

Houghton Hall Park

July 2022 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.

Our first 'Classics in The Park' show took place in Houghton Hall Park on Sunday 3rd July, seventy vehicles ranging from pre-war to 2005 were on display on our beautiful park grounds. The owners and members of the public could vote for their favourites, the top three in each category were

awarded with rosettes and a trophy. Swing Dance MK provided the entertainment with their energetic dancing and even got the park team

busting some moves! Ten local crafters had stalls and there was a free Stick Man trail for the children which proved very popular with over a hundred children taking part. The team received some wonderful feedback following the event and it will make a return next year on Sunday 2nd July!



'My partner and I would like to thank you and pass on our compliments for an excellent event today. There were some gorgeous cars in the Classic Car Show and I had a most interesting chat with the owner of an E-Type Jag, one of my favourite cars. My partner likes dancing and thoroughly enjoyed the performances by Swing Dance MK. You even managed to organise lovely weather. Fab morning out and a great contribution to our local community.'



A great place to live and work.

What's On

Nature Event



Pond Dipping

Join Eleanor, our Park Ranger, for some pond dipping in our wildlife pond in the kitchen garden, grab your nets and see what you can find!

One kit is suitable for two children, all children must be accompanied by an adult.

Booking in advance on our website

Event date: 2nd August
Event time: 10.30am to 12pm
Cost: £5 per pair



Nature Event



Mini Beast Hunting

Come and collect a mini beast hunting kit and have two hours to see what you can find!

One kit is suitable for three children, all children must be accompanied by an adult, this is a self led activity and the kits must be returned at the end of the session.

Booking in advance on our website

Event date: 27th July
Event time: 10am to 12pm
Cost: £5 per group



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Nature Event



Willow Dreamcatcher Workshop

Join Eleanor our Community Ranger and make your own willow dreamcatcher, go on a nature walk to find things to add to it, then back to the visitors centre to decorate your dreamcatcher with the things you have found and some additional charms and sparkle!

Must be booked in advance on our website.

Event date: 5th August
Event time: 10.30am to 12pm
Cost: £4



Nature Event



Clay Creature Workshop

Join Eleanor our Community Ranger and make your own clay creature, go on a nature walk to find things to add to it, then back to the visitors centre to decorate your creature with the things you have found and some additional crafty bits and bobs!

Must be booked in advance on our website.

Event date: 12th August
Event time: 10.30am to 12pm
Cost: £4



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Family Event

Central Bedfordshire
great
lifestyles

Make and Launch a Rocket

Join Eleanor our Community Ranger who will guide you through making your own rocket from a pop bottle, once complete she will show you how to launch it into the park!

Aimed at age 3 and over

Children must be accompanied by an adult for this activity and supervision will be required.

Booking in advance on our website

Event Date: 29th July
Event Time: 10.30am - 12pm
Cost: £4.50



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Family Event

Central Bedfordshire
great
lifestyles

Jungle Adventure

Sunday 21st August 10am to 4pm
£6 per child - must be prebooked

From the people that brought you the Pirates of Houghton Hall Park...

Join us on a 'Jungle Adventure' in the mystery of the missing bananas!

Help complete several challenges independently and as part of a team, break into the cave, fight through the jungle course, ride the wild bull, create jungle masks, join the jungle party and much more.

A 50 minute experience of interactive, immersive storytelling, fun, games & activities.



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Family Event

Central Bedfordshire
great
lifestyles

KIDZONE

Friday 19th August 10am to 4pm
£6 per child - must be prebooked

Schools out and it's time for the children to have some fun!

Book your space at Kidzone and enjoy:-

- Snowboard Simulator
- Pillow Bash
- Infatables
- Zorb Bodyballs
- Bungee Run
- Arts and Crafts
- Cookie Decorating
- Circus Skills

Sit back and relax for an hour while our fun experts entertain!



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



Art & Culture Event

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Buzz - a Bee-riliant Adventure!

Wednesday 24th August 11.30am and 1pm
£4 per child - must be prebooked

Join Billy Bumble in the formal gardens as he shrinks down to bee-size and learns about the troubles that they face. Featuring spell-binding puppetry and a giant honeycomb set, join us for a whirlwind ride, avoiding grumpy Mr Fred and the gaping jaws of Shredder the dog!

Ticket price includes our wildlife rubbing trail.

Design your own magnifying glass*
*Additional charge



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org



THE LUMINAUTS in **Houghton Hall Park** **HIGH STREET SAFARI**

MYSTERY OF THE SECRET KEYS

A FREE, FAMILY OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

★ Trustpilot ★★★★★

**COLLECT THE KEYS...
...REVEAL THE BEASTIES INSIDE**

This summer, take part in our free, augmented reality storytrail at Houghton Hall Park. Join our band of interstellar heroes 'The Luminauts' on an adventure story as they release 10 gem-creatures by finding special keys nearby.

To play, simply scan the QR codes, displayed at locations nearby, to collect digital stamps. Choose what happens in the story, see the characters spring to life in augmented reality, and solve the mystery of the secret keys.

