



The Friends of Holland Park
Spring 2025

Membership card enclosed
if you have paid for 2025



The Friends of
Holland Park

Your Committee

President Eric Ellul

Chairman Jennie Kettlewell

Secretary Rhoddy Wood

Treasurer Silvi Spassov

Governance Nigel Brockmann

Editor Joy Puritz

Website Nicholas Hopkins

Art Exhibition Sandra French

Database Manager Graham Franklin

Data & Technology Phillip Fei Hou

Our website address: www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org

Registered as a Charity, No. 281348

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.

Wed 9 April 7.30 pm in The Orangery, Holland Park

Please put the date in your diary and do come along, with your comments and questions. The formal part (voting to approve the 2024 accounts and voting for your trustees) is usually over quickly, and then we will have time to talk about future projects and to hear your questions and suggestions. As always, there is a great deal going on in the park and real challenges continue as we play our part in influencing the management of this complex park, when RBKC budgets remain very tight.

Our president, Eric Ellul, will chair the meeting and keep it all on track and on time.

Often, when it seems things are going well, people don't feel they need to come to the AGM. But

please do come as there are still issues, as there will be with any park. We also need your votes at the meeting to ensure your committee remains in place to carry on the work. Come and challenge us with thoughtful questions and share your ideas. The trustees need your support and want to know that we are representing you.

Members should please register to attend by contacting your chairman on:

jennie.kettlewell@thefriendsofhollandpark.org
or calling 020 7243 0804.

We look forward to seeing lots of you on Wednesday, 9 April.

New discount offer for The Friends! The Builders Arms



This friendly local pub dates back to the 1800s, is one of the most established watering holes in the area and a cornerstone of the neighbourhood's history. The building has been lovingly restored,

retaining many of its original Georgian features. The main room is wood-paneled with an open fire in winter, and there is a pretty flowered terrace as well as a private function room. The menu offers delightful snacks and sharers, succulent chicken, meat-free treats, and classic pub dishes - something for everyone.

Offer:

10% discount on food and drink, with a maximum group of 6.

Not valid on drink without food.

1 Kensington Court Place, London W8 5BJ
www.thebuildersarmskensington.co.uk
t. 020 7937 6213.

Summer party in the park

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

Save the date in your diary and we will give more information in our summer newsletter, on our park noticeboards and on our website, saying when and how you can book. The party is for members of The Friends only, though members are welcome to buy a ticket for a guest. It is the perfect place for a summer party, as the marquee offers a fine view of the seasonal planting in the formal garden and gives shelter from the sun, if we are lucky, and the rain if we are not.



Head Gardener

Owen Rogers has been Holland Park’s head gardener for the past six years. We are sad to tell you that he left *idverde* at the end of January to take up a new role. The search is on to find a new head gardener with the wide range of knowledge and skills that Owen demonstrated. Horticultural knowledge is of course important, but so is leading and motivating a team and all the financial and administrative skills the role entails. He had a flair for design, as can be seen in the Iris Garden and the floral displays in the Dutch Garden.



Owen representing the borough’s parks on Channel 5.

Meanwhile, *idverde* has an excellent team in Holland Park to keep the gardens up to scratch until a new head gardener arrives. We wish Owen well and thank him for all the imagination and hard work he has brought to the job.

Teaching circles

The Ecology Service has commissioned building of teaching circles in the West Woodland and Wildlife Enclosures. They are now completed, are truly a work of art and look beautiful. The work was carried out by Dominic Edge-Bovair of The Woven Fence Ltd, and the hazel came from a coppice that



Dominic Edge-Bovair, with a completed hazel teaching circle.

he is restoring in Hayley Wood, Cambridgeshire. *idverde*’s Gerry Kelsey and his team of volunteers have added bark chip and brought in seating logs and those school children who have already visited are absolutely delighted with their ‘outdoor classroom’. The Friends have agreed to fund the £7,000 cost of the three teaching circles and are pleased to note that their predicted life will be at least 10 years.

