



Autumn Newsletter – November 2025

Brighton and Hove Green Spaces Forum (BHGSF) is a volunteer organisation providing an independent voice and communication hub for volunteer groups working with Brighton & Hove's parks and open spaces.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter. Since our last Newsletter the Forum has helped a number of member groups with issues from Council liaison to support with Constitutions. We have also embarked on updating our member records; so if your group records on our website are out of date in any way, please let us know at bhgsforum@gmail.com and we will update them. We unfortunately had to postpone our Autumn Seminar planned for 10th September, this has now been re-scheduled for Monday 26th January. Please read on to find out more.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES – MONDAY 26th JANUARY - EARLY SPRING SEMINAR

Our 2026 Early Spring Seminar will take place from **5pm on Monday 26th January** at Friends Meeting House in Ship Street, Brighton. The theme for the event will be '*Nurturing our city*'. This event has been re-scheduled from 10th September 2025. If you have not already done so, please email the Forum at bhgsforum@gmail.com if you would like to come along (including the name of your group)

BRIGHTON & HOVE GREEN SPACES FORUM

EARLY SPRING SEMINAR

“Nurturing Our City”
5pm Mon 26th January
Friends Meeting House
Ship Street Brighton BN1 1AF
Doors open 4.30

GUEST SPEAKERS

JEAN GRIFFIN - Renowned gardening expert and Radio personality

ROB BOYLE - Horticulturalist and Head Gardener Brighton Royal Pavilion

SARAH DOBSON - Programme Manager - The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere

THE WILDFLOWER CONSERVATION SOCIETY

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS & DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED
Please let us know you will attending at bhgsforum@gmail.com



World recognition for an expanded Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere in Sussex

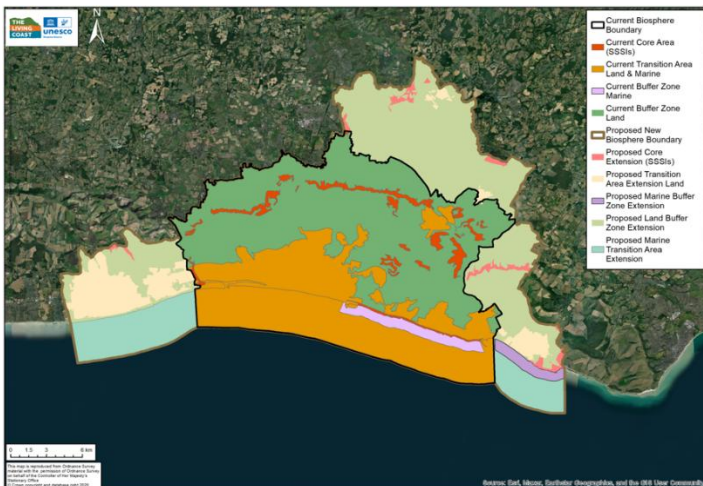
The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere has been redesignated for the next 10 years!

The designation of The Living Coast Biosphere in Sussex has been renewed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) bringing the Biosphere to over 550,000 Sussex residents. This recognises the vital work of the Biosphere Partnership in connecting people with nature, plus supporting and enhancing rare and unique landscapes over 700 square kilometres of Sussex.

UNESCO have agreed the expansion of The Living Coast Biosphere Region – it now covers nearly 700km² of our unique Sussex Downs, city, towns and marine environments from Worthing in the West, to Seaford in the East and stretching North over the South Downs National Park to Wivelsfield and Newick in the Low Weald.

Operating as a cross-sector partnership of over 40 organisations with Brighton & Hove City Council as lead partner; the Living Coast aims to protect and enhance our wildlife and habitats; promote a sustainable economy and communities; and champion environmental education, training and research.

For more information visit the Biosphere website at <https://thelivingcoast.org.uk/world-recognition-for-an-expanded-living-coast-unesco-biospherein-sussex>



This is a copy of the map of the new Biosphere geography (there will be more detailed maps, website updates and the like coming soon). You'll also see posts on The Living Coast social media channels.

COLDEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM



Coldean was designated as a Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum by the City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority in 2021. With connection to Stanmer Park, the Wild Park and Highfields, all within the South Downs National Park.

