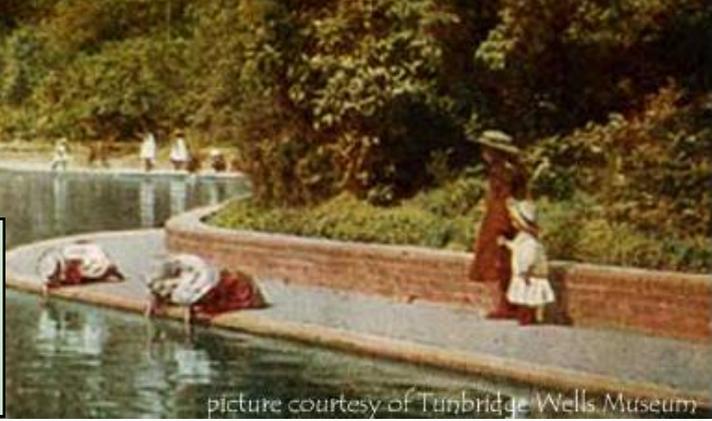


# Friends of Grosvenor & Hilbert Park (FoGH)



Newsletter 19 Summer 2016



picture courtesy of Tunbridge Wells Museum

**GRAND REOPENING & FUNDAY**

Special inside – see pages 4 & 5

## Before & After: the Heritage Lottery Regeneration Project



The tired 1970s Pavilion is now the Community Hub & Indoor Cafe.



With new & refurbished equipment, the Playground is vastly improved.



Marnock Lake: now restored & planted in the original Victorian style.



Formerly storage & an electrical substation, the Rochdale Road entrance has been reinstated.



Upper Grosvenor Road entrance is open & welcoming with new planting.



The new Folly Shaw bridge is much better than the old pallet bridge!



## Chairman's Report

At last more summer-like weather has arrived and the race to catch up with fresh growth is on. The prolonged cool temperatures have not stopped FoGH holding events in the Park. We have made good progress in the orchard, assisted again by Steff and her team of volunteers: they have cleared around each tree, then applied feed and mulch. Roger Worraker from Five Oak Green gave a fascinating workshop on fruit tree pruning, with practical instruction and a talk on the principles of training a productive tree.



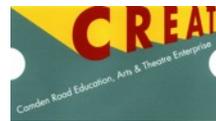
The grassland surrounds by Roundabout Woods have been harrowed and seeded with wildflowers suitable for both the open sunny parts and the woodland margins. I hope that during the course of the year, a wide variety of flowers will appear to attract an equally wide variety of foraging insects to help pollination.

Our main efforts have been concentrated on preparations for the Grand Reopening and Funday, which was again a great success. Many people from the neighbourhood came along to meet up and enjoy the wide variety of things to do and see. We could not achieve what we do without the generous help of the TWBC Parks Team and staff from Sodexo, who lend infrastructure and support. Additionally the time and dedication of those who volunteer their help makes a demanding event such as this possible. A huge thank you to everyone.

There are a couple of events coming up, with a picnic in the Park accompanied by a band on June 12th to mark the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations. The Working Horse Trust are returning on 16th July in Love Parks Week, to do more work in the orchard and offer cart rides. Steff has arranged a series of activities and wildlife walks and talks, so there is much to see and do in the Park this summer, which I hope you will enjoy. **Liz Edwards**

## Camden Road Education, Arts & Theatre Enterprise

CREATE presents:



**Nose in a Book Night.....Saturday June 25th 7pm**

In Refugee Week: readings & songs on the theme of 'Displacement'

At St Barnabas School: free entry, bring your own food & drink

**Glyndebourne at St Barnabas.....Sunday July 17th 12 – 3pm**

Classical concert by professional musicians,  
with the choirs of St Barnabas school & CREATE

bring a picnic to eat in the playground before the concert or in the interval.

For full details see the CREATE website [www.camdenroad.org](http://www.camdenroad.org) & Facebook [www.facebook.com/createTW](http://www.facebook.com/createTW)

table 8

**The Cafe at the  
Community Hub!**

*Paninis & Sandwiches*

*Macs & Soups*

*Cakes & Biscuits*

*Hot & Cold drinks*

*Daily Specials*

Open Daily 9am – 5pm

## Update from the Parks Department

At last we are at the end of the HLF works and soon our Contractors, Blakedown, will be leaving site. However, the work to the wetland will continue for a few more weeks due to delays from poor weather. Blakedown have done their best to keep the Park open during this complicated project and I am sure you will join me in thanking the staff for their efforts.