Park closures

Regular visitors to the park will have noticed that parts of the park have been closed on several occasions recently. This is for safety during storms and we seem to have had a few of those. The policy is to close the north of the park, the Adventure Playground and the Outdoor Gym when there is a Yellow Weather Warning, to avoid any danger from falling branches. At these times, access to the park is through the gates in the southern part of the park. Should there be an Amber Weather Warning, the whole park would have to close. RBKC Parks Management are aware of the inconvenience closures cause, but safety is a priority.

Wildlife monitoring

The Holland Park butterfly transect recorded a 55% reduction in population numbers in 2024, compared to 2023, but the same eight species were represented. This decline was reflected nationally, leading Butterfly Conservation to declare a Butterfly Emergency. This is thought to be due to a combination of habitat loss and poor weather. A borough-wide bat survey will be commissioned in 2025, as there has not been one since 2010.



Brimstone butterfly.

Second award for Allies and Morrison

Conservation architects, Allies and Morrison, won a second award for their excellent work on Holland House. This was a commendation in the Conservation category at the New London Awards, held in November 2024. Commendations were not awarded in every category, but only where they were considered to be merited. Conservation attracted many entries and was highly competitive, so the award is all the more pleasing.

Tulips may be commonplace today, but they have an exotic past. The first known written record is c1070 in the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. As Holland House was built at the beginning of the c17 it is reasonable to suppose that tulips would have adorned the gardens as a status symbol.

The greatest diversity of tulips comes from the central Asian mountains of Tien Shan, the Pamir-Altai and the Fergana Valley.

Wild tulips are also found in the Caucasus between the Black and Caspian Seas. They enjoy cold winters and hot summers. The ancient trade routes of the Silk Road would have contributed to their distribution, as would ballast dumped from ships.

Tulips reached Europe from Turkey in the late C16. The Ottoman Sultans celebrated their beauty. Europeans deemed them to be as exotic as oriental rugs and spices. As a man of fortune it was considered 'bad taste' if you did not have a collection. Bulbs were bought, flowers unseen, on credit with a plan to sell for profit. The price of one bulb would have bought a mansion on Amsterdam's Grand Canal. The market collapsed in 1637. A 1640 satirical painting, 'Tulip Mania' by Jan Brueghel the Younger, features the chaos.



Tulips in the wild.

The speculative bubble in traded tulips was heightened by the desire for 'broken' blooms. These had streaked, flame-like colours that were unpredictable, but that only added to the allure. It was believed the cause was environmental, and soil was changed, paint and 'miracle' potions added in a desperate attempt to replicate.



Tulipa 'Orange Duc Tholl' by the artist August Wilhelm Sievert, c. 1730. Watercolour on laid paper.

Rembrandt painted the 'broken' Semper Augustus, and French noble women wore rare tulips instead of jewellery. It was not until 1928 that the cause, the peach aphid mosaic virus TBV was identified.

The virus creates beautiful patterns by suppressing the pigment in the petals. The bulb is weakened, degrades and eventually dies.

Today historic varieties are only grown under licence in Holland, as the virus may infect other plants. Virus-free Modern Rembrandts are available.


There are about 75 species and thousands of cultivars. Celia Fisher's book 'Tulip' may inspire further investigation. Richard Wilford of Kew, whilst untangling the botanical complexities, wrote 'if you are lucky enough to have found yourself in this situation it may be better to give up on names and enjoy the tulips'.