Since then, the Forum has prepared its plan in consultation with residents and stakeholders. An initial public consultation on the draft plan was conducted by Coldean Neighbourhood Forum in June 2024 culminating in a formally submitted draft

Neighbourhood Plan to Brighton & Hove City Council for examination. The Draft Plan is now available for public consultation for a period of six weeks, from **23 October to 4 December 2025**. This is the final opportunity for residents and stakeholders to provide comments on the content of the plan.

All consultation documents are available for review, and comments may be submitted via the council's [Your Voice consultation website](#). A Word version of the survey form can be requested by emailing neighbourhoodplanning@brighton-hove.gov.uk



The countryside charity
Sussex

2025 HAS BEEN A BUSY YEAR FOR CPRE SUSSEX!



From guided tree walks, lively talks, a tree symposium and creative activities like willow weaving and drawing, the Tree Festival in June saw hundreds of people attending the 62 events held in Brighton & Hove and across the Living Coast Biosphere. The photography competition, encouraging entrants to enter pictures of trees they love, spent a week at Jubilee Library in Brighton and will soon be on display at the Rampion Centre in Brighton. Following the competition, we also created a map of our favourite Sussex trees and included the oldest, tallest and most unusual trees in our beautiful county - as well as the best tree-swing and the best trees for climbing!

Our '**Plant Your Postcode**' project continues to promote tree and hedge planting in the city and we are proud to be working with the City Council and residents across Brighton and Hove to get more trees planted in our streets! We are also helping to keep people informed about work planned and being done in our woodlands. Trees planned for planting this winter include stump replacements in Compton Road and Florence Road, and we have many other projects in the pipeline! Planting street trees is one of the best ways to bring green to our streets, make the air cleaner, help mitigate the effects of climate change as well as helping bring communities together for a common cause and we are proud to be working on this.

<https://www.cpresussex.org.uk/brighton-hove/>
www.cpresussex.org.uk

BRIGHTON PERMACULTURE TRUST



**BRIGHTON
PERMACULTURE
TRUST**


Deciding which tree(s) to plant can be a complicated business, but this course will briefly look at the basics you need to consider including assessing your site and selecting varieties, rootstocks and pollination. They will touch on how to grow fruit trees in small spaces and plant cordon trees against fences, walls, etc.

You can sign-up online for the course here:

<https://brightonpermaculture.org.uk/fruit-tree-planting/>

A FREE evening course focused on fruit tree planting basics.

 Thursday 6th November 2025

 7.30pm - 9pm

 Delivered by Zoom (Details supplied on registration)



SOUTH & SOUTH EAST IN BLOOM



Results 2025 - Many congratulations to the following:-

Preston Rockery - Silver Gilt - Small Park category (Pic of Andy Jeavons)
St Wulfran's Church Ovingdean - Silver Gilt - Churchyard category
FO St. Ann's Well Gardens - Thriving – It's Your Neighbourhood category
Woodingdean Community Association - Thriving - It's Your Neighbourhood category
FO Brunswick Sq & Terrace – Outstanding - It's Your Neighbourhood category
FO Preston Park – Outstanding - It's Your Neighbourhood category
Stanford & Cleveland Community Garden -Outstanding - It's Your Neighbourhood category
FO Palmeira & Adelaide – Outstanding - It's Your Neighbourhood category
The Norfolk Square Group – Outstanding - It's Your Neighbourhood category



The S&SEIB 2025 Outstanding Contribution Award went to Debbie Pryer (committee member of our Forum) who has worked tirelessly for Stanford & Cleveland Community Garden over many years – very well deserved - Congratulations Debbie!

For those groups who may be considering entering next year the closing date is 28th February 2026. Here follow the instructions of how to enter:

Please go to www.inbloom.org.uk and then click on registration/entry form (**fifth tab along coloured pink**) where there is a drop-down box with all the categories. Ensure you choose the **South & South East in in Bloom** ones. Please avoid using the do not use the Enquiry button as this can result in you having to re-fill the registration/entry form.

Once you have completed your registration, ensuring that you have filled in all the boxes and pressed the 'submit' button, the system will show an entry registration reference number – if this is not displayed, your entry has not registered. For those submitting multiple entries with the same contact please press the submit and add another entry button (this is not applicable for the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' category as these require a separate contact for each entry).

