

Houghton Hall Park

August 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.

NEW!

Launching Family Discovery Events!

Join Jane of Wassledine to discover the wildlife and history of Houghton Hall Park through storytelling, activities and games! We are running our very first 2 discover events in August, these fun activities are aimed at children aged 4-10 years old and costs only £3 per participating child, with under 4s and over 10s free. There is a maximum capacity of 20 participating children and all children must be accompanied by an adult during the activity. The meeting point is inside the visitor centre to register and pay before heading out into the park and the activity will finish at 12pm.

Woodpecker Woodland Discovery

Become a bird detective, meet some remarkable trees and hear their stories!

Date: Friday 10th August

Time: 10:15am

Price: £3 per participating child

Meeting Point: Visitor Centre

Tales through Time

Become a history detective, follow the footstep clues to solve a mystery and claim your prize!

Date: Thursday 23rd August

Time: 10:15am

Price: £3 per participating child

Meeting Point: Visitor Centre

For more information or to book a place, please email hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

A great place to live and work.

XPLORER ...is back!

Join our fun, family challenge on **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.

NEW!

Pirate Pearl and the Big Blue Monster



Event: Outdoor theatre

Date: Saturday 18th August

Time: 1:30pm or 4pm

Price: Adult £10, Concession £8, Family £34 (£1 booking fee per ticket)

Meeting Point: Grass next to Visitor Centre

Ahoy there, land lubbers - hop aboard the good ship Mirabel and join our rollicking adventures on the high seas. Pirate Pearl lives with her crusty old crew, Barnacle the dog and Mr Puskins the cat. One day, Pearl finds a stowaway onboard ship. It's a baby monster, but, if you feed a baby monster, it grows into a BIG, CLUMSY MONSTER!

Will baby monster ever find his mummy or will Pearl be stuck with smelly bums and stinky nappies FOREVER?! With songs, puppets

and live music, this fantastic family show will have you singing along, dancing in the aisles and laughing till your sides split.

This is an outdoor show at Houghton Hall Park, set sail on this swashbuckling high sea adventure, especially for little pirates and their grown-ups! (ages 3+). Bring along a blanket, or low-backed seating, and don't forget to arrive early to bag the best spot. The show is suitable for ages 3+, it's charming, funny and very playful. This show is interactive – join in and have fun.