Angela Fenhalls

Save me I'm wild

THE STRUCTURE OF WILD FLOWERS

Signed prints & handmade cards



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



Accounts

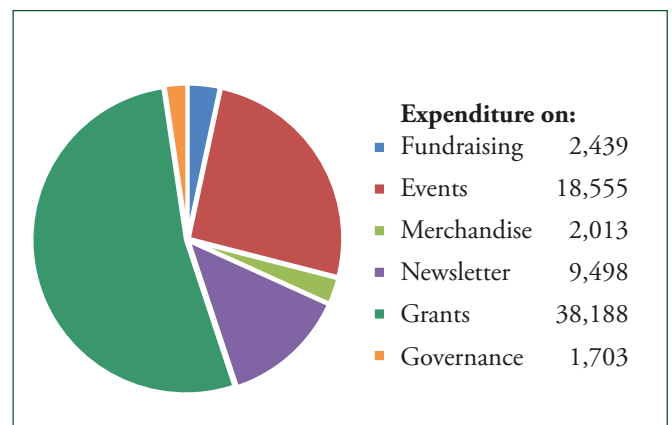
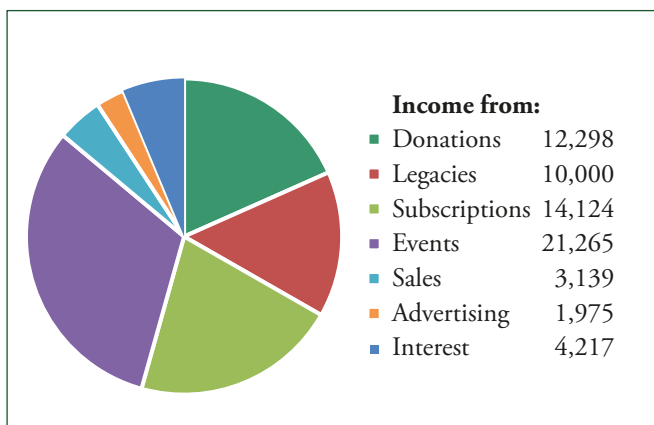
The Friends of Holland Park

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024		2023	
	£		£	
Income from:				
Donations & legacies:				
Donations		12,298		32,023
Legacies	10,000	22,298	-	32,023
Charitable activities:				
Subscriptions		14,124		13,625
Other trading income:				
Events		21,265		17,397
Sale of merchandise		3,139		3,589
Advertising	1,975	26,379	1,655	22,641
Interest		4,217		2,797
Total incoming resources		67,018		71,086
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds:				
Fundraising		2,439		2,924
Event expenses		18,555		14,667
Cost of merchandise	2,013	23,007	1,540	19,131
Charitable activities:				
Newsletter		9,498		8,538
Grants & aims expenditure		38,188		30,314
Governance	1,703	49,389	1,390	40,242
Total resources expended		72,396		59,373
Net income/(expenditure)		-5,378		11,713
Total funds brought forward		183,530		171,817
Total funds carried forward		178,152		183,530

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

	£		£	
Current assets:				
Debtors & prepayments		1,012		808
Deposit & current accounts	177,590	178,602	183,097	183,905
Creditors:				
Amounts falling due within one year		450		375
Net assets		178,152		183,530



1. Donations decreased in 2024 over 2023, due to an exceptional £25,000 donation in 2023.
2. A legacy of £10k, increased subscriptions and event income, resulted in the total income being only £4,068 less than in 2023.
3. An increase in the cost of newsletters was due to the rise in paper costs.
4. Event costs increased over 2023, largely due to a successful art exhibition. The more artworks sold, the more income we receive, but it means a higher total sum is paid to artists. Surplus on events in 2024 was £2,710, against £2,730 in 2023.
5. Grants to fund park projects increased satisfactorily from £30,314 in 2023 to £38,188 in 2024.
6. Unlike most organisations, the fact that costs exceeded income (by £5,378) is an achievement and is in line with our aim to increase spending on grants for park projects.

Membership Discount Cards and Subscriptions 2025

Payment for 2025. If the order form included with this newsletter is green, it means that at on **15 March** your membership discount card will expire, and you will no longer be entitled to the discounts that go with it. To enjoy this benefit, please renew your membership now. All subscriptions were due on 1 January, except for those who joined after 1 September 2024.



Our records are not infallible, so do contact Graham Franklin on 07802 761548 or ggfranklin3@aol.com if you have a query.

However you pay, we are most grateful for your support, as the more members we have the more

influence we can bring to bear in achieving our priorities for this wonderful park.

Rhoddy Wood

There are several ways to renew your membership. You can send a cheque, payable to The Friends of Holland Park, to Margaret Rhodes, 25 Princedale Road, London W11 4NW. You can also pay on our website www.thefriendsofhollandpark.

