



## Autumn 2025 FoGH Parklife

As I write this, we have seen a lot of much needed rain over the last few weeks. This is in stark contrast to the previous few months, which were very sunny, but with virtually no rain. This leads me to say a **big thank** you to our volunteers (Gabi, Roy & Sophie) for their dedication in watering the baskets around the Hub and Bowls Green during July and August. The plants very much appreciated it, as did all of us who enjoyed the display the plants gave us.

Talking of volunteers, I would like to mention our local experts who support our walks and talks around the Park. They give up their time to lead many of our events, sharing their knowledge and helping us better understand the plants and wildlife in our Park. So, another **big thank** you to Ian Beavis (Moths, Bees, Butterflies etc), David Scully (Bats and Trees) and Martin Sutton (Pond Dipping), along with Keith Palmer who will lead our upcoming Fungal Foray in late October.



The RHS In Bloom judging took place on 2nd July. As a Friends Group, we support the TWBC Parks Team by joining them and the judge, as he tours the Park over a 2-hour period. We show how FoGH contributes to the Park through our horticultural work and our events, like Moth ID mornings, Pond Dipping, and Bat, Tree and Bee walks. We were very pleased to hear that the judge felt the Community Orchard was flourishing and that FoGH were managing it very well. We must be doing something right, as the apple trees this year are literally dripping with fruit! We are still waiting for the results and will let you know once we get them.

It's hard to believe but it's 10 years since the Heritage Lottery Funded work took place and what a difference it has made to the Park. Over time the various works have settled in and become part of the everyday life of the Park. The children's playground continues to delight the kids using it, the Community Orchard has grown beyond our expectations, and the Wetland area has flourished. It really shows that all the work put into the project has been worthwhile, as its legacy continues to benefit all those that use the Park.

Finally, the Committee have been working hard arranging our Autumn/Winter programme. We have lots of events lined up, so hopefully there is something there that will appeal to you. It takes a lot of work to plan and organise these events and we are always looking for people to help us out. If you would like support us by getting involved in any of the events, please let us know – it will be much appreciated.

**Chris Hughes, FoGH Chair, September 2025**



## A Round Up of Events & Activities in the Park

In June we had a big push to 'tidy up' various parts of the Park, before the South & South East In Bloom judge visited at the start of July. A big thank you goes out to Maslins accountancy staff, who volunteered over three days and made a huge difference to what we could do. They weeded the beds around Marnock Lake and the Bowls Green, and tidied the Willow Tunnel. And, of course many thanks to our other volunteers.



Our Tree Walk focussed on the conifers planted in and around the Wetland area of the Park. The planting took place as part of the Heritage Lottery funded regeneration, working in conjunction with Bedgebury Pinetum. One of the key aims of the planting was to extend the distribution of specific species found at Bedgebury. As it was a very hot day, we were grateful for the shade these now offer!

In August FoGH arranged for the Drama Geezers to come to the Park and run two sessions on a Sunday afternoon. Taking a theme, Simon and Paul, who are the Drama Geezers, built a storyline from suggestions made by the audience. Once they had this, they got out a huge roll of paper and encouraged the children to draw the story onto it – we still have it if anyone wants to see it.



Over the summer we held three Moth Identification mornings, in June, August and September. Ian Beavis sets his moth trap up in a garden by the Park, then we open the trap in the Hub the following morning. We saw a good range of species, from the spectacular Hawk Moths in June through to the more autumnal moths. In September, ideal conditions overnight meant that we caught 139 moths of 34 different species, including several migrants.

The Pond Dipping was very well attended, with a lot of enthusiastic children (and parents), as we visited the wetland ponds and Marnock Lake. A total of 14 wetland species were found across the two sites. The stars of the show were the mature dragonfly larvae, but other finds included newt tadpoles, water boatmen, water beetles and freshwater shrimps. As with the moths, all these were released back into their natural habitats.



## Autumn & Winter Events in the Park

### **Apple Day.....Saturday 11th October 11am – 2pm**

At the Oast House (by Hilbert Rd entrance). Join FoGH for children's craft activities & refreshments. We'll be making juice with our apple press: bring bottles & any spare apples from your own tree. Lots of volunteers needed to help cut up the apples! Any clean bottles you have would be useful. Free event, but donations are welcomed: we are fund-raising for new interpretation boards.

### **Fungal Foray.....Saturday 25th October 10.30am – 12.30pm**

Discover the Park's fungi on this exploration & identification walk led by expert Keith Palmer.

Limited tickets (£2.00) for this event will be available at [fogh.org.uk/tickets](http://fogh.org.uk/tickets)

Fungi & Lichens is the subject of this year's RTW in Bloom Photo Competition.

Why not have a go? To learn more, see Facebook: [@RoyalTunbridgeWellsInBloom](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalTunbridgeWellsInBloom)

### **Halloween Crafts.....Sunday 26th October 2 – 4pm**

Get the family into the spirit of Halloween at this themed event.

Cake decorating, also art & craft activities. Optional fancy dress (just for fun).

At the Hub. Free drop-in event, run by the Fiends of Grosvenor & Hilbert Park.

We suggest a donation of £2 towards the cost of materials.

### **Community Basket Planting.....Date & time to be advised**

Help FoGH get the Hub & Bowling Green baskets replanted for winter & spring.

We'll be planting daffodil bulbs & colourful plants to brighten the Park into next spring.

Tools, plants & equipment provided: please wear appropriate clothing & footwear.

### **Christmas Tree Festival Crafts.....Sunday 23rd November 2 – 4pm**

Get crafty & help us create beautiful nature-inspired decorations for the FoGH Christmas tree.

We'll make the unique ornaments from natural materials, reflecting the Park's landscape.

This is for the Christmas Tree Festival at King Charles the Martyr Church (11th – 14th Dec).

At the Hub. This is a great festive way to support a local community event.

### **Wreath-making Workshop.....Saturday 6th December 1.30 – 3.30pm**

Craft a beautiful decoration for your front door or as a gift.

All materials are provided – from the wreath base to a gorgeous selection of fresh foliage.

At the Hub. There's only 10 spots available, so book your place now!

Tickets cost £30 per person from [fogh.org.uk/tickets](http://fogh.org.uk/tickets)

### **Apple Howling.....Saturday 3rd January 2026 2 – 3pm**

Join FoGH & Iron Spring Morris to scare bad spirits away from the Community Orchard.

Follow the ancient tradition of wassailing to wake the trees, so they give a good harvest in autumn.

Meet at the Oast House for refreshments & dancing, before we process up to the orchard.

Please bring pots & pans, whistles & drums to make as much noise as possible.

**## Please note: children must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all events. ##**

**For more information about any events, see social media & look out for posters in the Park.**

FoGH website: [www.fogh.org.uk](http://www.fogh.org.uk) Facebook [www.facebook.com/GrosvenorHilbert](https://www.facebook.com/GrosvenorHilbert)

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/ghparkfriends/>

To learn more about conservation volunteering days with KHWP, see [www.khwp.org.uk/](http://www.khwp.org.uk/)