

Houghton Hall Park

July 2018 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.

Launching... Fish and Chips Friday!

What a beautiful Summer we are coming into, the glorious sunshine beaming through the evergreen leaves in the woodlands and the colourful wildflower meadows changing day by day... we are so excited to see the park alive and busy with families, dog walkers and individuals enjoying their time here. What better way to spend a sunny Friday than eating Fish and Chips?? Due to the success of the Fish and Chip Fridays in June, the Café have extended this offer to run every Friday, for just £4.95!



...is back!

Join our fun, family challenge on **Tuesday 24th July & Tuesday 7th August** between 11am – 2pm (last entry 1pm). This is a FREE activity for all the family to enjoy. Explore the park, find the markers, complete the challenge and have fun together. The meeting point for the activity is in the foyer at Houghton Hall Park Visitor Centre, Park Road North, Houghton Regis, LU5 5FU. Parking is free for up to 3 hours, but parking spaces are limited so please arrive with plenty of time. For further information about the activity please visit www.xplorer.org.uk.

A great place to live and work.

Greensand Trust brings back the Bug Lab!

Returning to Houghton Hall Park with two sessions this summer, this is a chance for your family to hunt for mini-beasts! This activity will be led by experts and will also involve a fun bug-related craft activity. It is suggested that this event isn't suitable for under 4s. All children must be accompanied by an adult and please do not bring your dog to the activity. It's a good idea to wear long sleeves, trousers and suitable footwear. This is an outdoor event with little shelter, so please bring water and sun cream. You can stay for as long as you like during the session. While equipment and guides are provided, the session involves group work and sharing of materials. Places are limited so you'll need to book - accompanying adults are free of charge with tickets available one per participating child at £3 each. For more information or to book, please visit: www.greensandtrust.org/Event/bug-lab-2018-at-houghton-hall-park.

Monthly Photography Themes

We welcome photographers of all abilities from the age of 16 to get creative, use your imagination and enter our monthly themes, **July's theme is: Wildflowers in Houghton Hall Park**. Please send your submissions to hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk. The images must be taken between 1st and 31st July 2018 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 and conditions before submitting your work: www.houghtonhallpark.org/photography.

Below are some entries sent in for June's theme: Birds in Houghton Hall Park, thank you for your wonderful entries:



Incoming by Christina Cole



Move over by Christina Cole



Where are you going by Christina Cole



Female Black Cap by Sally Gray



Carrion Crow by Sally Gray



Newly fledged Whitethroat by Sally Gray

I love summer time, it's amazing! *by Mark Hogan*



Summer is my favourite time of year, it is when all the trees are covered in beautiful green foliage and all the summer flowers are out in full bloom like the Honeysuckle, Foxgloves and the country meadows are covered in wildflowers such as oxy-daisies and teasels. Teasel's attract all sorts of creatures like damselflies, dragonflies and when the flowers emerge, you will often see Goldfinches hungrily eating away at the plant heads themselves. You may also see raspberries, gooseberries and other fruit bushes at the side of the roads or even in your own gardens.

Summer also means the natural world becomes buzzing with new life and it is incredible to see all the young baby birds leave their nests and begin

their lives out in the big wide world, some stay with their parents for a little while but then move on to start a life for themselves. Not only birds but Grasshoppers and Crickets too suddenly appear in our gardens. The Cricket creates a chirping sound called "stridulating" which I think is one of the sounds of Summer, for me anyway.

With all the flowers coming out, it brings the Butterflies like Red Admirals, Peacocks, Meadow Browns and Cabbage Whites which feed on the nectar-rich flowers like Foxglove and Honeysuckle. You could create your own Wild Garden area by buying a packet of Wildflower seeds from a garden centre or growing Lavender, Salvia, Comfrey and even Foxgloves which might attract a Hedgehog, Muntjac or Fox.

One of my favourite insects is the Stag Beetle, they can be 75mm long and they have huge antlers on their heads, which are actually its jaw. They spend several years underground as larvae before emerging at the end of June to breed. They are one of our most endangered insects so if you see one on your garden path, pick it up gently by its middle and move it to safety.



I love Summer for the Birds, you will often see Swifts acrobatically swooping over your gardens, screeching as they do so and picking up insects like hoverflies, mosquitos, flying ants and aphids. Swift numbers have declined over the past few years because people have removed their nests from the eaves of their homes. If you want to help them, you can purchase Swift nest boxes in various materials, you can even get a Swift nest box made of brick, it is hollow and has a hole on the side so the Swifts can get in and feed their young. The only time a Swift lands is on its nest; it even drinks on the wing, swooping over a river or lake to do so.

If you see a bird or animal and you're not sure what it is then please take a picture of it and send it to us at the Houghton Hall Park Visitor Centre and we will try and identify it for you. We may even put it up in the Visitor Centre or in next month's newsletter.

Photography & Written by Mark Hogan

Keep in touch

Facebook

HoughtonHallPark

Instagram

HoughtonHallPark

Twitter

@BedsCountryside

Website

www.houghtonhallpark.org

Email

hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Opening Times

April to October

Monday to Friday

10:00am - 17:30pm

Saturday and Sunday

9:00am - 17:30pm

November to March

Monday to Friday

10:00am - 15:00pm

Saturday and Sunday

9:00am - 15:00pm



Become a friend of Houghton Hall Park

Thinking of joining the Friends of Houghton Hall Park? 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 Friends of Houghton Hall Park, please email hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Central Bedfordshire Council



LOTTERY FUNDED