Standing order for 2026 onwards. You need to pay the 2025 membership subscription now, but it helps us if you complete a bank Standing Order form, as it means your membership payment will be paid by your bank each year, and you will not have to remember to do it. You cannot complete a Standing Order form on our website, but you can use the one on the back of the green order form with this newsletter.

Donations. Some members choose to add a donation, which is appreciated. If you pay through our website, you can donate by clicking on a very obvious yellow button on the home page.

Membership rates. Membership is £12 a year, or £9 for the over 65s. Joint subscriptions, for two people at the same address, cost £20, or £15 where both are over 65.

Dutch garden hedging

The trial of different plants to replace the box hedging has worked well and the beds with a mix of all the alternative plants looks very special when precisely clipped.



Trial beds of box alternatives.

Barrie Maclaurin

Barrie joined RBKC as Parks Manager in 2004 and his role doubled overnight when RBKC merged services with Hammersmith and Fulham. He retired in March 2014, and moved to Wales with his partner, Jeff. He is remembered for many good reasons, not least his sense of humour and clever way of getting round bureaucracy. The sculpture Tonda was easily approved as 'a replacement garden ornament' rather than an art installation!

A passionate interest in Japanese gardens worked to our advantage. Barrie visited some of the great gardens of Japan and learned from master gardener Yasuo Kitayama. This resulted in great care and attention to accuracy in our own Kyoto Garden when it was refurbished in 2011. When the Emperor and Empress of Japan visited in 2012, it was Barrie who showed them round the Kyoto and Fukushima Gardens.



Barrie (centre) showing the Emperor and Empress of Japan round the Kyoto Garden in 2012.

When he retired, he joined The Friends as a member and kept in close touch, making his final visit to Holland Park with Jeff in March 2024. I last saw them in October 2024 in their Cardiff home, a happy occasion although Barrie was evidently not well. Sadly, he died on 2 December.

It is hard to sum up the very great contribution Barrie made to Holland Park. In a tribute to Barrie's skill and diplomacy, he was voted the most Inspirational Leader of the Year in the 2013 RBKC staff awards. And, in 2017, he received the prestigious Japanese Sato Award, which is presented to individuals and organisations for outstanding achievement in fostering exchange between Japan and other countries on the subject of parks and green spaces.

We miss Barrie's friendship and helpful advice on Japanese gardens, though that has been given from a distance for over 10 years.

Jennie Kettlewell

Mary Spain

We regret to report the death of Mary Spain on 17 November 2024. Mary joined The Friends in the early 1980s, but I first became fully aware of her in 1996. She then offered to join the team of newsletter deliverers which I was forming. Unlike others, she would not come to my flat to collect newsletters. Instead she said that, if I would bring them to her, she would stuff the envelopes and deliver and give me tea. She did this for every newsletter except two from then to Covid. Once was when she cracked her skull (leaving her with permanent tinnitus), and once was to recover from a breast cancer operation.



Mary Spain with one of the cats she loved

Mary was involved with many other local organisations and was willing to share news about The Friends with them. Whenever the Campden Hill Society produced a newsletter she asked me what she should say about the Friends' doings. She also gleaned news about us from her membership over some years on the Holland Park Liaison Committee. She was a real help in spreading the word about The Friends.

During Covid our regular meetings had to stop, but Mary went on delivering newsletters brought to her door, and this continued when Margaret Rhodes took over managing the deliverers. When in June of last year, Mary announced her retirement, it must have been part of her final settlement of her affairs. She worked for the Friends for 28 years, one of the longest of any. Rest in peace, a good and faithful servant.

Rhoddy Wood

After celebrating the 40th Friends of Holland Park Art Exhibition last year, which was our most successful to date, I am looking forward to continuing the momentum with future exhibitions.

For the Feature Artist this year, I have selected last year's winner of the "Spirit of Holland Park" prize, Chris Hales. Chris paints landscapes outdoors in rain or shine with a "plein air" approach. He grew up in the Peak District of Derbyshire, studied in Bristol and taught for many years at UWE (University of West of England) Faculty of Art, Media & Design,

subsequently moving to London to study at the Royal College of Art and settling down many years ago in Holland Road. We are delighted to have Ilchester Estates sponsor the exhibition for another year. Over the years this sponsorship has allowed The Friends to develop the exhibition, offer a free catalogue, advertise and increase visitor numbers to The Orangery.

