

The Friends of Holland Park
Spring 2012





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The cover photo was taken by Joy Puritz on 13 May 2010. It is of the gate leading from the Dutch Garden to the North Lawn.



Subscription Reminder

The annual subscription to The Friends of Holland Park runs from 1 January to 31 December except that new members joining after 1 September in any year are deemed to have paid for the next year. Most members sensibly paid by standing order on 1 January so they do not have to remember, and a good number of others have already paid by cheque. Our sincere thanks to all these. However if, and only if, the order form that came with this newsletter is green, it means that at the time of writing (end of January) we had not yet received your payment. Please make it now to save us having to remind you individually. If anyone has not yet made a standing order and would like to do so, you will find a form on the back of the green sheet.

Minimum subscriptions for individuals are £12, or £9 for the over 65s. Two members living at the same address may take out a joint membership for £20, or £15 when both are seniors. Please make your cheques payable to 'The Friends of Holland Park' and post to Rhoddy Wood, 21 Kenton Court, 356 Kensington High Street, W14 8NN.

Thank you.

On 2 December Holland Park witnessed an unusual event. At the invitation of the Lord Lieutenant of London, Sir David Brewer CMG JP, the mayors of the London boroughs gathered in our cafeteria to receive from Sir David Attenborough a rooted cutting each of a black poplar. This had been the suggestion of Roger Jeffcoate CBE who had provided the cuttings from the Vale of Aylesbury and had arranged for them to be grown on in the squash court beds in Holland Park. The idea was for all the boroughs of Greater London to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee collectively by planting a tree in a prominent position, and the black poplar was chosen because it is a native tree, now scarce. The Queen has already planted specimens in Buckingham Palace and on most of her properties, so we felt certain



The mayors with Mr Jeffcoate, David Attenborough and the Lord Lieutenant with a black poplar



L-R: Rhoddy Wood, Roger Jeffcoate, Sir David Attenborough, Nicholas Hopkins

she would approve. Holland Park already had a black poplar, and RBK&C's thanks for providing the growing space was to receive the extra spare trees which now form a young avenue in Kensington Memorial Park.

The mayors put in near to a hundred per cent attendance which some people guessed might have been much to do with David Attenborough's presence. In any case he spoke pertinently and humorously and impressed everyone with his endless patience in providing photo opportunities. He is as charming in the flesh as on the screen.

Rhoddy Wood

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, 28 March 2012 at 7.30pm
in the Orangery

All AGMs are important, but this one will be especially so as it will include the formal election of several new faces to key roles in the organisation: Treasurer, Art Exhibition Organiser and Projects Organiser. Our Chairman is also standing down this year and, while we hope a new Chairman will have come forward by the time of the AGM, it has not happened yet. Do please give it some serious thought, for whoever takes on the position will influence the style and direction of The Friends for some years to come. Do please come to the AGM to give your support to our new trustees.

Chaired by our distinguished president, Sir Angus Stirling, this yearly meeting gives all members the opportunity not only to hear what your trustees have been doing in the past year and to learn what is planned for the current year, but it is also the chance to tell them of your particular concerns for the Park.

As usual, the AGM coincides with our annual art exhibition in the Orangery and after the meeting is a great time to view the exhibits over a glass or two of wine.



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Christmas Carol Concert

Our audience packed the Orangery to listen to the Tallis Chamber Choir, conducted by Philip Simms, on their twelfth visit to entertain us, accompanied in some pieces by Michael Paine on an electronic keyboard.

The novelty and variety of programmes which Philip Simms devises are extraordinary, and this year was no exception, ranging from Sicily through Spain, France, the Netherlands and Germany to the UK. As usual, the quality of the singing was of a very high standard. We started with a folk-like song of Sicilian origin, 'O sanctissima', arranged by two Americans, Alice Parker (b. 1925), composer, arranger and conductor, and Robert Shaw (1916-99), a well known conductor. They also together arranged a Catalan Christmas carol performed later in the programme. There followed a German carol, 'Es ist ein Ros entsprungen', by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), a slightly younger contemporary of Thomas Tallis, and also of the Dutch composer J.P. Sweelinck. We returned home briefly with a well known English carol, 'In the bleak mid-winter', a poem by Christina Rossetti (1830-94) set to music by Harold Darke in 1909 (1888-1976), not to be confused with Gustav Holst's setting known as