Jean Griffin is a S&SEIB judge and is one of the presenters at our Late Spring Seminar on 26th January. Jean will include some information on the benefits groups get from S&SEIB in her presentation. If you are thinking about entering your group and have any questions, please email the Forum at bhgsforum@gmail.com in the first instance.

SUSSEX LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

Have your say on local nature recovery. A Consultation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Brighton & Hove and East Sussex is now open and runs until 26 November.

This is your opportunity to share ideas for nature in Sussex and help shape a practical framework to restore and connect nature in Brighton & Hove and the wider region. Developed over the past 2 years with input from local communities, land managers and environmental organisations, the draft strategy builds on and supports existing nature recovery efforts already underway.



These include large-scale partnerships like **The Living Coast UNESCO biosphere** and **City Downland Estate Plan** and nature restoration projects like the **Wild Park Rainscape** and **Wilding Waterhall**, to grassroots initiatives such as creating bee banks and wildflower areas in the city, and the schools environmental programme **Our City, Our World**.

Youth Rangers planting wildflowers in Wish Park.

The strategies set out nature recovery priorities for the area and provide over 100 practical actions to help reverse the decline in habitats and species. These range from incentivising the creation of new wildlife-rich spaces for rare habitats to small everyday actions that anyone can take to encourage wildlife in their gardens. Your voices are important to help shape this ambitious new strategy before it is published in early 2026.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world and Sussex has by no means been immune to this decline. The Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy is a chance to turn the tide.

To take part, visit yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/lhrs-east

Julie Harris | Net Zero Communications Brighton & Hove City Council

Any queries about the LNRS or consultation should be sent to EastSussexLNRS@eastsussex.gov.uk

BRIGHTON & HOVE ORGANIC GARDENING GROUP - BHOGG



Gardening at the Brighton and Hove Organic Gardening Group's Community allotment on the Weald Allotment Site in Hove.

Just a quick reminder that everyone is welcome to come and join us for some organic gardening every Sunday from 11am to 1pm.

We are a friendly bunch who garden and together and share the produce at harvest time - All ages welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult.

You can find further details about our allotment on our website www.bhogg.org where you can also sign up for our newsletter.



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PARKS & GREEN SPACES (NFPGS)



The Brighton & Hove Green Spaces Forum is affiliated to the NFPGS. This gives our local member groups access to National resources and assistance. The NFPGS also lobby the government on behalf of green spaces and volunteers.

The NFPGS in conjunction with the Parks Community UK last year launched a community group 'Better Friends strength checker' tool which can be found on their site at <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/>. This is a state-of-the-art audit tool freely available to all local greenspace community groups.

Using data from the strength checker tool, the NFPGS and Parks Community UK produced a report on '*The State of the Movement of Greenspace Friends Groups throughout the UK*'

This pathbreaking and important report analyses in depth what Friends Groups do, how they do it, their memberships, character, needs, partnerships and successes. It is well worth a read and can be seen here <https://natfedparks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/NFPGS-PCUK-Second-Report-2023.pdf>

The NFPGS have also produced an infographic – '*The Benefits of Friends Groups for Parks and Green Spaces*' which can be seen here <https://natfedparks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NFPGS-PCUK-Benefits-of-Friends-Groups-Infographic-2.pdf>

The benefits of having active Friends Groups for each of the UK's 27,000 green space are widespread and unique. This infographic explains the value of such groups for the greenspace itself, for its managers, for the individuals involved and for the wider community. The movement needs systematic ongoing support if our public green spaces are to thrive into the future ... as they surely must!

GROWING HOLLINGDEAN



Growing Hollingdean is volunteer-led and based in the Hollingdean area of Brighton.

With residents and partner organisations we improve local green spaces, bringing the community together. We create community gardens and orchards following permaculture principles, encourage biodiversity and offer learning opportunities around nature and sustainable food growing. Our community gardens and street orchards are welcoming, inclusive spaces where people of all ages can connect with nature, share skills, and enjoy growing food locally. They are hubs for creativity, wellbeing, and social interaction, strengthening community ties and sustainable living.

The Tree Guardians programme, a core project, looks after more than 300 fruit and nut trees planted around Hollingdean, mainly on council-owned land. These trees are planted for food security, carbon capture and increased biodiversity. Tree Guardians meet on the first Sunday of each month, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Meet outside Hollingdean park, west side entrance on Lynchet Close. After a 10-minute wait, the group heads out to maintain one of the orchards: tasks include mulching, pruning, weeding, and staking.