Please note: Artists' completed forms, showing details of all their exhibits, must reach me by Friday 7th March 2025.

Gordon French



Art Exhibition 2025 Timetable

Friday, 7 March, 2025	Final date for completed artist exhibits forms to be received to allow catalogue listing
Friday, 4 April	Artist deliver artworks to the Orangery, Holland Park 8.30-11am <i>Artists will be required to sign the catalogue to certify that all details shown are correct.</i>
Friday, 4 April	Hanging & Judging 11am – 6pm
Friday, 4 April	Artist Reception 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Saturday, 5 April	Exhibition open to the public. 10.30am to 6pm
to Sunday, 13 April	Continues for 9 days from 10.30am to 6pm with entry FREE OF CHARGE.
Sunday, 13 April	Artists and buyers collect works, 6.15pm – 7pm
Monday 14 April	Artists and buyers collect works, 9am – 11am

Threads

Please note that the owner of Threads, who have been a participating member of the Friends & Neighbours programme for quite a while, has sold the business. The shop is currently closed for refurbishment and we will approach the new owners once they are up and running to see if they will continue to offer a discount to our members.

Hi there **kids!**

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

Sensational stripes!

Hundreds of years ago, someone clever discovered the secret of stripey tulips. It was because the bulbs had an illness.

Be the best artist you can be and colour in the missing pink stripes on the right half of the flower.



Can you solve this riddle?

I climb trees but I'm not a cat
I hibernate but I'm not a bear
I eat nuts but I'm not a bird
I'm a type of rodent but I'm not a rat
I have a bushy tail but I'm not a fox.

What am I?

I am a squirrel!



Did you know?



Weird or wonderful?

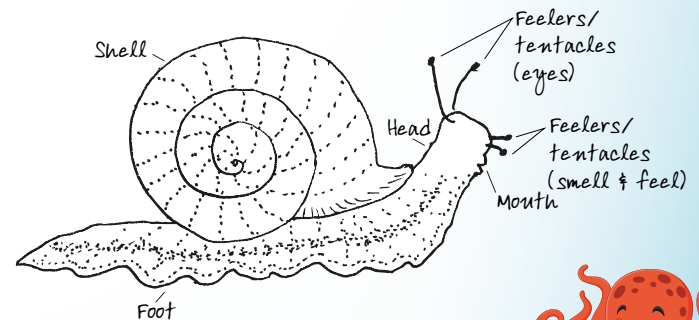
When a group of garden snails is seen together, it is called a 'walk' of snails.

Well, that's weird as snails don't have legs, so they can't walk. Or can they? They move **very** slowly, one of the slowest creatures on earth and, although they don't have legs, they do have just one foot.

The foot is quite large compared to the snail's body and head and it is full of muscles which ripple, helping it to glide along on smooth surfaces.

If the snail feels unsafe, it can withdraw its whole head, body and foot into its shell. Strangely, snails are born with their shells, which grow as the snail gets larger.

Another weird fact is that a snail has 12,000 teeth and they are on its tongue. Its mouth is low on its head so it can grind up food as it glides across it.



A snail has four 'tentacles' on its head, which may remind you of an octopus, to which it is related. It certainly is weird, but it's pretty wonderful too.

After the storms and chilly temperatures of winter, spring announces itself with buds on the trees, bulbs pushing up their green shoots through the still-damp earth, and birds singing with pure joy. It is a wonder to see nature re-emerge at the start of each year with such confidence.



Heron

Hamamelis blooms early and is to be found in the Acer Walk beds. Mahonia is sporting its yellow flower spikes to attract early bees and is in the bed just outside the Stable Yard. And the mimosa at the back of the Belvedere Restaurant will soon be in full fluffy bloom. Interesting that these are all yellow flowers. Later there will be daffodils.

Look around you as you walk through the park and notice the snowdrops between the double fence to Arboretum 1, just south east of the Holland Pond. It won't be long now before we see the pure white petals open up. The French call them *perce-neiges* because they are some of the first flowers to pierce the snowy crust.