'Cranham', published in the 1906 English Hymnal. We returned to Spain with a *villancico* or Christmas carol ('Riu, riu, chiu') by the Catalan composer Mateo Flecha (1481-1553) and then went on to the Netherlands with 'Hodie Christus natus est' by Sweelinck. We finished the first half with 'Il est né le devin enfant', a French carol based on a 17th-century melody arranged by John Rutter (b. 1945). After a short break, we had a traditional English carol, 'Lord of the dance': 'Tomorrow shall be my dancing day', in the arrangement by David Willcocks (b. 1919), one of many arrangements of this carol. We then returned to Spain with a Catalan Christmas carol, 'Fum, fum, fum', thought to be 16th or 17th-century in origin, arranged by Alice Parker and Robert Shaw; whilst the literal translation of the Catalan word 'fum' is smoke, the relevance of which is obscure, the Oxford Book of carols suggests that 'fum, fum, fum' might be imitating the sound of a drum or the strumming of a guitar. There followed a Christmas meditation, very lyrical in feeling, 'A spotless rose', composed by Herbert Howells (1892-1983), the text being an anonymous German hymn, probably 16th-century, 'Es ist ein Ros entsprungen', the same as that used by Praetorius for the second piece mentioned above. We did not have Philip Simms's arrangement of 'White Christmas' this time, but instead that of 'Rise up, shepherds', an American spiritual. Finally we had John Rutter's 'The very best time of year', which seems more like the chorus from a musical than a carol.

The audience joined the choir in four traditional carols, and all the carols were interspersed with six readings, five by members of the choir and one by our own Joy Puritz, all relating to Christmas, and three being extracts from Charles Dickens; but perhaps the most moving was a letter from an officer on the front describing the Christmas truce of 1914.

Every year I say that Janice Miles excelled herself with the food she produced after the concert; this year it really was the case again and, as usual, the wine flowed freely.

We left the Orangery uplifted, having had a really splendid evening and a wonderful introduction to Christmas. We are, as always, most grateful to Philip Simms and the Tallis Chamber Choir and for providing us with such great entertainment, and we hope that they keep coming back.

George Law

Difficult Problems Solved

We are not much good around the garden but...

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We very much look forward to welcoming you, and any friends you might like to bring along, to our annual art exhibition taking place from 24 March to 1 April. It is the 30th anniversary of the Friends' exhibition, and to celebrate this milestone we are having a Young Painters' Competition, details of which can be seen on our website, as can those of the Mini-Mart and main exhibition. The prizes for the latter will, as usual, be one of £150 for artistic excellence, and two of £75 each, one for the work which best expresses the essential spirit of Holland Park, and one for a three-dimensional work. We are delighted to welcome back Isabel Langtry as our judge for both the

main exhibition and the Young Painters' Competition. The prize-winners will be announced at the private view on Monday evening, 26 March.

We do ask all artists to note the timetable below, **particularly the deadline of 3 March for submitting exhibits details**, which is vital for the compiling of the catalogue. If you would like to become a Friend or register for the exhibition, please contact Mrs Rhoddy Wood (address on p.2). For other information contact Mr Gordon French, 19 Kensington Court Place, W8 5BJ, gordon.l.french@gmail.com.

Art Exhibition Timetable


- Sat 3 March** Last date for receipt of exhibits details form to allow listing in catalogue.
5 free preview tickets sent to each artist if we have been informed of date preference.
- Sat 3 March** Entries for the Young Painters' Competition must be with Gordon French.
- Fri 23 March** 9am-12 noon. Artists deliver works to The Orangery, Holland Park.
- Fri 23 March** 12 noon-6pm. Works hung/displayed for the exhibition.
- Private Views** Saturday, 24 March, 10.30am-12.30pm, Monday, 26 March, 7.30-9.30pm.

The exhibition is open to the public free of charge on Saturday, 24 March 1-6.30pm, and from Sunday, 25 March to Sunday, 1 April 10.30am-6.30pm.

Artists and buyers collect their works after the exhibition on Sunday, 1 April 6.30-7.30pm and Monday, 2 April 9-11am.

No works can be collected before 6.30pm on Sunday, 1 April as this would spoil the exhibition for others.

We look forward to seeing you at the exhibition and hope that you enjoy it.