It will take time for the plants to establish, but as they mature we will see the full effect of the planting scheme. Blakedown will maintain the areas they have worked on for the next twelve months, then they will revert to Sodexo. The Park has been entered into two competitions: Green Flag (judging date to be confirmed) and South and South East in Bloom for the large Park category (judging date July 4th). Sodexo welcomes a new member of the team to Grosvenor & Hilbert, Brian Eatherton, who joins us from Richmond. Brian has plenty of experience and knowledge of public parks: if you see him in the Park please say hello.

Sadly we are still experiencing damage to the Box topiary from dogs urinating against them. Our contractors are not obliged to replace the plants: they are not cheap and it will be a cost to the Council. We welcome dogs to the Park but would dog owners please keep their dogs off the newly planted areas.



I'm sure many of you will visit the Park in the summer, perhaps enjoying a BBQ.

Please remember the following:

- No BBQs in the Meadow Areas or after 9pm.
- Disposable BBQs MUST be placed on metal stands or bricks, NOT Park furniture or other items.
- To avoid accidents, keep children & pets away from the BBQs. No throwing or sports games near the BBQ.
- Never leave the BBQ unattended & ensure it is completely cool before attempting to move it.
- Before disposing of a used BBQ ensure it is totally extinguished. Let it burn out & go cold or use water.
- If your group consists of more than five people, please let the Parks team know.

Do take the time to enjoy the refurbished Park and remember we always have opportunities for volunteers; look out for more information or visit the websites. If you have any questions, please contact the Parks Department on 01892 554031 or [parcs@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:parcs@tunbridgewells.gov.uk) **Peter Every – TWBC Parks & Sports Team Leader**

## Events Roundup

### Orchard Pruning Workshop

As the trees in the Community Orchard grow, they need pruning to develop good shape and to encourage fruit production. On Saturday March 12th, we gathered in the orchard with our secateurs. Roger Worraker is a renowned expert in fruit tree cultivation and he gave tree sponsors hands-on tuition to give their trees an initial prune.



Roger starting the workshop

Then we moved down to the Community Hub for a talk from Roger, helped with refreshments including apple cake. Roger showed us tree branches aged from one to four years old, highlighting the stages of growth and how to prune to encourage the development of fruiting spurs. We would like to thank Roger for taking the time and trouble to share his expertise.

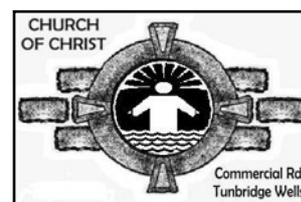


Advice on pruning

**Chris Hughes**

### Easter Sunday Sunrise Service

The annual service took place on Easter Sunday 27th March and despite the rain (and thunder), a good crowd gathered from several churches (at least five) to celebrate Christ's Resurrection. Bible readings, poetry, prayers and songs were shared before we all beat a hasty retreat in the face of heavy rain to Church of Christ, Commercial Road for a delicious and plentiful continental breakfast. Grosvenor & Hilbert Park is a wonderful setting to celebrate this event.



**Cliff Allen, Minister – Church of Christ**

### Community Weeding & Planting

On Saturday 16th April, a small group of hardy volunteers braved the chilly wind to do weeding and planting. The herb beds by the Bowling Green were looking a bit sparse, so FoGH decided to brighten them up, by adding more herbs and mulch. This is part of our Britain in Bloom entry.



Plenty of herbs to plant

The selection of small but healthy plants included lovage and fennel to add height, hyssop, winter savory, salad burnet, borage, lemon balm and bergamot. Dandelions, buttercups and couch grass were removed before the plants went in. Bark mulch retains moisture and suppresses weeds, as well as looking decorative. Sincere thanks to the volunteers for their hard work, despite the cold weather.