Houghton Hall Park
23rd July - 4th September 2022
HighStreetSafari.com




Nature Event

Central Bedfordshire **great lifestyles**

Bird of Prey Day

Sunday 14th August 11 am to 3pm
Free Entry!

- A selection of birds from the English School of Falconry
- 20 minute flying display
- Bird of prey trail*
- Owl Pellet Workshop*
- Craft & Produce stalls

*Chargable Activity



Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org

LOTTERY FUNDED

Buggy Exercise



When: Every Wednesday during term time

Time: 10am outside the Visitors Centre

Cost: £2

This is the perfect class if you have a baby, would like to meet other parents and get fit in the process! The park is a great sensory experience for your baby, just getting out in the fresh air and nature is proven to boost your mood and increase energy.

The class starts with a gentle jog/walk/stretch around the park followed by a circuit and sometimes boxing which is a great stress reliever!

To book on visit our website:

<https://www.houghtonhallpark.org/events/buggy-exercise>

Parkrun & Junior Parkrun



When: Parkrun every Saturday and Junior Parkrun every Sunday

Time: 9am

Cost: Free!

A free, weekly, timed 5k/2k walk/jog/run at 9am every Saturday & Sunday. Open to all ages and abilities. Organised entirely by volunteers. Friendly and fun.

If you would like to take part but have not run before you will need to register at www.parkrun.org.uk

Friends of Houghton Hall Park Kitchen Garden Plant & Produce Sale



When: Every Thursday in the Kitchen Garden and the Visitors Centre

Time: 9.30am to 2pm (times may vary)

Cost: Donations to Friends of Houghton Hall Park

Weather permitting, our popular plant and produce stall will be back in the Kitchen Garden every Thursday, the range we have to offer will slowly grow over the coming weeks, including any spare plants we have. Thank you to everyone who supports us, as all the money raised is invested back into the gardens through the Friends of

Houghton Hall Park group. The table is usually set up ready for 9.30am, giving us time to freshly pick and prepare everything earlier in the morning.

Monthly Photography Themes

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

July's theme is: 'The Kitchen Garden in Houghton Hall Park' we would love to see what you capture. Please send your submissions to hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

The images must be taken between 1st – 31st July 2022 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, in our monthly newsletter.

Please see our website for the full terms & conditions before you submit your work: www.houghtonhallpark.org/photography

July's theme was 'Wildflowers' in Houghton Hall Park, thank you to Ruth Jenkins and Colin Walsh for sending in these wonderful photos, what a variety of wildflowers we have!

Art & Culture Event

great lifestyles

July's Photography Theme

'The Kitchen Garden' at Houghton Hall Park

We look forward to seeing what you capture:

- Up to 5 entries per person
- Images must be taken in July
- 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: hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Deadline 31st July
- Full terms & conditions at our website

Find out more online at www.houghtonhallpark.org

LOTTERY FUNDED



Ruth Jenkins 4



Ruth Jenkins 5



Ruth Jenkins 3



Colin Walsh 2



Colin Walsh 1



Ruth Jenkins 2



Ruth Jenkins 1



Colin Walsh 3

Community Park Ranger Update

Words and photographs by Eleanor Evans, Community Park Ranger.

And like that June was gone in a flash!

I feel like the months are flying by. June has been a relatively quiet time within the park in terms of conservation. Due to the time of year tree and hedge work can't be done due to the risk to nesting birds. This means we've been helping in the gardens a fair amount as it is a very busy time for them what with everything growing and in this heat the amount of water they need is a never ending job!

Here is a great photo of volunteer Christine helping in the gardens collecting flowers for the produce sale.

This month one of the schools that volunteer on site have finished for the summer holidays. The group from Weatherfield Academy have done a great job of clearance work in various places around the park and really have done a fantastic job! Hopefully we'll see them again in September!

This month's Sunday volunteer session consisted of a litter pick and cutting back on some of the paths that had got rather over grown! The volunteers are fantastic and really make the park what it is and ensures that everyone can enjoy it! If you would like to get involved with the monthly Sunday volunteer tasks, or like to volunteer at any time please email me at: Eleanor.evans@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



If you regularly enter the park from the direction of the green you may have noticed that there was a fence panel which for some reason hadn't been painted when all the others had been. On one of the cooler days we've had this month I managed to paint it and now you can't tell that it never was!

Have a fantastic July, stay safe in the sun, don't forget to drink plenty of water, wear sun cream and try and stay out of the sun between 12 and 3!

Many thanks

Eleanor



Nature Notes

Words by Mark Bolan, Houghton Hall Park Volunteer.



Last month my nature notes was about the mullein caterpillar and how one of my verbascums had been savaged by them. Well despite all the apparent devastation, it has not only survived, but as you will see from the picture it has flowered profusely. It's an absolute blaze of yellow frequented by lots of bees.

The current spell of hot weather has prompted me to make the topic for my nature notes about providing drinking water for wildlife.