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The Mediterranean Bed

One of the joys of gardening, but also one of its sorrows, is that living plants never stand still. However perfect a picture a gardener creates, we can be sure that it will change in a year or two and sometimes much more quickly. This rule applies equally to a sapling in a park which grows, matures and then deteriorates and eventually comes down leaving either a gap or a new vista according to the view of the observer, and to a carefully planned border. The Mediterranean bed, along the north wall of the Dutch Garden, is no exception and had become overgrown and shapeless even though many of its plants were rare in the UK and needed sunshine and protection which the south-facing wall provided. Its present overhaul was sparked off by the desire for an improvement to mark the Queen's Jubilee, and a party will be held in July to celebrate the Jubilee, which is also the 60th anniversary of Holland Park and the creation of 'The Diamond Jubilee Walk'.

The first decision to be made concerned the holm oak which overshadowed a large portion so that only the toughest shade lovers would grow at all. One suggestion was to cut down the oak altogether but the less radical experiment was decided upon which was to remove the lower branches and thin the rest, thus lifting the canopy and making it less dense. The park staff did careful

measurements, and claim that enough sun will slant underneath it to allow a much larger number of species to flourish. The author is not entirely convinced how effective this will be; we wait to see. Meanwhile the oak does look lighter and more appropriate to the position. 'Lifting' the canopy is a technique much used especially in woodland gardens where it can enable three layers of plants to flourish: trees, shrubs and ground cover, as long as the lower plants do not need full sun. As well as the holm oak, similar treatment has been given to the adjacent English oak, the olive, the prickly Moses, *Acacia verticillata*, the Azara and the myrtle whose colourful bark can thus be better appreciated. Together with the palms, these now give a permanent structure to the bed. The author advised on which plants were uncommon enough to be preserved and has been assured that those not left *in situ* will be relocated within the park. These include the dwarf pomegranates (called Mickey Mouse flowers by school parties because of their funny red noses), the *Edgeworthia chrysantha* (white flowers in February), *Clerodendron bungei* (purple flowers in September/October), *Sycopsis sinensis* (yellow/red flowers in February), *Euphorbia mellifera* (fragrant flowers in June), *Callistemon citrinus*, the long-flowering evergreen red bottlebrush and *Acacia baileyana* 'Purpurea' with its filigree blue-green leaves tipped with new purple growth which was given by a Friend in 2011. These all need sunshine and shelter and we are waiting to hear where they will be located. Apart from the ivy the climbers on the wall have been left, and there might be space for some new additions.

This leaves the ground layer of the border which has been covered with large blocks of mostly very common herbaceous plants, the most interesting being the *Convolvuluscneorum* (actually woody) which, since planted, has weirdly been flowering in December instead of its more usual May. This treatment should ensure that the bed will look tidy and colourful for the opening ceremony in July but is of little horticultural interest. There is a half promise that it can be varied with pots and wigwams of tender species such as mandevilla, strelitzia, gloriosa, sollya and bourganvillea which would be overwintered in the glasshouses and could go a long way towards reconciling plantsmen to the new regime. Perhaps this is a useful moment to explain to readers the current thinking of the Borough on a topic to some degree relevant to the Mediterranean bed but with much wider implications. It has been decided, partly for reasons of economy, that annuals and bedding-out plants will be confined to set pieces like the main portion of the Dutch Garden, and otherwise be replaced with herbaceous plants which will not give the same long-lasting blocks of colour but can be arranged to have spots of colour erupting throughout the season. Holland Park will be building up its stocks of herbaceous plants by buying



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varieties in small numbers, dividing them in the autumn and over-wintering them out of doors. This author is not much attached to annuals but does regret that in the concentration on herbaceous plants it seems to have been forgotten that to mix in small and medium-sized shrubs can give much the same effect, varies the structure and saves on work. It also seems odd that in the face of

declared policy, bedding-out plants have arrived in two places, above the sandpit and on the suntrap terraces, which used to have shrub and herbaceous mixes. Perhaps these are transitional until the herbaceous stock can be built up.

Rhoddy Wood

Norland Conservation Society Annual Lecture

Thursday, 15 March at 8.30pm

This year's lecture, taking place at St James Norlands Church, St James's Gardens, W11, is entitled 'The London Square: Gardens in the Midst of Town' and will be given by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, President of London Parks & Gardens Trust, currently re-presenting the gardens of Kensington Palace to mark the Diamond Jubilee of H.M. The Queen. A landscape architect he is also Gardens Adviser to Hampton Court Palace. Tickets are available at £8 each from Rosemary Bauccio, 20 St Ann's Villas, W11 4RS. Please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope and make your cheque payable to 'Norland Conservation Society'.