Get Growing in Hollingdean Park, is developing a Forest Garden in the park orchard and edible hedges and wildflower beds around the park, supported by B&H Food Partnership and Brighton Permaculture Trust.

Regular volunteer sessions on 3rd Sunday of the month, plus some weekday slots. Look out for information on our website. Tools are provided. Volunteers just need to dress for the weather and bring a drink. All welcome - under 18s must come with an adult. Find out more about the Growing Hollingdean Collective at www.growinghollingdean.org.uk

WILDFLOWER CONSERVATION SOCIETY



The Wild Flower Conservation Society (WFCS) had a successful and active year promoting chalk grassland wildflowers, biodiversity, and community engagement.

Our open day attracted over 350 visitors and sold 800+ plants, featuring talks and nature walks by local experts. WFCS expanded by acquiring a new one-acre “Top Garden” to grow more wildflowers and received a donation from CSA Environmental to support site development. Efforts included upgrading plant racks, setting up an irrigation system, and maintaining a watering rota.

WFCS supplied plants to award-winning RHS exhibits, organised seed collection and sales, and contributed to city wide wildflower planting projects. We participated in community events like Saddlescombe Farm Day and Apple Blossom Day, hosted visitors and corporate groups, and plan to add an extra plant sale day in 2026. Our work continues to connect people with nature and support local ecosystems.

The WFCS Newsletter can be found here <https://bhgreenspaceforum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WFCS-2025-3-compressed.pdf>

Please follow us on Instagram and Facebook because it all helps in the socially linked world and please come and see us for all your chalk grassland wild flower needs. Only £2.00 a pot Let’s hope 2026 gives us many more happy wild flower sharing days. We will also have a stall at the Forum’s Early Spring Seminar on Monday 26th January – see earlier article.

Website: www.wildflowerconservationsociety.com / Instagram: wildflowerconservationsociety Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WFCSBrightonandBeyond> / email: wildflower.brighton@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF EASTHILL PARK



Welcome to one of our newest members – Friends of Easthill Park

Formed in 2024, Friends of Easthill Park was created to work alongside the community and local council to enhance our much-loved park. Our first event, an Easter Egg Hunt held this spring, drew around 400 participants which was a fantastic turnout that helped bring families together. During the event we also gathered feedback through a community consultation to learn what people value most about the park and what improvements they’d like to see.

In October, we held our first Annual General Meeting, held at the Parish Centre in Portslade, we officially voted in our committee members and shared the results of the consultation. The main priorities identified by residents included:

More activities for older children / Upgraded play and park equipment
Improved paths and accessibility / Outdoor gym facilities / Café facilities and activities.

We’re now working hard to turn these ideas into real changes that everyone can enjoy. Stay up to date with our progress and upcoming events on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/easthillparkfriends



ST JOHN'S CHURCH COMMUNITY WILDLIFE GARDEN

Since March, our small community garden at **St John the Evangelist Church**, Preston, Brighton (on the A23), has blossomed—both literally and in spirit.



What began as a neglected and overgrown area behind the church has become a vibrant shared space, tended by volunteers of all ages from the local community. With the support of City Gate Church, who use our halls for their own activities, and the energy of our three Eco Champions—Tash Fairbanks, Lisa Williamson and Jane Millett—we have transformed an unused corner into an open, welcoming area for reflection, creativity, and connection.

Even those unable to help in person have generously contributed, funding benches, plants and garden tools. Others have shared unwanted items like a water butt or spare materials for our compost area. Thanks to everyone's kindness, we've also added trellis, a new lawnmower and water hose to keep the garden thriving.

Our goal has always been to act locally in the service of creation care. St John's is now well on its way to achieving the Silver A Rocha Eco Church Award—a reflection of our growing commitment to the environment and community renewal. We've recently linked up with the Vicarage Green development, a new regeneration project, and "Renew Preston Village" initiative, a long-term collaboration involving local residents to restore and reenergise the area – new volunteers always welcome.



We are asking for Forum members' input on addressing occasional night-time antisocial behaviour, particularly concerning safe needle disposal. As children from a local nursery use the space any ideas for compassionate signage or community outreach would be greatly valued.

