



*The Friends of Holland Park
Autumn 2024*



The Friends of
Holland Park

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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, 8 December in the Holland Park Orangery. 7.00pm

We are delighted that Douglas Somers-Lee will entertain us with his Ariel Consort of London once again. Douglas has sung in The Friends' Christmas concert for many years, with the Tallis Chamber Choir, so he knows us well and knows just what we like for our very special end of year event. There will be many familiar faces in the choir.



Douglas Somers-Lee conducting

After last year's concert, one of you said: "I haven't been to The Friends' Christmas Concert for ten years. I now wonder why, as it is certainly better than the others. I shall come again next year." So, if you haven't been to this event for a while, or indeed if you are a regular, we can promise you a highly enjoyable evening. Do put the date in your diary.

Trustee, Nigel Brockmann, is in contact with Douglas and we will update you about the programme at the end of November. One thing we can be sure of is the joyous voices of the choir ringing out in the beautiful Orangery, readings to interest and amuse you, and some carols for all to sing.

After the concert, we will be treated to tasty canapés and a glass or two of wine. Tickets, at £27, can be ordered on our website (www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org), or on the order form enclosed with this newsletter.

Please note that this year's concert starts at 7.00pm, earlier than in previous years.

Discount at Holland Park Café

Daisy Green have been running the Holland Park Café since May. They are a community-focused business and are working hard to understand the quirks of Holland Park and its regulars.

Some of our members have expressed disappointment that they couldn't just drop in for a coffee as they had been accustomed to do, but this was a misunderstanding. You can! The misunderstanding was due to the rather formal look of the Café which had the tables set out with knives and forks for a meal. We notice that this is no longer the case for most tables and the Café looks more welcoming for it. Daisy Green will need the regulars when it comes to the quieter winter months.

Table service inside the Café and on the terrace means tables are cleared and cleaned quickly and we notice that pigeons are much less in evidence. If you prefer,



Front terrace of café

you can go to the counter and order a coffee and sandwich to go. The kiosk opens at 12 noon.

Daisy Green have joined the Friends & Neighbours programme, so that paid-up members of The Friends are entitled to a 15% discount on all purchases in the Café, when you show your membership card on ordering.

Some regular groups have been used to pushing tables together for easier socialising. If you wish to do that, just ask the on-duty Café staff, or ask the manager in advance.

If you haven't already been to the new Café, come and try it out, bring your friends and claim your members' discount.

Treatment of sports field trees

In November 2021, four Kentucky Coffee trees and four Southern Nettle trees were planted at the north end of the sports field, to replace the row of failed Red Horse Chestnut trees. Bartletts Tree Experts did the planting and have checked up on them several times since then. All are growing into handsome straight trees, but the Southern Nettles have looked a little peaky of late, with their leaves mottled with unhealthy yellow. Bartletts came to inspect these trees on 16 August, told us it looked like nutrient deficiency and treated them appropriately. They took samples of the leaves and the soil for analysis. Let's hope that does the trick, but it was found that the surrounding soil was parched and the trees badly needed watering. We've called on help from idverde.



Yellowing leaves on the Southern Nettle tree.

Master classes from the Japanese gardeners

At the end of June, expert Japanese gardeners made a visit to Holland Park's Kyoto Garden to work with Parks Management and idverde. The home team benefitted from master classes on pruning in the Japanese way. Not only must a tree or shrub be a beautiful shape, but it must leave a pleasing shadow on the ground. That is art!



The Japanese gardeners and Holland Park team.

Open-air gym

By the time you read this, work to refurbish the Holland Park open-air gym, at the extreme south west of the sports field, will be well under way. The facility has been extremely popular and the equipment was coming to the end of its life. The same applied to the golf practice area. The council held well-publicised on-site meetings in autumn 2023 to hear the views of those who use the gym and there was an on-line questionnaire. The improvements are expected to be completed in early October. If you haven't tried the equipment yet, do visit the new gym and have a go.