Elephants

Your secretary was recently given a book on identification of our commoner trees especially in winter. The emphasis was less on details of bud and bark and more on observing the overall shape. Among the ordinary 'upright', 'spreading' or 'flame-shaped', she was brought up short by 'elephant-like' for the horse chestnut. Surely not? So next time in the park she looked earnestly for pachyderms – and suddenly the bare, long, knobbly, twisting branches looked like elephant trunks dangling from broad heads and large ears – definitely *African* elephants; and several branches seen sideways together looked like a whole herd. See if you can spot them on your next walk in the park.



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Statement of Accounts

The Friends of Holland Park

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2011

	£	<u>2010</u> £
Incoming resources:		
Donations	5,016	4,884
Activities in furtherance of objects:		
Subscriptions	11,253	10,304
Advertising	2,678	2,175
Activities for generating funds:		
Events	10,528	8,281
Sale of merchandise	1,291	2,186
Interest	1,206	648
Total incoming resources	<u>31,972</u>	<u>28,478</u>
Resources expended:		
Cost of generating funds		
Fundraising direct costs	1,457	1,472
Event expenses	7,206	5,677
Cost of merchandise	892	1,208
	<u>9,555</u>	<u>8,357</u>
Charitable expenditure:		
Newsletter	6,062	5,607
Grants	20,911	7,971
	<u>26,973</u>	<u>13,578</u>
Governance costs	605	336
Total resources expended	<u>37,133</u>	<u>22,271</u>
Net (outgoing)/ incoming resources	(5,161)	6,207
Fund balances brought forward	74,619	68,412
Fund balances carried forward	<u>69,458</u>	<u>74,619</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2011

	£	<u>2010</u> £
Current assets:		
Debtors and prepayments	2,443	2,363
Deposit and current accounts	69,973	73,310
	72,416	75,673
Creditors:		
Amounts falling due within one year	2,958	1,054
Net assets	<u>69,458</u>	<u>74,619</u>

These accounts have been approved by the Trustees but have not yet been independently examined.

Russian Virtuosi of Europe Concert



Saturday, 31 March at 7.30pm in the Orangery

Programme:

Dvorak: Terzetto for two violins and viola op.74

Prokofiev: Sonata in C for two violins

Interval

Tchaikovsky arr. Lev Tchistiakov: Three pieces from 'Children's Album'

Kodaly: Serenade for two violins and viola op.12

Natalia and Alexandra Lomeiko violins

Ekaterina Lazareva viola

Members will remember the very high standard of music that Natalia and her friends always bring us. Since she was last with us she has been busy performing concertos by Berg, Brahms, Beethoven, Shostakovich, and Mozart's 'Sinfonia Concertante', as well as participating in various chamber music festivals and teaching at the Royal College of Music where she is Professor of Violin. Her husband, Yuri Zhislin, cannot come with her this time as we had hoped but she is bringing two younger musicians whom

we are sure she will have chosen well.

Ekaterina was born in Belarus and has studied extensively at the Belarusian State Academy of Music and has played in a number of international festivals as well as solo and chamber music recitals. Since 2010 she has been a post-graduate student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama supported by full scholarships.

Alexandra was born in Novosibirsk, Russia, and moved to New Zealand at the age of five where she received many awards and prizes. In 2006 she came to London where she has performed as a solo artist and chamber musician in many prestigious venues as well as internationally in about a dozen countries. She is also currently studying at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Tickets are £15, and we will end the evening with wine and a few nibbles.

Pimm's in the Park

Wednesday, 18 July, 6–8pm in the youth hostel garden

Our annual summer party is already firmly written in our diaries; make sure it is in yours! For many it is a highlight of the summer season, and even a rather wet evening last year did not seriously detract from everyone's enjoyment.

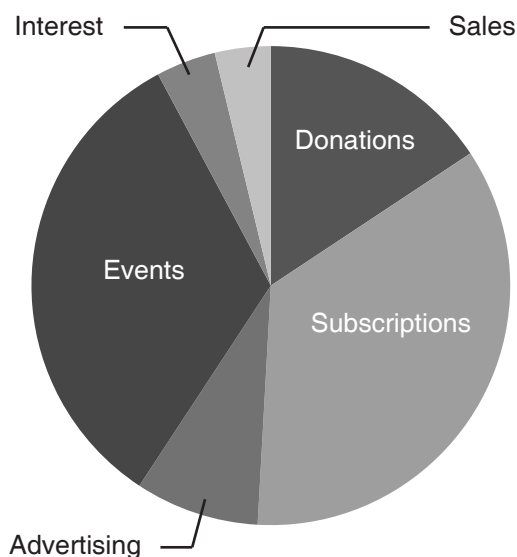
We shall again be indebted to Sally Martyn-Johns, manager of the youth hostel, for allowing us to hold the party in the hostel's delightful private garden, in the shadow of the east wing of Holland House.