Info@brightonstjohn.org.uk

FRIENDS OF PRESTON PARK



Our popular guided walks show people are interested in their local environment and conservation. Our bat, tree, and local history walks are a vital way for us to share knowledge on the present state of the park and its future challenges.

The residents are worried about the increasing use of the park as a profit-making event venue for the Council. The privatisation of large areas of the park for events prevents children and adults enjoying this green public space for long periods. The Council have promised to listen to residents' views on events.



The Rose Garden achieved the top level, 'Outstanding' in the South and Southeast in Bloom (SSEiB) 'It's Your Neighbourhood' competition. The Rockery was awarded Silver Gilt in the 'Small Park' category. Congratulations to all the volunteers who are doing an amazing job all year round.



The Rose Garden east and west herbaceous borders have been replanted with plants grown from seed by volunteers and shrubs given by the National Trust. We also planted over 200 roses last year and 110 more this year. The vegetation in the Rotunda Pond has been cleared to allow for repairs as leaks are making it difficult to keep a healthy water level. FoPP sourced and funded a private company to guide our volunteers.



Preston Manor reopened to the general public after a 5 years closure. This brings more visitors to the north of the park where Rust Café in the Manor provides an additional place of refreshment.

Finally, we are thankful to our Ranger, Neil Doyle and his team of volunteers, the CityParks groundsmen, FoPP volunteers, school children and company employee volunteers who come and help us even for one day. They all make a big difference to our park. If you would like to join our friendly and enthusiastic group of volunteers, even just occasionally, please email info@friendsofprestonpark.org. For more information please visit www.friendsofprestonpark.org



FRIENDS OF HOVE PARK



After a beautiful summer in Hove Park, autumn has arrived, bringing falling leaves and fading plants. The *Friends of Hove Park* remain active, planting 4,000 crocus bulbs donated by the Soiree Rotary Club to support the **Purple4Polio** campaign.

Together with Ranger Neil Doyle, we are preparing the new Wildflower Meadow for next year and looking forward to a great show.

We will also be carrying out a final weeding session on the park's last remaining plant bed situated by Old Shoreham Road, which we have been looking after all summer and it's still looking really good.

Congratulations to Gino at newly refurbished park café which is a popular meeting spot.

The newly updated playgrounds are a big success with two distinct areas for young and older children. Families can entertain their children in the fresh air of this valuable green space. GPs and the rest of the NHS are now being encouraged to prescribe Nature to patients suffering from many different mental health issues.



The concept of using mother nature's powers is proving very successful for many people. Just a walk in the park, listening to the birdsong or simply watching leaves flutter to the ground, nature can have a profound effect on everybody's health. Come and enjoy Hove Park's green space for wellbeing—free of charge.

<http://www.friendsofhovepark.org/>

KEEP THE RIDGE GREEN – GREEN RIDGE – See header photo of this Newsletter



In 2024 we made the decision to plant a community heritage fruit orchard and this year it has come to fruition (excuse the pun). With two sites identified the sapling were planted late winter and are now due for a very light pruning before the end of the season. Green Ridge having gone from a waterlogged 2024, we have had to water all the new trees regularly this summer to help them get established, all are looking very healthy.

Although the pond nearly dried out this year it did not stop the Parrot Feather returning and the Iris and marginals spreading into what little water remained. We missed the window to give it a good clearing before the rain returned but will try to tackle the problem before next spring. During the winter we are intending to erect two hibernacula inside the pond bunding fence to provide shelter and hibernation for pond wildlife, but it has been difficult to find volunteers to give a few hours of their time to undertake these projects.



See photos of our work parties, the sheep and distant views of the windmill and South Downs on Facebook – Keep The Ridge Green!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/278602262823110/>

FRIENDS OF BLAKERS PARK



Our successful sponsored tree programme ended in 2023 and we've continued to look after the lovely new trees and enjoy the variety they have brought to the park. Our main news this year is that we concluded our community fundraising project to pay for the repair of the Blakers Clock mechanism.

During this project it was fantastic to discover that Gillett and Johnston, the company which originally made the clock in 1894, were still in business!

In liaison with Brighton and Hove City Council the team from Gillett and Johnston came along to repair the clock and are now contracted by the City to provide its ongoing maintenance.

To finalise the clock project, we are designing an interpretation panel to outline the clock renovation which should be in the park by next summer.