History display in Café

For quite a few years, The Friends have offered to create an information panel describing the history of Holland House, designed to go on the long brick wall inside the café. There is virtually nothing to tell park visitors the significance of Holland House and its story. At last, Daisy Green agreed to the proposal and the panels are now in place. They are designed to whet the appetite with pictures, and offer a link to finding out further information.



Holland House information panels.

Permission had to be sought for each of the illustrations to be included and credits agreed. Designed by Column Communications, who created the Kyoto and Holland House signs and The Friends' guides to the park, the panels are slightly smaller than expected, because a notice board will fill the space immediately to the right. We hope you enjoy the new information panels.

The Council is currently working on a project to introduce Natural Flood Management (NFM) interventions within the northern woodland area of Holland Park to reduce the rate and volume of runoff leaving the park.

Natural Flood Management means working with natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. This includes diverting water to where it is needed or can drain naturally, and this can help increase habitat diversity and provide wider climate resilience. While there are existing hard interventions within the park through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), which help capture surface water and filter it back into the ground rather than the sewers, these are not able to deal with the fast flow of water from increasingly frequent heavy rainfall down the woodland paths and rainwater still ends up in places where we do not want or need it.

The hard solutions used on the formal pathways in the park (soakaway drains and bound paths) are not appropriate for the woodland areas and a more natural solution is being sought. The challenges being looked at are:

- Surface water runoff frequently leaves the woodland area
- Woodland footpaths frequently become preferential flow paths during heavy rainfall, bypassing the absorption of the woodland floor and eroding the tracks.

- The existing pond within the Wildlife Enclosure receives very little water due to bypassing down the footpaths and therefore requires supplementary top-ups during summer months.

Solutions are currently going through a design process, and these designs will be ready to share shortly but the interventions may include:

- Earth banks and scraped channels along the woodland paths, with wood or natural stone, to direct surface water flow into the woodland margins and the Wildlife Enclosure pond
- Renewed leaky barriers within the drainage ditch
- Some narrowing of the path on Chestnut and Lime Tree Walks.
- Enhanced woodland margins with additional woodland plants to reduce the footpath catchment and provide additional water infiltration

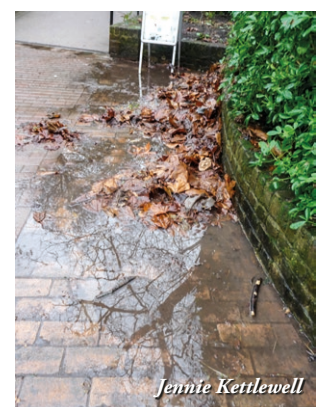
The woodland paths will remain as an unbound surface. Any earth banks introduced will be staggered and direct water to woodland margins where it can discharge into the soil. This project is being supported through funding from the Council and the Environment Agency. It is expected that the work will be carried out in winter 2024 and be complete in Spring 2025. Some pathways may be closed during works for safety reasons, but the interventions proposed work with the natural landscape so any disruption should be minimal.

Monica Castelino, RBKC Parks Manager

*L-R:
Floodwater collecting
at the bottom of the
North Lawn;*

*Rainwater flow past
West Woodland
Enclosure.*

*Floodwater by the
Sun Trap gate.*



Chairman of The Friends, Jennie Kettlewell adds that The Friends have been involved in this initiative from the start and wrote to support the bid for external funding (which was successful). While we agree this work is very necessary to retain rainwater in the park, where it is needed, and not let it run off to where it can't be used, we emphasized that the solution must look natural and retain the integrity of the woodlands. We also asked that it improve the marginal water-dependent habitats. It is pleasing to see the proposed use of earth banks and scraped channels, rather than concrete gulleys. We have asked to be kept informed as the project progresses.