Hard at work

**Mary Hughes**

### FoGH Annual General Meeting

How lovely to be able to have our AGM on 'home turf'! On Thursday 12th May in the Community Hub, committee members welcomed about 30 Friends to cheese and wine. Chairman Liz Edwards and Treasurer John Bushell gave updates on the year.

We answered questions from members, which included: over-running and standard of HLF works, night-time lighting and litter in the woods. Committee members Liz Edwards, Carolyn Gray, Chris Hughes and Ben Chapelard were re-elected, and Emma Melville, Chris Maslin and Jane Chapelard were voted onto the committee.



At the AGM

After the formal event there was a chance to socialise and look at the 'Before and After' photos displayed on the Hub walls. The photo display is an example of how FoGH assists the council with projects. Avid photographer Chris Hughes worked with computer skilled Dave Barnett to produce the display. Thanks to Liz Edwards as well for sourcing the wire system and perspex photo holders.

**Carolyn Gray**

### Guided walk at Bedgebury Pinetum

Some trees planted in the wetland area as part of the HLF regeneration were supplied by Bedgebury National Pinetum. These were grown at the Pinetum from seed collected in the wild. A group of FoGH members enjoyed a guided tour with Bedgebury's Dendrologist Dan Luscombe.

Bedgebury holds many rare specimens, but it is important to have examples planted elsewhere to safeguard their long-term survival. As you walk around the wetland area, you will see our own little Pinetum developing. See [www.forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury)

**Chris Hughes**



Some of the group at Bedgebury

# Grand Reopening & Funday Monday 2nd May 2016

Our fifth Family Fun Day was also the Grand Reopening of the Park, following the Heritage Lottery Funded work. As well as our usual attractions, additional events were organised by Community Engagement Officer Steff D'Argorne.

In the Community Hub, the HLF hosted a reception celebrating the restoration work in the Park. Local dignitaries heard HLF committee member Bill Ferris express his delight at the transformation. Cllr Jane March spoke of the exciting new opportunities and paid tribute to the contribution of FoGH and other volunteers.



The Grand Reopening in the Hub



## The Dog Show

Despite a miserable start, enthusiastic dogs and owners turned up. We began with Best Young Handler, won by Frank with Bear. Seven month-old Westie Alfred was judged Cutest Puppy. Best Paw Shaker was Bruno, who combined confidence with perfect paw shaking.



Minnie AKA Harry Potter

A new category of Celebrity/Owner Look-Alike was won by Amalia and Ruby. For Best Trick Sonny gained the top prize for some outstanding moves. Fancy Dress saw wolves in Grandma's clothing and a Che Guevara, but 1st prize went to Minnie as Harry Potter.



Frank with Bear



Sonny with owner Wendy

Musical Sits had dogs parading to dog-themed tunes like 'Hound Dog'. Finally, Tia was crowned as Best in Show. Many thanks to Kent & Sussex Courier for the

Goody bags and treats, and to our Judges, Susan Schibli, Paula Day and Ben Chapelard. See our website [www.FoGH.org.uk](http://www.FoGH.org.uk) for the full story and more photos.

## The Main Event

Following a fanfare from the Sea Cadets Reunion Band and an introduction from Town Crier John Scholey, the Mayor, Cllr David Elliott, officially opened the day. He was joined by deputy Mayor Cllr David Neve.



The Sea Cadets Reunion Band



The Town Crier



The Mayor opens the Funday

The afternoon of entertainment, hosted by The Acoustic Reverb Collective, started with Scuffed Soul, and included various bands and also dance acts on the grass in front of the stage. We would like to thank Town and Country Foundation for their contribution towards our infrastructure on the day.



Scuffed Soul



Cascade Dance Company



Second Helpin'

Volunteer Kate in the FoGH cake tent



FoGH ran our information stall, with free lucky dip for children, and a cake tent. These were all run by volunteers, and thank you for all the cake donations – the stall ran out before the end of the day! It was lovely to chat to visitors, and hear positive feedback on all the work in the Park.

The donkeys



'Have a Go' at Bowls



After a wet start the weather improved slightly and we were aware that people mingled more, rather than sitting on the (rather damp) grass.

