

Houghton Hall Park

June 2023 Newsletter

The Houghton Hall Park Renaissance and Renewal Project is being managed by Central Bedfordshire Council in partnership with Houghton Regis Town Council and is supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund.

What beautiful weather we've had this month, perfect for our very first Mindful Fest event on Sunday 11th June, the park was brought to life by Pantasy Steel Band playing summer tunes on steel drums, the perfect sound



whilst having a stroll around our Mindful Market stalls. Free head massages were on offer, along with healing crystals, grow your own boxes and handmade wooden products to name a few! Children had the chance to make kites with Community Kite Workshop, they looked very impressive being flown around outside. Free



meditation, lessons in movement and children's yoga classes took place in the formal gardens and these were very well received despite the hot weather, in fact we are now hoping to hold regular children's yoga sessions during the summer holidays, watch this space!



The Kitchen Gardens were also open with the Friends of Houghton Hall Park holding their very popular plant sale, the handpainted vases of sweetpeas were very popular, a great day was had by all and we hope to repeat it next year.



A great place to live and work.

Pop-Ups In the Foyer

We like to offer local crafters an opportunity to showcase their products in the Visitors Centre foyer on a Saturday/Sunday, stalls cost £10 per day. There is still availability for June and July, you can find out more information, check availability and book on our website

Date	Pop-Up
17th June	Doggy Dawdlers - Doggy Crafts and Treats
18th June	Laura Gunn - Hand painted China

<https://www.houghtonhallpark.org/events/pop-up>

Sketching Walk

When: Thursday 22nd June

Time: 2pm to 4pm

Cost: Free

Join Senior Countryside Officer and local wildlife artist Steve Halton on this FREE sketching walk and watch the park come to life on paper.

You will need:

- Sketch pad
- Pens
- Pencils or paint
- Folding chair or stool if you have one. although not essential

No need to book, meet outside the Visitors Centre.

Classics in the Park

When: Sunday 9th July

Time: 10am to 3pm

Cost: £5 to enter a vehicle, FREE to attend

It won't be long until our second Classics in the Park event, show off your classic vehicle in the beautiful surroundings of our park, there will be entertainment from Swing Dance MK and Jazz the 2 of Us along with our ever popular Stick Man trail and a great selection of stalls, we hope to see you there!

Entries are now open, to book you classic into the show visit our [WEBSITE](#)



The Tale Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny Outdoor Theatre

When: Tuesday 25th July

Time: 11am to 1.30pm

Cost: £5 per child

The first of our summer holiday activities, Quantum Theatre presents an enchanting adaptation of two of Beatrix Potter's most popular tales - The Tale of Peter Rabbit and the Tale of Benjamin Bunny. Peter and his naughty cousin Benjamin know very well that they are not to go into Mr McGregor's garden, but they cannot resist and soon they find themselves face to face with Mr McGregor himself! How will they ever escape? Join Peter and Benjamin on their hair-raising adventures in Michael Whitmore's delightful new adaptation for young and old alike.



Set outside in our beautiful park this is a show not to be missed!

Tickets cost £5 per child (2 years and over), this also includes a Peter Rabbit trail around the kitchen gardens.

All children must be accompanied by an adult, running time approx 1hr 40mins with a 15-minute interval.

Tickets are non-refundable unless we cancel the event.

Outside Cinema

When: Thursday 27th July

Time: 2pm and 5pm

Cost: £1 per person in advance, £2 per person on the day

Hosted by Houghton Regis Town Council come along to a Movie Night in the park on July 27th.

To pre-book your tickets for ONLY £1 (under 2's FREE) please click the links below for your preferred film.

If you choose to arrive on the day tickets will be £2 (under 2's FREE)

Lyle, Lyle Crocodile : <https://bit.ly/43AK9fp>

Puss in Boots – The Last Wish: <https://bit.ly/43zITuj>



Monthly Photography Themes

We welcome photographers of all abilities to get creative, use your imagination and enter our monthly theme.

June's theme is: 'Silhouettes at Houghton Hall Park', we can't wait to see what you capture for this one, please send your submissions to:-

hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

The images must be taken between 1st – 30th June 2023 and each person can submit up to 5 entries. We will not accept any overly photoshopped images that do not represent the reality of the subject in the photo. Some images will be featured on our website, social media platforms, notice boards around the visitor centre and in our monthly newsletter.

Please see our website for the full terms & conditions before you submit your work:

www.houghtonhallpark.org/photography

Art & Culture Event

Central Bedfordshire

great lifestyles

June's Photography Theme

'Silhouettes' at Houghton Hall Park

We look forward to seeing what you capture:

- Up to 5 entries per person
- Images must be taken in June
- Some images will be featured on our website, social media platforms, notice boards around the visitor centre and in our monthly newsletter
- Send them to us at: hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Deadline 30th June
- Full terms & conditions at our website

Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org

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Nature Notes

Words by Mark Bolan, Houghton Hall Park Volunteer.