In our summer newsletter, we invited you to submit your best photos of Holland Park and you sent us some stunning shots. Each of you have your favourite places in the park, so we had a welcome variety of subjects from plants and people, to birds and buildings. Some photos were, sadly, not high resolution, but we still have some very attractive pictures to share in the next few issues of the newsletter. Here are some examples. A big thank you to all of you who sent photos.

Janet Thacker



Clockwise from top left:

Herons take flight.

Taken in the Iris Garden by Patricia Vallely.

Magpie perched in a tree.

Taken in the Kyoto Garden by Angeles Gonzalez.

Dancing under the arches.

Taken by Sue Clarke.

Strolling down the Acer Walk.

Taken by Carol Jones on a rainy day.

Quiet contemplation.

Taken in the Kyoto Garden by Barry Eaglestone. The monk gave Barry permission to use the photo.



The work of the Parks Police team is much appreciated and their familiar faces reassure us as they patrol the paths, fields, enclosures and buildings of Holland Park. Two of the most well-known police constables retired this August and we shall miss them. Pc Phil Crowther spent 15 years with the force and pc Dave Pullan worked in the team for 12 years. The Friends have wished them well in their retirement.



All-electric Parks Police car.

Fortunately, three new police constables have joined the team. Pc Warren Cummings arrived in April this year, while pc David Lane and pc Jeff Cresswell are more recent arrivals. The Parks Police work in two teams, one headed up by Sergeant Helen Tilbury and the other by Sergeant Arron Haynes. One or other of the two teams is on duty during daylight hours, with some late evening patrols, 365 days of the year. In a three-shift day, they enforce bye-laws, Dog Control Orders, deal with traffic issues, respond to accidents in the park, find missing people and deal with more cases of anti-social behaviour than you might imagine.

Though based in Holland Park, the Parks Police cover around 40 parks and four cemeteries in the

Borough, so they are obviously extremely busy. The reason you might not be aware of all this activity is that they take a preventative approach and aim to solve each problem before it escalates. They strongly believe that a problem-solving approach is the most effective way of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, so they work with local

communities and park users to identify concerns and find solutions. In addition, they can be called to help out with events such as the Notting Hill Carnival, cycle coding, Remembrance parades and to provide assistance to the emergency services during major incidents.

The Parks Police are dedicated to ensuring that the Borough's parks are safe and welcoming places for everyone, but they cannot be everywhere in the park at once, so they urge that we call the Parks Police number (see below) when their assistance is needed. In my experience, they are quick to act and do so firmly but with tact. They can only help us if we help them to do so.

Jennie Kettlewell

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**.



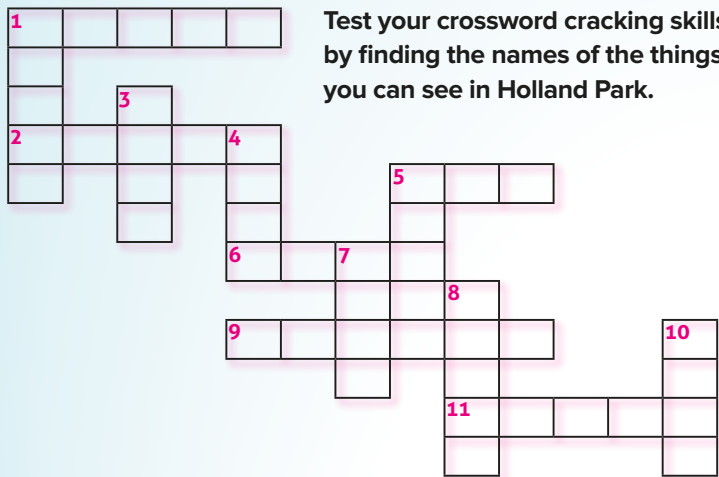
*The Cover photo was taken in the Kyoto Garden by Barry Eaglestone, whose exhibition in the Ice House in June 2024 included many photographs of Holland Park.
www.barryeaglestone.com*

Hi there **kids!**

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



Crack our crazy crossword



Test your crossword cracking skills by finding the names of the things you can see in Holland Park.