This was good, with attractions the whole length of the Park. Acrojou: All At Sea were based by the playground, near 'Have a Go' at Bowls. The vintage cars, donkeys and CREATE tombola in aid of the Winter Lantern Parade were near the Auckland Road entrance.

Some of the vintage cars



Queues at the bouncy castles



Acrojou: All At Sea



The climbing wall



Food and drink were on the lower field, then bouncy castles from Bounce The Party, the climbing wall, goal scoring with The Wells Free School and the St John Beavers' caving system at the top of the slope. Several community based stalls around the Park provided additional activities, although the wet sections of the lower football pitch again limited what and where we could host.

The hog roast



Waiting for ice cream & fish and chips



The Dancing Day Trippers



Churches for Tunbridge Wells stall



We loved 'The Dancing Day Trippers' from Applause Rural Touring, who drove their scooter around chatting and dancing with all the crowds. Over at the railway bridge, Dave Eagles of Overspray was finishing a Wind in the Willows inspired mural, funded by Heritage Lottery.



### With Thanks

We'd like to thank everyone for coming along, and particularly to all our stewards and volunteers. We are grateful for all the donations in the buckets, which, along with the stall-holders rents, and the assistance this year from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Town and Country, means we have covered our costs. Our thanks also to TWBC for their assistance, especially with the portaloos and rubbish clearance.

**Carolyn Gray, Liz Edwards & Sue Kaner**



## Meet the new Heritage Lottery Funded Community Ranger

First of all I'd like to say a big hello. Some of you I have already met, but I am aware that there are many people involved with and frequenting the Park that I have yet to meet. I'm Jazz, the relatively new Graduate Community Ranger at Grosvenor & Hilbert Park.



On a university field trip

I started the role back in chilly January and have really enjoyed getting to know the Park and its people. A keen naturalist, I graduated from The University of Exeter with a degree in Conservation Biology and Ecology in 2014. Since then I have been a volunteer community engagement intern for the RSPB and have worked in the events team for Sustrans in Bristol.

In January 2016 I moved to Tunbridge Wells to join the Community Engagement team for

Grosvenor & Hilbert Park. In my first few weeks I got to meet and work with some of the fantastic weekly volunteers, FoGH members and volunteers, and the creative and enthusiastic people working within and around the Park.



Wildflower planting

Now five months in we are busy organising events and activities for the coming summer months. There are forest schools and the wildlife gardening project for school aged children, willow weaving, bug hunting and wildlife walks and talks for people of all ages. The summer schedule is packed full of brilliant free events to suit a variety of ages, abilities and interests. See our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/GHParkHLF/](http://www.facebook.com/GHParkHLF/)

I am relishing the opportunity to be part of such a busy and exciting Park. If I haven't already met you, I look forward to doing so and hearing what Grosvenor & Hilbert Park means to you. **Jazz (Jasmin) Ashworth**



Jazz & Steff with two volunteers

## A Reminder: Reporting Issues in the Park (*Continue to use 999 for emergencies*)

### Police 101: 24 hr non-urgent crime reporting & anti-social behaviour.

Vandalism, nuisance behaviour and disturbances. Please leave a message so the incident is logged.

**TWBC Parks Service 01892 554031** During office hours for general issues (vandalism, fly tipping, dog fouling).

### Parks Out-of-Hours Service 07920 534369 Evenings & Weekends (see notices for times)

Contact point for issues like broken equipment or overflowing bins. Also record and report problems or issues.

## Sport Report

### Football (see <http://www.wksl.org.uk/>)

Tony Vanns, Club Secretary of St John's Yard, admits that the team didn't have a great season. The West Kent Sunday Football League was reduced from five to four divisions after the 2015-2016 season. The club ended up in Division 3, from Division 4: a challenge. Bad weather caused matches to be postponed: the team's first match in 2016 was at the end of February.

With five wins and three draws, they finished third from bottom: by no means a disgrace. They scored in every match bar, one but the other teams usually scored more! The team are looking forward to next season, but are thinking about moving from Hilbert, as the bottom pitch was unplayable for most of the season. The top pitch is better, but on the small side. If they are still at Hilbert next season, please come and cheer them on. **Mary Hughes**



St John's Yard 3 – 8 Bricklayers Arms



At a recent match

### Bowls (see <https://www.facebook.com/GrosvenorBowls/>)

The season has now started, we had our players out during the Funday and invited all onto the green to 'Have a Go', which was well received. Hopefully we may be able to attract some back to join us on a more permanent basis. We have played three matches, all close but only winning one. We have now played our first home game, with all the new facilities available to us; it is lovely to return! The ground keepers are looking after us, the green and surrounds look fine, although we would like the rinks just a little shorter.

