



News from the Committee

Let me introduce myself: I'm Chris Hughes and I was elected as Chair at the March AGM. As my house overlooks the Park, I've always had an interest in what happens in it. I really got to know it well when I started volunteering with Kent High Weald Partnership in 2007. Since then, I've helped to build boardwalk, planted trees in Appledore Wood and sown yellow rattle in the Orchard. I've also worn a fetching pair of waders as we cleared bur-reed in the wetland!

When the Friends group started in 2011, I was keen to join to support them. I joined the committee in 2013 and became Treasurer in 2017. When Carolyn Gray decided to step down as Chair last autumn, we began looking for a replacement, but it soon became clear that it would be hard to identify anyone. After some thought, I decided to put myself forward, as I've always been very much involved in the group. I'm very much aware that I've got big boots to fill! Carolyn has been involved in FoGH since the very beginning and has been a dedicated and energetic Chair for the last four years. We are glad she's decided to remain on the committee.

There have also been a number of changes to the FoGH committee: John Scholey has stepped down, as has Lynda Steers, who has moved away from the local area. We'll miss her help at events and all her gardening work with the FoGH Green Team. Richard Woodfield has been our Secretary since 2021, and his hard work has ensured that we have up-to-date policy documents and risk assessments. We'll certainly miss his knowledge of the FoGH constitution and careful recording of volunteer hours.

At the AGM two new committee members were elected: Sue Payne and Tom Saunders. Sue lives close to the Park and we are hoping to use her skills as a former art teacher. Tom has an accountancy background and has agreed to become Treasurer, so I'm currently handing the role over to him. I chaired my first committee meeting in May, with help from our special guest Pebbles the cat, who lives near the Park. We hoped he would take the minutes, but that went cat-astrophically wrong...

Last year Grosvenor & Hilbert won the 'Best Large Park (above 25 acres)' category in the South & South East in Bloom competition, which was a triumph for all concerned! Royal Horticultural Society judge Sorin Caraiman is coming to Tunbridge Wells on Wednesday 2nd July and will visit the Park in the morning. FoGH will be working with the park keeper Tony Cheeseman, the Parks Department and our volunteers to make sure everything looks as good as possible. There will be opportunities for gardening work in the Park over the summer - look for social media posts or emails and give us a hand if you can.

Chris Hughes/FoGH Chair - June 2025

Some Upcoming Events

Heritage Open Days: The Swimming Pool : Sun 14th September : 2.30 pm : The Hub

Join FoGH volunteers for an Heritage Open Days exhibition and a brief talk about the Swimming Pool that was once in our park.

Moth Identification Morning : Sat 20th September : 10:30 am - 12:30 pm : The Hub

Drop in to the Hub to see what night-flying insects Dr Ian Beavis can identify from the overnight moth trap.

Pond Dipping : Sun 21st September : 2:00 - 4:00 pm : The Hub / Wetlands

Join us for a pond dipping session in the wetlands. Discover the creatures that live in the Park's water habitats with local expert Martin Sutton. This is a ticketed event. See the website for details.

Apple Day : Sat 11th October : 11am-2pm : Hilbert Gates / The Oast

Join FoGH for children's craft activities & refreshments and we'll be making juice with our apple press.

Fungal Foray : Sat 25th October : The Hub

Discover the Park's fungi on this exploration & identification walk led by expert Keith Palmer. This is a ticketed event. See the website for details.

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

Ticketed Events: FoGH members get exclusive access to tickets before they go on general release

Event details are provisional: date and times can change, events might be cancelled.

For more information about any event please check our website, emails, posters or social media