Did you know?



The big gates in front of Holland House have a strange creature carved in stone on top of each gate post. The creatures are called griffins. The back end of the griffin is a bit like the back end of a lion. The front end and the wings are meant to be like an eagle. Go and look very carefully and see if you agree.

Crossword clues...

» Across

1. Big grey bird, that often stands on one leg
2. Green stuff on which you can play football
5. Bird that hunts at night and makes a hooting sound
6. Bird that likes water
9. Its petals look pretty on a plant
11. Bird that sings beautifully and has a red breast

» Down

1. Rows of green bushes at the edge of a field
3. You can walk on one of these in the park
4. If you put one of these in the soil, it will grow into a new plant
5. A very big tree
7. A clever bird with black feathers
8. Birds like these red, yellow or purple fruits on plants in autumn
10. Water where you can find ducks

Mia, aged 6
drew this pretty
flower. We thought
it made a lovely
border.



TREES GO NUTS IN AUTUMN

Can you work out which nut belongs to which tree?



Write your answer here:
A, B or C.



A. Chestnut



B. Oak



C. Hazel



On 3 July, the Mayor of Motomiya City in Fukushima hosted a cultural exchange event in Holland Park's Fukushima Garden. The occasion was held to celebrate the friendship between Motomiya City and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and followed a Friendship Declaration signed in April this year. There is a sister English garden in Prince William's Park, in Motomiya City.



His excellency, Hajime Hayashi, the Ambassador of Japan, giving his speech.

Japanese dignitaries, RBKC councillors and staff, and trustees of The Friends were invited to enjoy the Hanami 'picnic party.' It started dramatically with an impressive and highly energetic display of Japanese drumming. This was followed by speeches from the Japanese Ambassador to the UK, Mr Hajime Hayashi; Motomiya City Mayor, Mr Gigyo Takamatsu; Chairman of the Fukushima Prefectural Association in London, Mr Yoshio Mitsuyama; and The Worshipful the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr. Will Lane. Many fine words that kept the interpreters busy.

Then it was time to eat and Bento Boxes, filled with tasty Japanese food, were handed to each guest. After all had eaten their fill and taken the opportunity to meet other guests, it was time to share in some cultural activities. There was a tea ceremony to watch, with someone explaining the very formal process to produce

the rather alarmingly lurid green brew. Origami is the art of folding paper to make pleasing shapes, which some guests watched and the braver among them had a go. Cllr. Preety Hudd tried her hand at ikebana flower arranging. The sake tasting was very popular. And some showed their artistic skills when painting the little okiagari-koboshi figurines that are associated with Fukushima culture.

The idea for the Fukushima Garden was suggested by Japanese master gardener, Yasuo Kitayama, to be a memorial garden in gratitude for the support of the



The Worshipful the Mayor of RBKC, Cllr Will Lane, giving his speech.

British people following the earthquake and tsunami disaster in 2011. He returned later in 2012 to create the Fukushima Memorial Garden which was opened on 24 July 2012.

Both the Kyoto and Fukushima Gardens are beautifully looked after by the idverde gardening team and The Friends were pleased to see that the gardeners responsible for the good work were invited to the Hanami picnic event.

It was a very happy occasion and we thank the hosts from Motomiya City for their kind invitation to The Friends.

Jennie Kettlewell



Display of drumming.

This year's Christmas card is a view of the 'new' Stable Yard in Holland Park, as it now looks. The 'old' stable yard was on the site of what is now the formal garden and the old stables were to the west where you can now see the brick arches and the Belvedere Restaurant. The current stable yard was built in 1812. The card is 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 these cards, with greetings, in three options:

- Standard, 152 mm x 197 mm format at £7.00 for five.
- Smaller, 118 mm x 168 mm at £12.00 for ten.
- 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.
- In addition, there is a range of 17 other Holland Park cards in the brochure enclosed with this newsletter.