Meanwhile, the issue about access to the fenced area is progressing. Friends of Blakers Park supported a petition organised by a neighbourhood group in favour of returning it to its dog free status. The petition was debated at the full Council meeting in July where it was supported unanimously. The Cabinet member responsible has said he will ask officers to bring forward the consultation to reinstate the dog free status of the fenced area so we sincerely hope this will happen very soon.

On a seasonal note, our next event is our December carol singing and we are looking forward to this annual community event in the park.

<https://www.blakersparkbrighton.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/BlakersParkFriends/#>

<https://www.instagram.com/friendsofblakerspark/>

ROUND HILL GREEN SPACES AND ROUND HILL SOCIETY



The Round Hill Community Pocket Park which is located at the junction of Prince's Crescent with Ditchling Road has had a successful first six months pocket park. It consists of four wooden planters: three flower beds and one community herb garden. Feedback from the local community has been overwhelmingly positive, with the most frequent comments being about how it brings people joy when passing and how it has encouraged social interaction.



Round Hill Green Spaces has an active community working group which campaigns for greening projects within the Round Hill conservation area and now maintains ten community planters in total. There are more than 30 volunteers for watering and maintenance operating under the auspices of the Round Hill Society residents' association; and is a member of BHGSF and the Brighton & Hove Community Garden Network. Community funding for the pocket park was raised from a variety of sources, which includes the UK Shared Prosperity Community Fund, the Chalk Cliff Trust, Brighton & Hove Buses, councillor ward funds, and annual plant sales.

As part of this year's Brighton & Hove Community Garden Trail we held an open day Community Pocket Park on Sunday 6 June which, although rescheduled due to inclement weather, attracted a constant stream and interaction of community residents and passers-by.

The event helped inform visitors that the pocket park is entirely community-led and funded, not provided by the council. A new sign has since been installed to highlight it as a "community pocket park" and to help discourage vandalism.

Dominic Furlong <https://roundhill.org.uk/main?sec=main&p=welcome>

FRIENDS OF HOLLINGBURY & BURSTEAD WOODS



We have had a busy few months getting back on track after the felling of the diseased ash trees in Hollingbury wood; Many locals remain unhappy with how the Council handled this, but the upside of it is more volunteers have come forward to help restore the woods. We now have a representative on the Council's newly created 'Woodland Advisory Board', which has improved communications.

The Rights of Way officer found some money to relay the northern section of the Easy Access path which was damaged by the felling contractors, and the rain in August saved our pond from drying out.

We have constructed hibernacula for the frogs nearby and hope to see some frogspawn next year. The Wildflower Guardians helped us by strimming the Butterfly banks at the top of Hollingbury meadow and we planted Cherry Plum on the western edge of the woods. We also tackled cutting back the brambles in the glade in Burstead wood and our Ranger Andy Williams helped repair the steps there.

He also installed the bench top in Snowdrop glade in Hollingbury wood for us. This has freed up space in our storage container, but our tools are still being ruined from the condensation and damp: we are trying to raise funds to replace this with something more suitable.

We are now finalising plans for our Community Tree Planting Day on 7th December to restore one of the areas where we lost so many Ash trees (follow us on Facebook for more information).



<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofHollingburyandBursteadWoodsinBrighton>

FRIENDS OF ST ANN'S WELL GARDENS



Moving at Last!

Our last report was upbeat about getting vital improvement work done over the Summer – sadly this proved painfully slow.

However, keeping the pressure on Brighton and Hove Council has paid dividends. The vandalised pavilion in the Sensory Garden is now firmly in the Council's sights for repair. Contractors are being tasked with mending the roof and windows and re-installing the electricity and water supply. When the pavilion is useable again, we are determined to put it back to good use for park users and the wider community. In addition, the ongoing planting work in the Sensory Garden should reap blooming benefits in Spring.



We enjoyed another mayoral visit, this time from Councillor Amanda Grimshaw who unveiled a blue plaque to Eustace and Oswald Short. The sun shone on an exciting day of discovery about the brother's aviation heritage, with picnicking on the lawns, great music and even some dancing.