If like me you provide food and water for the wildlife in the garden all year round, you'll need to think about times when you are either busy or on holiday. Life cannot exist without water and if you want to maintain continuity during these periods, then I have a very simple and quick to make DIY project for you this month. You can also adapt it to keep plants in pots watered. You will only need a few items most of which you may already have: -

- A glass wine bottle, plastic bottles work, but being very flexible, tend to collapse.
- A tray, I used a garden gravel tray, but anything leak proof will do.
- Two pieces of wood. Off cuts are good.
- Garden wire or tape.
- A brick or stone to weigh the wood support down.

Make your bottle support by joining two pieces of wood together as in the photo. Then wire your bottle to it. You can use sticky tape but it won't last more than a couple of weeks. The bottle needs to be positioned so the top of the bottle, when in position, is just above the base of your tray.



It's best to set up your watering station where it will be in shade and birds in particular will feel safe using it. Put some water in the tray and fill the bottle. Put your finger over the top of the bottle and turn it upside down so the opening is covered by the water in the tray. As the water in the tray is used up it will be replenished from the bottle. You can adjust the depth of water you want to maintain in the tray by moving the bottle up or down. You can place a couple of pieces of brick or similar absorbent material in the tray so insects can get a drink without drowning.

For taking care of plants while you're away, set up a similar arrangement with a larger tray and stand your pots in the water. Alternatively arrange pots around a bucket of water with a rag wick from the water to each pot.

When it's hot you can help cool your bet pet by brushing it with a wet brush. Water when it evaporates creates a cooling effect. Dip the brush in a bowl of water which is at room temperature; never use chilled water, you don't want to shock your pet. Brush your pet in the normal way, occasionally dipping the brush in the water. Cats don't normally like getting wet, but when it was hot, I had a cat who loved being brushed in this way.

Finally, my bees have been very busy in the sunshine, so next month hopefully I should have news of a bumper honey harvest.

Until next time

Mark

Volunteer at Houghton Hall Park and Gardens



Plant of the Month – Bupleurum



A popular flowering plant with origins in Central Asia and Southern Europe, *Bupleurum* is a hardy annual (or short-lived perennial) herb that is closely related to fennel, dill and other umbel-forming plants. The plant's most notable quality is its foliage, which is perfoliate, meaning its leaves (measuring about 2.5–5 cm) completely circle the stem so the common name thoroughwax is derived from “throw-wax” (through-grow). With its bright-green foliage and small clusters of yellow blooms topping its multi-branched stems, *Bupleurum* is a favourite among floral artisans as a filler flower. It adds wonderful texture to and refreshing

colour to spring and summer arrangements so today, it is primarily used for ornamental purposes and is commonly featured in seasonal arrangements and bridal bouquets.

In ancient China and Europe, *Bupleurum* was prized in herbal medicines and used to treat a multitude of respiratory infections, digestive issues and other ailments

Irene Copperwheat
Houghton Hall Park Volunteer

What's the latest in the Gardens?

By Sue Beard, Houghton Hall Park Community Gardener

It has been a super busy month in the gardens, with little rain and lots of sun!

Our days have been spent planting out, harvesting, watering, and contending with the weeds!

The plants are growing well despite the intense heat at times and the limited rain we have had.



The cut flower bed is looking stunning and provides us with so many wonderful blooms for our talented volunteers to create beautiful floral displays.

A brilliant crop of strawberries, potatoes, beetroot, and carrots has kept us busy harvesting each week ready for our Thursday produce sale, and last week saw the grand opening of the newly built produce hut when the volunteers opened the gardens for carnival day.

As we said goodbye to the Jubilee bed it was with anticipation everyone waited to see what display came next. After much hard work and creativity, the seaside bed was finished last week, and is brilliant! Each day we see so many people taking photographs of the tiny little beach huts and the fisherman in his hut!



There are so many jobs to do at this time of year, so Eleanor our Park Ranger and her group of volunteers have been lending us a hand which has been so very welcome.

So, until next month I will finish by saying how lovely it has been to see so many people enjoying the sun and visiting the gardens, hopefully the nice sunny weather will last for the school holidays

Until next time, happy gardening!

Sue



Houghton Hall Park

Kitchen Garden Recipe

To use from - The Garden:
Strawberries



Strawberry Smoothie

Ingredients:

200g Strawberries
300ml Almond milk (any milk of choice but Almond gives a nice flavour)
6tbsp natural yogurt
1 banana
Handful of porridge oats
1 tbsp sunflower seeds (optional)

Method:

1. Tip all ingredients into a blender and blitz till smooth
2. Check consistency add more milk if too thick, half a banana if too thin.

Can be used as a breakfast smoothie or poured into lolly moulds and frozen as a healthy lolly.



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 hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Keep in touch

Facebook

HoughtonHallPark

Instagram

HoughtonHallPark

Twitter

@BedsCountryside

Website

www.houghtonhallpark.org

Email

hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Current Opening Times

Mon – Sun 9am to 4pm



Central Bedfordshire Council



heritage lottery fund



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