*Christmas card designs:
Stable Yard (top), Café (above)*

These will be available from 1 November but 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 more have to be printed, especially towards the end of the season.

To order, you can use the order form with this newsletter, or order from The Friends' website.

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 make a donation to; naturally we would hope it was The Friends, but you are free to choose any charity.

Rhoddy Wood

Congratulations!

Two gardeners from the idverde team, Sheku Maringa and Canice Osuagwu, have succeeded in completing their City and Guilds level 2 Award in Horticulture. The course was delivered in-house at Holland Park by Gerry Kelsey, idverde's Community & Training Manager, and focused on plant identification and propagation, with emphasis on plants found in Holland Park.



Canice Osuagwu



Sheku Maringa

undertaking many tasks and can often be seen in the Kyoto Garden, making sure visitors treat it with respect.

Monica Castelino, RBKC Parks Manager, said: "It is really encouraging to see more of the team sign up to gain horticultural qualifications and, more importantly, enjoy and excel in their training. Well done Sheku and Canice, and well done Gerry."

You will probably recognise both Canice and Sheku. Canice is one of the team who care for the Kyoto and Fukushima Gardens. Sheku works at weekends,

The Friends send their congratulations and wish them a successful future with the new qualification.

On the evening of 17 July, Mark Spencer treated us to yet another intriguing talk on the wild plants in Holland Park. As always, he found interesting subjects as we walked, and pounced upon them with glee to reveal facts and tell stories.

Did you know?

1. Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea vulgaris*) is usually said to be poisonous for animals. When growing, it gives off a pungent scent so that animals recognize the plant is toxic and leave it alone. Once cut, the scent disappears and animals might eat it in ignorance, with dire consequences. So, if you cut ragwort, be sure to remove it from anywhere animals might graze.
2. Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*) is surprisingly a relative of coffee. It contains coumarin, a twin sister of vanillin. If you press a piece of the plant in your note book and leave it to dry, your note book will smell fragrant for years.
3. Clever Water Soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) lives on ponds and it sinks in winter. In spring, it pulls oxygen into the leaves so it floats to the surface.
4. On finding Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*) Mark told us most of the carrots we eat today are orange, but that wasn't always so. William of Orange and his wife Mary became king and queen of England, Ireland and Scotland in 1689. They came from the Dutch House of Orange, so orange became the colour of choice and the populace would only buy and serve orange carrots.
5. Water plant Amphibius Bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*) has stomata both on the top and under



Wild carrot.

surface of its leaves. Stomata are tiny pores in the surface of a leaf, which allow it to 'breathe'. Usually, stomata are on the underside of a leaf, but this wouldn't work when the leaf lies flat on the water, so it swaps to the upper side of the leaf so it can still function.

Why not book to come on Mark Spencer's Fungi Foray Walk on Saturday 26 October. Details are on the 'Dates for your Diary' page at the end of this newsletter.




Dried Woodruff

Save me I'm wild

TRANSLUCENT PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES
OF THE STRUCTURE OF WILD FLOWERS

Signed prints & handmade cards



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www.savemeimwild.com

We were delighted that John Russell and his son Lee paid a visit to Holland Park on 27 June and came to say hello to The Friends at our pop-up stall in the Café Yard.

John had known Holland Park well in the 1940s when his grandfather, George Russell, worked for the Ilchester family as a gardener for the Holland House Estate. George and his wife Nelly lived in a flat above the stables, in what is now the Stable Yard, and John remembers visiting and spending Christmas there.

He particularly remembers the aromas of the time. Granddad George smoked a pipe and had a habit of putting a little honey and a piece of apple into his tobacco pouch to give the tobacco a special fragrance. The scent lingered on the stairway and was sometimes mixed with the smell of cabbage, cooked by his grandmother on the huge iron range. And he remembers the smell of the old white horse, that pulled the cart on which John and his brother would sit as it travelled round the park on various errands. John has asked if anyone knows what that horse was called, but there seems to be no record. The scent of the wisteria growing on the south side of the arcade near the Orangery was far more appealing.