If anyone missed us at the Funday, they are more than welcome to come and have a try: we are down at the green most Wednesday evenings

between 5:45 and 7:00pm. All you need are flat shoes!

**Norman Barton, Club Captain**

## View from the Allotment



The water collection system

After the ravages of winter and a confusing spring, our double allotment is mostly repaired, with beds hosting early potatoes, broad beans and peas. The strawberry bed has doubled in size and the rhubarb looks well due to April showers.

At home, in our tiny greenhouse and on window sills, are hundreds of plantlets waiting for the first-frost free nights to be planted out.

One gusty night, our water collection unit (a tarpaulin supported on flimsy timbers) took off with plastic pots, poles, sticks and netting all landing in a heap. Now, back in place, the water collector pours rain into a 1200 litre tank, feeding our collection of water bins.

The zealous Council workers strimmed not only our paths, but also our early raspberries down to ground level. Strangely, they left the autumn ones standing! There is still tons to do: three generations are working together to grow bumper crops. **Alistair Melville**

## Dogs in the Park

I got Tilly from Battersea ten years ago and she is now about 14. Originally 'origin unknown', she has turned out to be half Parson Jack Russell and the rest Lakeland and Welsh terrier.

She is a happy lively dog and clever. As a terrier, she has a mind of her own - the kennels call her "Bossy Boots". She also sulks if she doesn't get a ride home in my friend's car.

Although she can't run as far these days, she still enjoys a chase in the Park, but tends to referee rough and tumble. However, she does play rough with her 'toy boy': Buddy (aged three). She likes to mooch about the Park looking for interesting smells and mud. She is not fussy about what she eats, but her real love is raw sweet pepper. Her other odd habit is she always backs out of corners - never turns round. Finally her claim to fame is that she won Scuffiest Dog in the Park - twice. **Dorothy Swann**



## Steff's Sum Up (or Community Engagement Officer Update)

What a busy couple of months we have had! I would like to start with a big thank you to FoGH and all the volunteers who helped to make the Grand Reopening and Funday such a success. This turned into a great day (despite colder than normal temperatures), and it was fantastic to see so many people making the most of the new features in the Park.



In February the wildflower planting event saw 18 kind volunteers putting in hundreds of plugs and a few native hedgerow plants alongside Hilbert Woods. World Water Day in March had a recycled boat race in Hilbert Woods. The fantastic designs included a pirate ship with Lego pirates. Our Easter event in the Hub resulted in some beautifully painted Easter eggs and was attended by over 200 people! Thanks to all who came along to make those events so enjoyable.

Now that spring has sprung, Jasmin (the Graduate HLF Community Ranger) and I have set up a new project, the Wildlife Gardening Project. This after-school club for local primary school children teaches them to grow their own vegetables, and helps them find out more about the Park's wildlife. We are fully booked on Wednesday evenings, but still have spaces on Thursday, so if you know anyone who may like to join, please contact me at: [steff.dagorne@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:steff.dagorne@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

Since the Funday, new interpretation signs can be found in the Park. We have set up a brass rubbing trail with 10 posts, which introduce children to some of the Park's wildlife. If you've been wondering, the cow in the new wood is to remind the children



that this area, now managed as woodland pasture, was originally grazed by cows.

The conservation volunteer team has been working hard preparing the Park for summer, mulching the orchard trees, planting wildflowers and ferns by Folly Shaw bridge and helping to install interpretation signs. We are always looking for extra volunteers, so if you want to lend a hand, please do email me at the address above.