There is so much birdsong, if you give yourself time to stop and really listen. The Egyptian geese (they are actually ducks) have been seen in the Kyoto Garden, and herons are everywhere.

Spring never fails to astonish and to fill us with such hope.

Jennie Kettlewell



Hamamelis (L)
Snowdrops (R)

Jennie Kettlewell



Jennie Kettlewell

We need your help to protect our wildlife

We have written in several recent issues of this magazine about helping to care for the wildlife in Holland Park by not feeding birds, animals or fish. It is not good for them, nor is it good for the park.

People often say that they are using food that is appropriate and not harmful, but that is not the real problem. The problem is that it is not wise to let wild birds and animals interact closely with humans. The danger is that peafowl, for example, get used to being fed by humans and, on several occasions, have approached a person with a dog. Even if the dog is on a lead, that dog is going to react as a dog does. Peafowl that get over confident about being on the ground can get taken by a fox. Both the peafowl and the foxes are wild. Many of our members ask about the dwindling peafowl in the park. We are glad to report that we

will get new peacocks and peahens in late spring, but they will only survive if people stop feeding them.

Squirrels may be cute, but they can find plenty of food in the park and should not be fed. There have been quite a few incidents recently of squirrels biting park visitors who try to feed them. And the high numbers of squirrels encouraged by feeding, damage and kill trees.

Many London parks have signs saying Don't Feed the Wildlife and the posters shown here will shortly be displayed in all RBKC's parks. People who continue to disregard the posters will be fined.

Our parks are managed to provide sufficient food to sustain the wildlife that lives there. Please let our wildlife be wild.



Holland House fell in and out of favour with its owners; some lived there, and others were absentees. The Edwardes family, to whom the estate passed in 1721, were absentees. The author of *A Tour Through England* (1748), said that “the famous old edifice” had “long been decaying”. But help, in the person of Henry Fox, was already at hand.

Henry Fox was born in 1705. His father, Sir Stephen Fox, was an associate of Charles II and a skilled financial manager, who served in four reigns as Paymaster of the Forces and Commissioner of Horse. His elder brother, Stephen, later became Earl of Ilchester.

Henry himself squandered his inheritance and lived in France to avoid his creditors. He formed a relationship with Susanna Strangeways, his brother’s future mother-in-law, who became his patroness and enabled him to return to England.

Elected to Parliament in 1735, he showed himself a skilled debater, and he rose through the ministerial ranks, becoming in 1755 Secretary of State for the Southern Division (effectively Foreign Minister) and Leader of the House, responsible for defending the government in the House of Commons, while the Prime Minister, the Duke of Newcastle, sat in the House of Lords.

The outbreak of the Seven Years’ War in 1756 saw a number of British reverses, including the capture of Minorca by the French, and Admiral Byng’s failure to recapture it. Newcastle and Fox sought to deflect the resulting political storm by prosecuting Byng for cowardice. But by the time of Byng’s execution, Fox had resigned and the Newcastle government had fallen. Fox failed in his attempts to form a government and eventually his great rival William Pitt (the Elder) formed a government with Newcastle.



Portrait of Caroline, Lady Holland, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds 1757-58.



Portrait of Henry, 1st Lord Holland by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Turning away from high office, Fox was appointed Paymaster of the Forces, in effect the personal banker to the Army, in 1757. The monies voted by Parliament for military expenditure were paid to him, and he was required to disburse them as required. The office provided enormous opportunities for enrichment, through investing the funds before disbursing them, and through straightforward embezzlement. Fox, a hugely competent financial manager, took full advantage of these opportunities.

Fox’s extreme pragmatism as a politician saw him accused of lack of principle, and even in an age where political office was a path to wealth through corrupt patronage, he was notorious for his pursuit of money. But most of the opprobrium came from his political enemies, and there were many who valued his friendship.

He was happier in his personal life. In 1744 he eloped with Lady Caroline Lennox, 18 years his junior, the daughter of the Duke of Richmond and a great beauty.

It took his new in-laws five years to get over his social inferiority and accept his political talents. The couple were devoted to one another throughout their 30-year marriage.