The date is specifically chosen not to clash with an opera

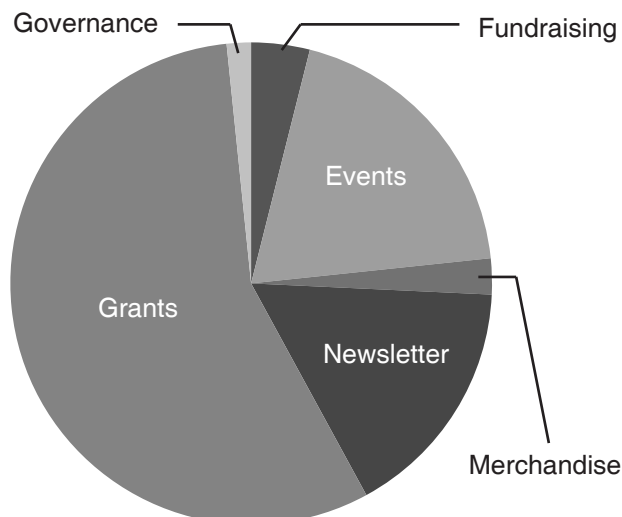
performance next door, but we are sometimes entertained by a rehearsal. We also like to invite a few guests to thank them for their work in making the Park such a pleasure to be in all the year round.

Please book your tickets at £12 each, to include Pimm's and light refreshments, on the enclosed order form (also downloadable from our web site) and hope for glorious weather. This is our one event of the year which is only open to members and their immediate guests.

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



In the north-east corner of the Dutch Garden you might have noticed an elegant stone fountain attached to the brick wall at the right of the gate onto the North Lawn (the gate in the cover photo). It was in need of much care and attention, and has now been painstakingly conserved by an experienced stone mason, this having been funded by The Friends of Holland Park. No one has been able to trace the origin of the fountain or its precise history in Holland Park but it is known that the floral decoration is typically 19th-century Italian.



Paul Mills conserving the fountain

As stone mason Paul Mills cleaned the Portland stone and marble to bring up the original colours, and replaced a couple of broken corners with matching stone, he reflected on the fountain, and his observations are interesting. He guessed the fountain had been

moved from its original position because the stone at the rear sides had not been dressed and would at some point have been inset into a wall. The basin, in its current form, is too narrow to serve any real purpose, and jets from the, now dry, spouts would splash water well beyond the trough. So he wondered if the basin had once been larger and used as a rather superior horse trough. This view is supported by the fact that the stone at the front of the trough is different from the rest and is probably not the original.

These two conjectures made us wonder if the back part of the fountain had once been part of the stables at the west end of the Dutch Garden, and had been moved in about 1812 when the stables were demolished and the Dutch

Garden created. The newer 'Italian' part must have been added after 1812 and would fit with the other Italian garden ornaments that Lord Holland introduced to the formal garden over the following years. Maybe we will be lucky enough to find the fountain, in its original or current form, included in one the photos currently being researched for the Holland Park garden history publication.

At some stage a plaque had been fixed to the fountain with the inscription

Earth would be less fair without trees
to grace her valleys, Hide her scars
cast cool shade, In gardens here.

This plaque was not part of the original fountain design, so a new home has been found for it nearby, on a low wall at the opposite end of the terrace, next to the steps leading down to the café. As this is a relatively quiet corner Park Manager Barrie Maclaurin intends placing a bench there so visitors can enjoy a new reflective space. At the time of writing he is waiting to find someone who wishes to donate a memorial bench, matching others in the Dutch Garden.



The restored fountain

Text and photos by Jennie Kettlewell

Opera Holland Park

Although The Friends of Holland Park is a quite separate organisation from Opera Holland Park Friends, we are happy to carry the announcement of their upcoming productions for this summer. For priority bookings (opening online on 5 March) join Opera Holland Park Friends. Call 020 7361 3910 or e-mail friends@operahollandpark.com. Online booking opens to the general public on 19 April, and telephone booking on 23 April.

