swap today's troubles for timeless tranquillity.

The thick end of the wedge, the path that extends up from the youth hostel, links two long avenues that meet on the park's western edge. Chestnut Walk runs north of Lime Tree Walk – though there are no signs to identify either. But don't worry if you don't know a birch from a beech or an alder from an elder, just enjoy the quiet calm. (And if you do worry, the Friends publish an illustrated tree guide.)

Paths connecting those avenues mean visitors can vary routes and find sylvan favourites – like buckled branches or bizarre bark, or the tree-with-five-trunks (a chestnut that gate-crashed Lime Tree Walk). Occasionally old arboreal friends fall; more often the tree gangs cull them first. But the other trees' imperceptible growth offsets the loss, and their falling leaves add to the soft ground that differentiates woodland trails from the park's asphalt pathways.



*Multi-stemmed chestnut tree in Lime Tree Avenue.*



*Woodland path.*

There are more trees in the Wildlife Enclosure north of Chestnut Walk but these are out-of-bounds except for Ecology Service events: a double-height fence now keeps the wildlife inside and big-game hunters out.

Wildlife is everywhere else however. Sit down and a robin will likely join you. Squirrels pose cutely before begging (never give them money – they only spend it on nuts). In spring there are pockets of snowdrops, crocuses and bluebells while Lime Tree Walk becomes an avenue of daffodils.

Moorhens glide round Lord Holland's Pond – the Piccadilly Circus of the woodland wedge where five paths converge, bringing passing tourists south from the park's Sun Trap entrance, too busy studying their phone-maps to see either woods or trees.

My favourite moment here? When the pandemic left the woods even emptier than usual, a young lady in evening dress was standing at the bottom of Lime Tree Walk being photographed clutching a violin and bow. I asked if she played or were these just props? Her response was a private rendition, for my exclusive audience, of Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending*. Beat that.

*Richard Northedge*

## Finding your way around Holland Park

When we say something is happening in a particular part of the park people often say: 'I know the park well but I'm not sure where that is.' We have taken the opportunity to print a copy of the Holland Park map which you can see on the page opposite.

# Finding your way around

## Entrances

As marked on the map. See map on back cover for local access roads.

## Car parking

Off Abbotsbury Road, to west of park. Postcode for SatNav users: **W14 8EJ** then look for pay and display car park sign.

## Food and beverages

Café  
Belvedere Restaurant

## Children's play areas

Toddlers' playground  
Adventure playground

## Historic and other buildings

Holland House and Terrace  
The Orangery  
The Ice House  
The Stable Yard  
The Youth Hostel

## Park management offices

Park reception & sports booking office  
Parks Police  
Ecology Centre

## Toilets

East side of Stable Yard building  
Inside Ecology Centre (when centre is open)  
Adventure Playground (including wheelchair access)  
Stable Yard (Changing Places toilet)

## Sculptures and architectural features

Throughout its history, owners of the grounds of Holland House have collected works of art and embellished the buildings and structures. Sites of interest in the park are too numerous to mention here so we have chosen four interesting examples:

- 1 Lord Holland statue by George Frederick Watts
- 2 Tonda by Jonathan Loxley
- 3 Tortoises with Triangle and Time by Wendy Taylor
- 4 The stone 'hand rinsing' basin in the Kyoto Garden

To explore the sculptures and architectural features of Holland Park, a guide, *Decorative art in Holland Park*, is available from [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org) or the Park office.



## Winter 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](mailto:susan.vannoorden@ntlworld.com).

Keep an eye on the website ([www.kensingtongardeners.co.uk](http://www.kensingtongardeners.co.uk)) for a new programme of talks and visits in 2026.

### 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](http://www.kensingtonsociety.org/events).

Wed. 26 Nov,  
11.15am-12.30pm.

Special tour of the royal Albert Hall, built between 1867 and 1971. Must book, which can be done on the Kensington Society Website. Tickets £20 for members of the Kensington Society. £30 for non-members.

### 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.

### Stop Press! Gold Awards



News has just come through that Kensington and Chelsea has done exceptionally well in this year's London in Bloom awards. At the presentation ceremony on 27 October, it was announced that Holland Park had again won a Gold and the borough, as a whole, achieved Gold standard.

Gold is for an outstanding result, with 85% or more of the possible marks, covering horticultural gardening achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation. Eight of the borough's parks achieved Gold, with another park receiving Silver Gilt.

Lisa Wilkinson, one of three Council community kitchen gardeners who help residents grow food in their own neighbourhoods, was given the Outstanding Contribution Award for her services to community gardening in London.

This is a truly terrific result though not entirely a surprise as we are aware of the very hard work put in by all those involved. Thank you to Parks Management, the Ecology Service, the community gardeners, the Parks Police, the idverde gardeners, maintenance team and the front-line staff in the park reception office. You all played a part in achieving Gold standard and what you do is much appreciated by those who enjoy Holland Park.

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. 29 Nov.	<b>Festive pop-up event</b> in the Holland Park Café Yard. Festive 'wishing tree', activities for children, cakes from the Holland Park Café for sale, sale of Friends' guides to the park and related merchandise. If they are not called away to other duties, officers from the Met Police horse division will attend with their magnificent large horses. Children will be able to feed carrots to the horses. Best of all, the Worshipful the Mayor and Mayoress of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea will visit at 11.30am to meet those taking part in the activities.	F 10am-3pm
Sat. 6 Dec.	<b>Wreath-making workshop</b> in the Ecology Centre. Must book on Eventbrite.	ES 1-3pm
Sun. 7 Dec.	<b>Christmas Concert</b> performed in The Orangery by the Ariel Consort of London. £27. (See p3 in this newsletter for details and how to book tickets.)	F 7pm
Sun. 13 Dec.	<b>Wreath-making workshop</b> in the Ecology Centre. Must book on Eventbrite.	ES 1-3pm
Tues. 16 Dec.	<b>Wreath-making workshop</b> in the Ecology Centre. Must book on Eventbrite.	ES 1-3pm

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](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org), or by contacting Isabelle Beaumont on 07549 138 461 or [IBeaumontnew@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:Gerald.Kelsey@idverde.co.uk).

## 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.

## 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 is of a frosted pittosporum in the Dutch Garden, taken by Jennie Kettlewell in January 2025*



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