In 1761, Lady Caroline was ennobled as Lady Holland of Holland (in Lincolnshire). Fox remained a commoner and, returning to the post of Leader of the House for a couple of years, managed the difficult ratification of the Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years’ War: his reward in 1763 was the title of Lord Holland of Foxley (in Wiltshire) – though he had hoped for an earldom.

In 1746, Fox had taken a lease on the dilapidated Holland House estate and set about improving

it. 22 years later, he bought all the estate north of the Kensington Turnpike (now Kensington High Street). He said, "I pay a great deal more for Holland House than anything but Lady Holland's extreme fondness could make it worth." They held many lavish parties in the house, starting with a housewarming ball in 1747 and a ball in 1752 when 62 sat down to dinner.

He laid out the grounds in the new "landscape garden" style, with extensive planting of exotic trees from North America, and replaced the formal gardens north of the house with lawns – an expensive luxury at the time. He also moved the entrance drive so that he and his guests could avoid the Kensington Turnpike toll-gate.

Fox was a notoriously indulgent parent. When his son Charles wanted to hit a valuable watch with a hammer, he said "Well, if you must, I suppose you must." On another occasion, Charles and his elder brother Stephen ("Ste") had been promised that they could see a wall being blown up, but they missed the explosion. So Fox had the wall rebuilt and blown up again, this time in the presence of his sons!

Unfortunately, the two boys did not learn self-discipline, and grew up to be inveterate and extravagant gamblers. Paying their debts almost exhausted Fox's fortune. He never achieved the highest office, and his attempts to secure an earldom were rebuffed. He died, a disappointed man, in 1774.

Rowan Freeland



Rowan is one of the Blue Badge Guides who leads tours covering the history of Holland House, decorative arts in the park, and the history of the gardens. Regular tours will run throughout 2025, led by Rowan or Leila Sukiur. Tour dates are listed at the back of this newsletter, under Dates for your Diary, together with booking instructions. The first tour is on Sat. 8 March, which will be the last chance to see the conserved exterior of grade 1 listed Holland House before the terrace closes for the opera season.

Wildlife and nature events

Once again the Ecology Service will run a full programme of wildlife walks in Holland Park, sponsored by The Friends. These events are very popular, and rightly so. Some dates are listed at the back of this newsletter, but watch out for the dawn chorus, bat walk, dragonfly walk and herbal medicine dates which will be advertised on Eventbrite. The Friends will continue with the bird walks led by expert ornithologist, Bill Haines, and the tree identification walks with Dr Alan Harrington.

Guided walks in Holland Park

Every Thursday we meet at 10.30 am in the Holland Park Café and embark on a short, but not strenuous walk around the park. The walk, which embraces the woodlands, flower walks and Kyoto Garden, is led by two volunteers and lasts around 45 minutes. Afterwards we have tea and coffee and wide-ranging conversation in the café which has been generous in accommodating us.

It is a group of around 15 or so, generally over 60s, all abilities and all friendly. Everyone is welcome and, barring drinks, participation is free and above all enjoyable and informative, as we observe the park's changing seasons in the course of each year.

At 3pm every Thursday there is a group meeting to do a Nordic walk around the park. This is instructor-led and Nordic walking poles are provided. Nordic walking is beneficial for heart, lungs and posture, without being too exhausting. In fact you should emerge refreshed and energised. It is excellent exercise for all ages and especially for over 60s, as it improves general fitness, and it has also proved beneficial as rehabilitation.

Simon Grantham, volunteer walk leader



Walk leaders Simon Grantham and Svetlana Mills, who received RBKC awards for their voluntary work



Local Events Run by Neighbouring Organisations

Spring 2025

Kensington Gardeners' Club

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

Saturday March 15, 2025, 2:30pm **Club Meeting**, Garden historian, Caroline Holmes, talks about painter and plantsman, Cedric Morris, famed for breeding bearded irises.

Saturday, April 12, 2025, 2:30pm **Club Meeting**, Paul Bagshaw, head gardener of Goodnestone Park Gardens, will talk about sustainable and wildlife gardening at Goodnestone.