Currently, the Park is part of 'Days of Wonder' – a project spotlighting the magic of early cinema. The lives and works of George Albert and Laura Bayley Smith in their pioneering Film Factory, is being celebrated with a series of talks, walks and an exhibition in the Garden Cafe, featuring images from their early films. The Smiths lived and worked from their studio in St Ann's Well, pushing the boundaries of early cinema.

More events are planned over the coming months but our priority is keeping up the pressure on long needed repairs.

<https://www.friendsofstannswellgardens.org/>

FRIENDS OF CRAVEN WOOD



This year has been a busy one for Craven Wood! Our Whispering Trees project has truly taken root since being inaugurated last year. At the summer solstice, we held two guided audio walks through the woodland, where guests listened through headphones to the voices of the trees and to the 'spirit of the wood', aka Gloria (performed by Jools Voce). This was repeated in early October, and more such walks are being planned, provided funding can be found.





Last year's three new lecterns at the entrance to the Wood have now been joined by six new signposts, highlighting the different habitats that can be discovered within the woodland, thanks to a generous grant from East Brighton Trust.

In September, in collaboration with the Craven Vale Community Association, a small fenced-off area adjoining the Wood was transformed into a wildlife sanctuary, complete with a couple of new ponds, birdboxes, hedgehog boxes, and insect hotels. Being on chalk, the lack of water has long been a challenge for wildlife, but the creatures have already begun to make the most of this new haven.

Finally, the unnamed Right of Way behind Rochester Street that leads to Craven Wood was given a good tidy-up in mid-October by a team of volunteers organised by Cllr Marina Lademacher, with plans to add an extra sign to the signpost saying 'To Craven Wood'.

We intend that no one is left in any doubt that our 'best-kept secret' - Craven Wood - is no secret any more

Alan Cooke Friends of Craven Wood <https://friendsofcravenwood.org.uk/>

FRIENDS OF PALMEIRA & ADELAIDE

Green Waste Composting: A Greener Community for Palmeira and Adelaide

This year marks a major milestone for Palmeira Square and Adelaide Crescent. Following our first ever Level 5 'Outstanding' RHS South East in Bloom award, we're proud to launch our new **garden green waste composting area**. Created through a joint effort between **CityParks Ranger volunteers** and the **Waterman Group**, this facility is already making a big difference, transforming garden waste into valuable compost that keeps our shared spaces healthy and full of life.



By processing green waste locally, we're producing even more nutrient-rich compost for our flower borders and community gardens. The benefits go beyond the soil: fewer Council collections mean reduced fuel use and transport to Stanmer Park, saving both energy and resources. It also frees up valuable time for our gardeners, **Lena** and **Vicki**, who can now focus on maintaining and enhancing our beautiful communal spaces.

The new composting area builds on the success of our long-running **community composting scheme** by the **Brighton & Hove Food Partnership**, which continues to thrive thanks to the enthusiasm of local residents. With five active bins still in operation, there's a steady supply of high-

A special mention goes to **Stuart** and **Holly**, whose dedication ensures everything breaks down efficiently. Together, residents, volunteers, and Council staff are closing the loop on waste — turning garden trimmings and kitchen scraps into "black gold" that nourishes both our gardens and our community.

STANFORD & CLEVELAND COMMUNITY GARDEN



Despite periods of hot and very dry weather the garden has been very productive with good crops of vegetables and a profusion of flowers. Our chard was growing especially well until August when someone sadly decided to tip something over it which damaged it.



We sought advice from the Council and the RHS as how best to deal with this contamination. The RHS advice was extremely helpful and suggested a simple experiment to check whether the soil was contaminated. We took samples of soil from around affected plants, moistened it and placed it in a jam jar and sowed lettuce seeds. A control sample from an unaffected area was similarly treated. All samples germinated and grew at the same rate which was encouraging

We will repeat this experiment in the spring and if any problems exist, we will grow sunflowers in this area which suck up contaminants and when mature can be disposed of safely. It was also recommended to fork over plenty of organic matter which will help decompose and dilute any residues. Just hope this doesn't happen again!

In June, when the garden was looking particularly beautiful, we were judged by Jean Griffin from South and South East in Bloom. At the award ceremony held at RHS Wisley on 21st October we were thrilled to be presented with an Outstanding certificate. Many thanks to all our wonderful volunteers and supporters who made this happen.



Also, in June we held an Open Day as part of the Brighton and Hove Community Gardens Trail. It was great to show people around the garden, sell some plants and crafts and have a lovely day in the sunshine.