The night of 27 September 1940 must have been terrifying, when Holland House was hit by 22 incendiary bombs during a ten-hour raid and was set ablaze. The 6th Earl of Ilchester and his family had decamped to their Dorset home, so the house was empty and there is no record of loss of life. Granddad George Russell was there, so he may have helped to fight the fire, along with Henry Cowper,



John Russell at his 90th birthday in April 2024, with his son Lee

carpenter on the estate, who lived at Melbury Lodge. John says: "I remember an oil-like stain and damage on one of the stairs to the Stable Yard flat, which was caused by another incendiary bomb which came through the then unglazed window opening. Obviously it must have been extinguished. I remember Granddad taking me through the bombed house, across many gaps in the upstairs floors, bridged by builders' planks. As a six or seven-year-old, it was exciting!"

Visits to Holland Park stopped in 1946. It is not clear why, as the estate was not sold by the Ilchesters until 1952. It may be that war damage and the demise of the private pleasure grounds meant there was no longer a role for a gardener.

On their April visit this year, John and Lee took the opportunity to look at the Stable Yard. Had we known they were coming, we might have been able to arrange access to the old flat, now the offices of the Parks Police. John says he was disappointed and saddened at some of the changes, in particular the semi-blocking of the stairway at the far-left corner of the yard, which had been the entrance to the flat. And he felt that the bricking up of the entrance to the horse stalls could have been more in keeping with the old buildings. We don't know when these changes were made as, strangely, there are almost no historical records of the Stable Yard, but we assume it must have been when the LCC bought the estate from the Ilchesters.

Jennie Kettlewell

Thank you idverde

The Wild Flowers and Autumn Berries Holland Park tea towels have been a popular addition to our merchandise. We have printed 500 tea towels over the past few years. Big thanks to idverde who sponsored the printing and, in return, you can find their logo featured on each tea towel.



The rarest tree in Holland Park is a *Styphnolobium japonicum* 'violacea', next to the West Lawn. *S. japonicum* is often seen in parks, but ours is different because its flowers have a mauve stain in each pea-like flower. This variety flowers later than the usual form. We had hoped this tree might be accorded Champion Tree status by The Tree Register, but there is evidently a better example in Wimbledon's Cannizaro Park. However it is rare and even Kew Botanic Gardens don't have one, so they gladly agreed when we asked if they would be interested in taking cuttings. The head of Kew's propagation unit, Sal Demain, visited in person to take cuttings and is now growing these on in Kew's tree nursery. We hope to receive one or two very small trees from her in about three years' time.



Kew's Sal Demain with Holland Park head gardener, Owen Rogers.

Green Flag Award

It's great news that Holland Park has won the award yet again after over 20 years of success.

The judges looked attentively at everything, from hedges to habitats, and from litterbins to loos. They asked lots of questions and clearly understood the complexity of our park. All the hard work paid off and Holland Park has a Green Flag once again.

It's tough to win this prestigious award as there are eight criteria for the judges to assess, so it is not only about stunning flower displays, but includes subjects like absence of litter, clear information displays,



Hassan Elkholy and Bulent Kazim collecting the award.

biodiversity, conservation of buildings and implementation of a management plan. That means there are a great many people in the RBKC Parks Management and *idverde* teams whose work in the park contributed to the award. RBKC Park Officers, Hassan Elkholy and Bulent Kazim were responsible for hosting the judges and putting together the visit programme.

Thank you to Parks Management, the Ecology Service, the Parks Police, the *idverde* gardeners, maintenance team and the front-line staff in the park reception office.