Thursday, 1 May, 2025 **Garden Visit**, 10am coach from Notting Hill Gate to Charlotte Molesworth's Topiary Garden in Kent to enjoy bluebells and rich planting schemes, including a tour of Hole Park Gardens. £50 for KGC members. £55 for guests. Must book.

Wed May 28, 2025 **Garden Visit**, 10am Coach from Notting Hill Gate to Loseley Park in Surrey for peak season view of Rose Garden. Guided tour of house and garden. £50 for KGC members. £55 for guests. Must book.

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

Opera Holland Park

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

27,29,31 May. 5,7,12,14 June at 7.30pm **Flying Dutchman** by Richard Wagner

3,6,11,13 June at 7.30pm & 8 June at 2pm **Itch** by Jonathan Dove

19,21,25,27,28 June at 7.30pm **The Merry Widow** by Franz Lehár

24,26 June at 7.30pm **Trial by Jury/A Matter of Misconduct!**
by W.S. Gilbert & Arthur Sullivan/Emma Jenkins and Toby Hession

18,22,24,26,30 July & 1Aug at 7.30pm **Lucia di Lammermoor** by Gaetano Donizetti

19,23,25,29,31 July & 2 Aug at 7.30pm. & 27 July at 2pm. **La traviata** by Giuseppe Verdi

The Kensington Society

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

The events listed below are either organised by The Friends (F), or organised by the Ecology Service (ES), most of which are sponsored by The Friends.

Sat. 8 Mar.	Blue Badge guided tour. History of Holland House and the families that lived there. Last chance to see conserved building before it closes for the opera season. Must book. £10	F	2.30-4pm
Thurs. 3 April	Spring Tree Walk , led by Trevor Bowyer. Free but must book.	ES	5-7pm
Sun. 6 April	Blue Badge guided tour. Statues, sculptures and Art in the park. Must book. £10.	F	2.30-4pm
Sat 5 - Sun 13 April	Friends Art exhibition in the Holland Park Orangery. Free to visit.	F	10.30am-6pm
Wed. 9 April	Friends AGM. 7.30pm. For members only. Update on plans for the Park and chance to ask questions and share your views. Please contact Jennie Kettlewell on 020 7243 0804/ jennie.kettlewell@thefriendsofhollandpark.org to let her know you will attend.		
Tues. 29 April	Spring plant walk. with Dr Mark Spencer. Free to attend, but must book.	ES	6-8pm
Sat. 17 May	Blue Badge guided tour. History of the Gardens and Pleasure Grounds. Must book. £10	F	2.30-4pm
Wed. 18 June	Tree identification walk in Holland Park, led by Dr Alan Harrington. Free to attend. No need to book. Meet by The Friends' noticeboard in the Café Yard.	F	11am-1pm
Sat. 21 June	Blue Badge guided tour. History of the Gardens. Must book. £10	F	10.30-noon
Sat. 28 June	Butterfly and Moth morning. Free to attend but must book.	ES	10am-noon

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.

Parks Police

Holland Park is generally a safe place, but we should never be complacent. If you see any antisocial behaviour, such as vandalism, please contact the Parks Police on:

0300 3655 101

Remember three key points:

- Keep yourself out of danger
- Take a description of the person, location and exactly what they are doing
- Contact the Parks Police and report **the facts**.



The Cover photo of tulips in the beds round the Armillary Sphere was taken by Jennie Kettlewell in April 2024.



Friends of Holland
Park Household
Insurance Scheme

10%
discount for
all members

Homes like yours need insurance like ours

Lycetts has nearly 60 years' experience of looking after the insurance needs of our clients. We offer specialist, impartial advice on your personal insurance and wealth management requirements, in addition to an extensive range of products and services for estates, farms, equestrian and commercial enterprises.

Lycetts
Insurance Brokers

0207 398 1660

jonathan.lloyd@lycetts.co.uk

www.lycetts.co.uk

Lycetts is a trading name of Lycett, Browne-Swinburne & Douglass Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
Lycetts is a trading name of Lycetts Financial Services Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Proud to protect your home and your valued possessions