***Lucia di Lammermoor* by Donizetti** June 7, 9, 12, 15, 19, 23, 27 (Gala), 30 **7.30pm**

***Così fan tutte* by Mozart** June 8, 13, 16, 18, 21, 24 (matinée 2pm), 28. July 4, 7 **7.15pm**

***Gianni Schicchi* by Puccini and *Zanetto* by Mascagni** (double bill) June 22, 26, 29, July 3, 6, 12, 14 **7.30pm**

***Yevgeny Onegin* by Tchaikovsky** July 13, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 31. August 2, 4 **7.30pm**

***Falstaff* by Verdi** July 20, 24, 26, 28, 30. August 1, 3 **7.30pm**

***Fantastic Mr Fox* by Picker** July 17, 19, 24, 26, 31. August 2, 4 **3pm**
July 21, 28 **1pm and 4pm**



The Ecology Service has for a number of years been running a series of walks and talks in the park, most of which have been free to attend. In 2011, because of straightened financial circumstances, they experimented with charging for these events with the result that many fewer members of the public came. The Friends, mindful that one of our objectives stated in our constitution is to educate the public in the history and natural history of the park, have offered to pay the fees of the walk leaders on condition that no attendance charges are made and that we only pay for events that qualify for our objectives. These events are shown on the list as 'sponsored' and unless otherwise stated the meeting place is outside the Ecology Centre in the stable yard. The Centre will continue to manage them with the exception of Alan Harrington's walks which will be directly run by the Friends. Any other events organised by the Ecology Service will have the letters 'ES' by them; some must be booked, in which case please call 020 7938 8186 or e-mail ecology.centre@rbkc.gov.uk. There is a charge for those marked £.

As part of 'Taskforce 4 Nature 2012' the Ecology Service started the 'Holland Park Conservation Volunteers' programme in February. Sessions are from 10.30am to 3pm every third Saturday of the month, meeting at the café at 10.30am. Volunteers can come for all or part of the sessions. Tea, gloves, tools and instruction are provided. Volunteers should wear sturdy shoes and clothes and bring waterproofs and their lunch. For more information contact Moira at Groundwork London on moira.herring@groundwork.org.uk; call 020 8743 3040 or visit www.groundwork.org.uk/london.

All FHP events in the diary are printed in **bold**. Our bird/nature walks (BNW) will continue to take place on the first Saturday of each month (except August) under the direction of our knowledgeable and informative guide, Ian Thomson. Meet him at Lord Holland's statue at 9am. The walks are free and everyone is welcome, not just members, so please come and encourage your friends: they might become members too! We recommend you bring binoculars if you can – they make such a difference.

Sat 3 Mar	BNW	
Sat 24 Mar – Sun 1 Apr	Annual Art Exhibition. In the Orangery (see p.5)	
Wed 28 Mar	FHP Annual General Meeting. In the Orangery	7.30pm
Sat 31 Mar	Russian Virtuosi of Europe Concert. In the Orangery, £15	7.30pm
Mon 2 – Fri 13 Apr	ES. Easter children's holiday activities. Must book. £	
Sat 7 Apr	BNW	
Sat 28 Apr	ES. Spring Wildlife Area Open Day. Drop in at wildlife area	2-6pm
Sat 5 May	ES. Dawn Chorus Bird Walk (sponsored). Must book. Car park	5am
Sat 5 May	BNW	
Fri 11 May	ES. Bat Walk and Talk, London Bat Group (sponsored). Must book	8.30pm
Sat 12 May	ES. Bird ringing demonstration (sponsored). Drop in at wildlife area	7-11am
Tues 22 May	ES. Wildlife Area Open Evening. Drop in at wildlife area	5-7pm
Sat 2 June	BNW	
Sat 2 June	ES. Drawing on Nature Course. Must book. £	10am-4pm
Wed 6 – Fri 8 June	ES. Half-term children's activities. Must book. £	
Sat 9 – Sun 10 June	Open Garden Squares Weekend. Details at: www.opensquares.org	
Sat 16 June	Summer Tree Walk , Dr Alan Harrington. Outside café	11am-1pm
Thur 28 June	ES. Wildlife Area Open Evening. Drop in at wildlife area	6-8pm
Sat 7 July	BNW	
Sat 7 July	ES. Summer Wildlife Area Open Day. Drop in at wildlife area	2-6pm
Wed 18 July	Pimm's in the Park. In the youth hostel garden, £12	6-8pm
Wed 18 July	ES. Tree Walk: The Basics. Must book	6.30-8.30pm

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