Our most recent event was participating in Stanford Avenue Methodist Church Flowerpot Festival. This is a good way to recycle old plastic flowerpots. Our theme was 'Mary, Mary, quite contrary how does your garden grow..' Amazing what you can make with flowerpots!



This has been a very eventful year for us, and we are now busy planning for the next growing year.

<https://www.facebook.com/StanfordAvenueCommunityGarden/>

BENFIELD WILDLIFE & CONSERVATION GROUP



Benfield Wildlife and Conservation Group has had a great summer and the wildlife made the most of it, particularly the invertebrates such as moths and butterflies. The wildflowers did not disappoint either.

In May It was my privilege to host the Network of International Women for a picnic and walk on the reserve. This diverse group of women enjoyed their time on the reserve and I hope to welcome them back again next year.



Moth Trapping

Thanks to Dave and Penny Green who came along to lead another moth trap this year in May. The evening was mild and calm, which is good for seeing the most moths. We found some beautiful moths including Brimstone, Peach Blossom, quite a lot of Small Elephant Hawk Moth. A great evening for all who attended.

Brimstone



Peach Blossom.



Small Elephant Hawkmoth newly emerged



Flower Walk



We had great weather again for our flower walk in June which was well attended. We found over 55 species of wildflower many of which are chalk grassland indicator species such as Fairy Flax, Shaking Grass, Bulbous Buttercup, Dropwort.

Here are the group focusing in on a flowers detail.

Glow worms

This year has been great for our glow-worms. On our June walk we counted over 70 glowing females and had at least 3 mating pairs. Unfortunately, our second walk was cancelled due to bad weather, which was a bit unlucky given it's been the hottest and driest summer.

Here is one of our amorous couples. Of course, once mated the females light goes out, and she lays her eggs and then dies.



Scarce Forester Moth



I think the find of the year prize goes to Neil Jenkins one of our keen photographers for the site. He found an amazing Scarce Forester Moth, which is a day flying moth. It is another rare species to add to the reserves' list of wildlife which thrives on our chalk grassland habitat and a first for our reserve. Well done, Neil. The Brighton and Hove Argus Newspaper featured an article on his find. See link below:

https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2025/07/09/rare-moth-sighted-at-hove-nature-reserve/#google_vignette

Butterfly walk

We were very lucky to have Paul Gorringer CityParks Ranger for Waterhall to lead the butterfly walk in August. This summer has been fabulous for butterflies. They have enjoyed the long hot sunny days. We were not disappointed, as Paul and the walkers were treated to 7 Silver Spotted Skippers, a relatively rare butterfly restricted to chalk downland. Its caterpillars feed on Sheeps Fescue grass which grows well on calcareous soils. Photo Julia Vasylevska



Dormice

I have been a bit out of action this summer due to a back injury, but managed to do 3 National Dormouse Monitoring Programme nest box checks on the reserve. The check in October revealed that many boxes had had breeding nests in them, but the Dormice had obviously been weaned and dispersed. However, we did find 4 adults all of a good weight for hibernation and 2 juveniles who needed to feed up a bit. Here is an adult female with a white tipped tail.

This year has been a good year for Dormice across the Counties where dormice have been recorded, with many sites having had record numbers of young. Hopefully, next year will be good if they make it through hibernation.

Sally Wadsworth

Chair, Benfield Wildlife & Conservation Group

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REPLACING OUR LOST FLORENCE ROAD TREES



The Florence Road Community Tree Project Team reached out to **CPRE Sussex Plant Your Postcode** for advice and they liaised on our behalf with Brighton & Hove Council's Tree Planting team.

Sadly, in recent years Florence Road has lost a significant number of much-loved trees to disease, leaving gaps where there was once shade, greenery, and vital habitat for local wildlife. At the moment, we have 8 stumps, 2 bare trunks and 1 tree without a canopy on the street. A group of residents has come together to see how we can replace these trees by funding ourselves some of the costs. We welcome your ideas, support, and help raising the funds to make it happen.

Visit our website www.florenceroad.org for updates and to sign the petition to the Council to address the 'missing trees' - the more people who sign this the more influence we will have with the Council. If you wish, you can support us by donating on our GoFundMe page at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/replacement-of-felled-trees-in-florence-road>