It's certainly been a busy time with my bees. Last month I mentioned that they had swarmed and I put them into a new hive. I left the new hive and the one they swarmed from, to settle for a week



I now have three hives at the bottom of my garden.

before inspecting them again. It's never a good idea to keep opening a hive as it upsets the bees unnecessarily and only encourages the urge to swarm. I found the queen in the new hive and all was well. Unfortunately, the hive they swarmed from appeared to be queen-less. None of the frames in the brood chamber had eggs or larvae, a sure sign the queen was missing. Worker bees are all female and only live for an average of six weeks, so without a constant supply of eggs a hive will soon die out. It is only the queen who can lay fertilised eggs, laying up to two thousand a day this time of year, to save this hive I needed to introduce a new queen. With no

eggs or brood in the hive I only had two options, to move frames of brood from the other hive and hope they would develop a new queen from the larvae. They do this by feeding one or more larvae with royal jelly. The first to hatch will kill any other potential queens. My second option was to buy a fertilised queen, which I chose to do. She arrived in a small plastic frame known as a queen cage. I couldn't put her straight into the hive as the bees will treat her as an invader and kill her. Firstly, they must get accustomed to the pheromones she gives off, which takes about twenty-four hours. Still protected in her cage, I put her between two brood frames. Immediately the mood of the hive changed with an increase in the sound of buzzing as the bees swarmed around her investigating this intrusion. The end of the queen cage is plugged with fondant, which the queen feeds on and the bees in the hive will eat from the opposite side of this plug. By the time it has been eaten, she will be able to escape into the brood chamber and the bees hopefully will accept her as their new queen. It will take her a couple of days for her to settle in and start laying, so I'll let you know next month if I've been successful. Despite all this I have had a good supply of honey and so far, have collected fifteen pounds, with several more frames almost ready to take.

Just before I close I must mention that as I have been writing this the vixen has just wandered through the back door into the kitchen.

Until next time.

Mark

Volunteer at Houghton Hall Park and Gardens.



The righthand image shows the inside of a queen cage.



A full frame of capped honey comb straight from the hive.

What's the latest in the Gardens?

By Sue Beard, Community Gardener

Finally, the beautiful sunshine has arrived, and the gardens have bounced into life!



June is the busiest month in the gardens calendar as everything starts to pop and grow at a speedy pace.

We are so busy planting out, battling with the ever-growing weeds, keeping on top of the endless tasks of watering, seed sowing, potting on, pricking out, harvesting the crops that are ready and the 100s of other jobs that always seem to need doing in any garden!!

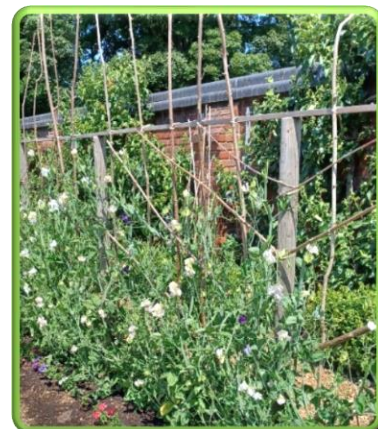
We have been busy planting out a selection of bedding plants grown on site to add colour and interest to different areas of the gardens. Flowers planted in the winter months are now starting to burst into colour!

The sweet peas are flowering at a fast pace and require frequent cutting to keep the flowers producing. The sweet peas are a mixture of varieties that includes one with a high scent

which is so lovely when cut. The Sweet Williams underneath the Houghton Hall Sign in the formal gardens have bloomed into colour after sitting patiently in the bed over the winter months!



The cut flowers bed designed this year by Linda one of our amazing volunteers is looking fabulous with a unique design. With a wide range of plant varieties and added interest of a pretty ladder as the main focal point it really is eye catching and a beautiful addition to the gardens.



The herb bed is starting to put down root and is now growing at a quick rate, the different textures, and smells of the range of herbs is a nice partner to stand next to the Storytelling bed.



Work is under way in preparation for the summer story telling display.

The volunteers are so talented at creating these displays and can turn their ideas into reality, I am always amazed what they can create from very few materials...so keep an eye out when this fun summer display will appear!

As we start to crop the produce the Friends of Houghton Hall Park will be opening their produce shop on Thursdays between 10am and 1pm.

Must sign off now and pick up my hose pipe to continue with the never-ending task of watering in this fantastic but punishing heat! Until next month....

Happy Gardening!

Sue



Become a volunteer at Houghton Hall Park

Thinking of giving something back to your local community? Then get in touch with us to see what you can do to get involved. Here are some ideas below:

- Observational Surveys
- Community engagement
- Weeding and clearing
- Cleaning
- Watering
- Growing food and encourage healthy eating
- Teach younger generations (if you have a skill or qualification, let us know!)
- Become a community leader
- Support other volunteers
- Contribute to the annual park events calendar
- Volunteering assistant at events running at the park
- Curate local history talks at visitor centre
- Habitat enhancement work in the woodland and meadow

There are many opportunities to take part. If you would like to volunteer and join the Volunteers of Houghton Hall Park, please email hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Keep in touch

Facebook

HoughtonHallPark

Instagram

HoughtonHallPark

Twitter

@BedsCountryside

Website

www.houghtonhallpark.org

Email

hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Current Opening Times

Mon – Sun 9am to 4pm



Central Bedfordshire Council



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