Over the next few months we have some great events lined up in the Park, from wildlife walks and talks to woodcraft sessions. So keep an eye on the noticeboards and Facebook page (GHParkHLF) for more information about how to get involved. **Steff D'Agorne**



## Dates for your Diary

- Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration.....**Sunday June 12th 2 – 4pm  
 A Bring Your Own Picnic Party  
 Music from the Bacchus Wind Orchestra  
 On the lower field: please bring chairs rugs & cushions  
  

- HLF Boardwalk Building.....**Thursday 9th June 10am — 3pm  
 KHWP volunteer day  
 Meet at the Hilbert Rd gates & dress appropriately  

- A Bug Hunt on National Meadows Day #.....**Saturday 2nd July 10am – 1.30pm  
 Meet on the mini football pitch by the skate park  
 Identify some of the exciting invertebrates in the Park  
  
  
  
 LOTTERY FUNDED
- Stop the alien invasion!.....**Thursday 7th July 10am – 3pm  
 KHWP volunteer days removing invasive Himalayan balsam  
 Meet at the Hilbert Rd gates & dress appropriately  
**Thursday 4th August 10am – 3pm**
- Introduction to Birds Walk & Talk.....**Monday 11th July from 5pm  
 Meet at the Community Hub: Walk 5pm Talk 6.30pm  
 All children must be accompanied by an adult  
  
  
  
 LOTTERY FUNDED
- Heavy Horse Day.....**Saturday 16th July 10.30am – 4pm  
 The Working Horse Trust in action  
 Cart rides available & the horses will be moving tree trunks  
  

- Woodcraft Sessions #.....**Wednesday 27th July  
 Meet by the skate park to learn new skills outdoors  
**Also Thursday 11th, Friday 12th & 19th August**  
  
  
  
 LOTTERY FUNDED
- National Play Day.....**Wednesday 3rd August 11am – 3pm  
 Join KHWP & FoGH on the upper field  
 For our annual celebration of outdoor play  
 Free games, activities, crafts, face painting & much more!  
  

- Butterflies, Dragonflies & Grasshoppers Walk # & Talk.....**Tuesday 9th August from 5pm  
 Meet at the Community Hub: Walk 5pm Talk 6.30pm  
 All children must be accompanied by an adult  
  
  
  
 LOTTERY FUNDED
- The Life of Birds.....**Wednesday 17th August 10am – 2pm  
 At the Community Hub: drop-in event suitable for all ages  
 Bird related activities & learn how to look after birds in our gardens  
  
  
  
 LOTTERY FUNDED
- Hay today, gone tomorrow.....**Wednesday 24th August 10am – 3pm  
 KHWP volunteer days: the annual meadow cut & thinning  
 Meet at the Hilbert Rd gates & dress appropriately  
**Thursday 8th September 10am – 3pm**
- Heritage Open Days at the Community Hub.....**Friday 9th September 2 – 5pm  
 Displays on Park history & the HLF regeneration  
**Saturday 10th September 10am – 4pm**  
**HODs History Walk** Meet at the Hub  
**Sunday 11th September 11am – 12.30pm**  

- Conservation Volunteer tasks every Thursday 10am – 3pm** Meet at the Oast House  
*More free HLF summer events available. Book events marked # via [steff.dagorne@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:steff.dagorne@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)*  
 See posters, [www.fogh.org.uk](http://www.fogh.org.uk) Facebook [www.facebook.com/GrosvenorHilbert](https://www.facebook.com/GrosvenorHilbert) or Twitter <https://twitter.com/FofGH>

### FoGH Contact Details

Liz Edwards (Chairman) [chair@fogh.org.uk](mailto:chair@fogh.org.uk)  
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 Twitter <https://twitter.com/FofGH>

Comments or contributions to  
 Newsletter editors at  
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 or 15 Dorking Road,  
 Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2LN

To join, contact the Secretary at 41, Dorking Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2LN or on [Friendsghrp@aol.com](mailto:Friendsghrp@aol.com)

Our sincere thanks to Tunbridge  
 Wells Borough Council for all their  
 support in printing and collating hard  
 copies of this Newsletter



### Other Contacts & Useful Information

TWBC Parks Service 01892 554031  
 Out of Hours Service 07920 534369  
 Toilets: Opening Hours 7am - 6pm

Images courtesy of Jasmin Ashworth, Dave Barnett, Steff D'Agorne, Mel Harrison,  
 Chris Hughes, Kent & Sussex Courier, Jane Melville & Dorothy Swann