Holland House conservation listed for award



Conserved East wing of Holland House

The conservation work on Holland House was carried out over 2021/22 and involved Allies & Morrison, architects with special expertise in conservation, and Boras Construction who implemented the work. Allies & Morrison have already been accorded a Civic Trust Regional Finalist award for their work on Holland House and have now been shortlisted for a further recognition by New London Awards, under the conservation category. There is strong competition but you can do your bit by voting for the People's Choice Award. Go to the website: nla.london/awards/new-london-awards and cast your vote, but please do so under your own name and not as The Friends of Holland Park.

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.

Tuesday, 24 September

Garden Visit, Green Island Gardens in Colchester, 'A Plantsman's Paradise', with a huge range of unusual trees, shrubs, perennials and bulbs. Leave Notting Hill Gate by coach at 10.00am. Cost £55 for non-members of the Club.

Sat. 19 October, 2.30pm.

Club Meeting - Garden Competition Awards, St George's Church. Meet this year's winners and see slides of their gardens. Q&A with afternoon tea to follow

Saturday, 16 November

Club Meeting, Author and garden consultant, Andy McIndoe, will give an illustrated talk on 'The Winter Garden'. Cost £5 for non-members of the Club.

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

The Kensington Society

A programme of lectures, talks, walks and visits is being planned for 2024 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.

Marc Sinclair jets off to California

We wrote about *idverde's*, Marc Sinclair and his fame as an ace skateboarder in our Winter 2023 issue. In May this year he was inducted into the Skateboarding Hall of Fame, when he was invited to visit the Skateboarding Hall of Fame Museum just outside Los Angeles. By all accounts it was a grand gathering of noted skateboarders from the 1970s and 80s, who all enjoyed catching up with old mates. Marc also enjoyed being invited into the cockpit of the plane on his flight back to the UK, where he was snapped holding his award.

Marc in the cockpit showing off his award.



The jays were the highlight

On 5 June, expert ornithologist, Bill Haines ran a bird identification walk for The Friends. Not brilliant weather, but the rain held off, and we saw or heard 21 species of bird. The highlight was a couple of very vocal jay chicks being fed by a parent in one of the Holland Pond enclosure trees.

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.

Thurs. 19 Sept.	Herbal medicine walk led by Janine Gerhardt. Free to attend but must book. No dogs please. Meet Ecology Centre.	ES	5-7pm
Wed. 2 Oct.	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. No dogs please.	F	11am-1pm
Sat. 5 Oct.	Bird ringing demonstration in the Wildlife Enclosure. Free to attend. No need to book. No dogs please.	ES	7-11am
Sun. 20 Oct.	Blue Badge guided tour. History of Holland House and the Families who lived there. Must book. £10.	F	10.30am-noon
Sat. 26 Oct.	Fungi Foray led by Dr Mark Spencer Free to attend, but must book. No dogs please. Meet Ecology Centre.	ES	2-4pm
Sat. 2 Nov.	Bird Walk. Free to attend. No need to book. Meet in Café Yard. No dogs please.	F	9-10.30am
Sun. 8 Dec.	Christmas Concert performed in The Holland Park Orangery by the Ariel Consort of London. £27. (See p1 in this newsletter for details and how to book tickets.)	F	7pm

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 Jennie Kettlewell on 020 7243 0804 or jennie.kettlewell@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.


Summer Games in Holland Park

On Sunday 28 July RBKC ran its annual Summer Games on the sports field in Holland Park. All ages turned out to have a go at the sports on offer. The activities ranged from the energetic (football and running) to gentler pursuits such as Tai Chi. Member of the Friends, Tham Maniam, was determined to try the 'dead-hang' exercise, which involves timed hanging from a bar. The challenge is harder than it sounds. The benefit is that your bodyweight helps decompress, strengthen and lengthen your spine. It helps with grip and your arm muscles will certainly feel they are being used.

The Friends had a pop-up stall in the Café Yard which was busy all day with questions, sales, children doing the spotter activity, and six people joined as members.

Tham Maniam braves the dead-hang exercise.





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