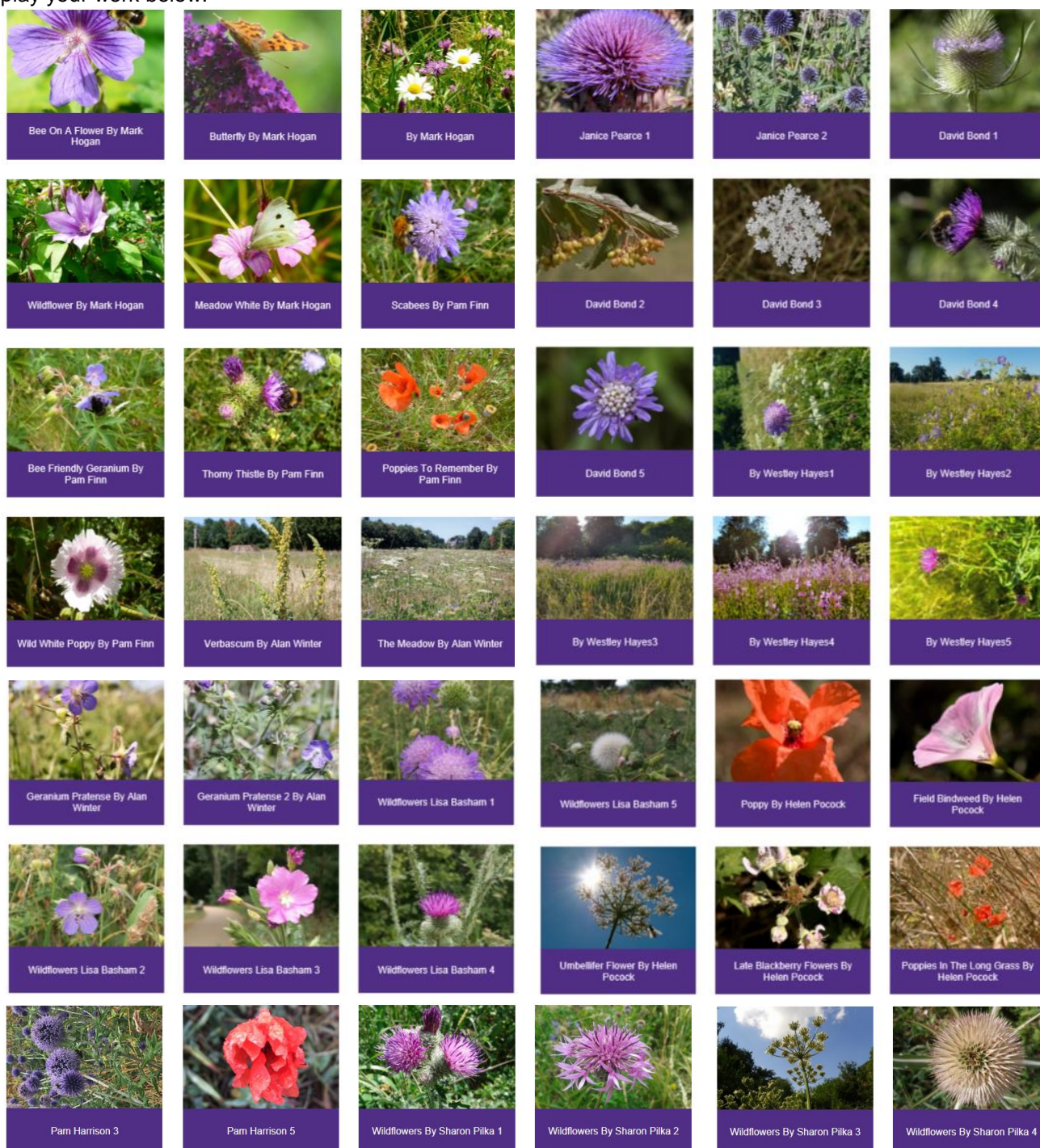
If it rains the show will go ahead, we provide waterproof shelter, so you stay nice and dry. To book please go to the Leighton Buzzard Theatre website, please note that booking fees are per ticket and a family ticket has four tickets.

Volunteer at the park this month

Take part in valuable conservation work at Houghton Hall Park with the Greensand Trust one Sunday a month! This month on **Sunday 19th August 10am-3pm**, the task is managing the vegetation that may have grown over the unsurfaced woodland paths and in the southern whip plantation and carrying out a short survey of the wildflower meadows, noting the later species and the different insects living on them. The meeting spot will be outside Houghton Hall House on the Redhouse Court (the green lane leading to the kitchen gardens entrance). Comfrey & Hogweed control. If you would like to come along, please email: hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk to let us know. This is open to everyone so please join us, we hope to see you there.

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, **August's theme is: Light in Houghton Hall Park**. Feel free to use your imagination for this month's theme and consider how you can capture light creatively, for example shadows, sun shining from behind a cloud, the light coming through gaps or leaves in the woodland areas, we can't wait to see what you send us! Please send your submissions to hhp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk. The images must be taken between 1st - 31st August 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 from July's theme: Wildflowers in Houghton Hall Park. We were overwhelmed with the amount of entries for this month, we thank you all for venturing out into the park on the recent hot summer days and capturing the beautiful wildflowers in the park, we are proud to display your work below:



Wildlife needs our help too in the summer heat!

By Mark Hogan

I don't know about you, but this weather is just too hot. It would just be nice to have a few days of rain, so everything could go green again and cool everything down. This hot weather is also affecting the birds and wildlife - if you have a bird bath in your garden make sure it is always full of fresh water, not just for the birds to drink from but so they can have a bath in to cool them down. The other thing that you could do is put a shallow bowl of water out near some bushes in the shade in the evening so that if a fox or hedgehog comes into your garden, they can get some water to drink.



The thing I really love at the moment is all the butterflies and bees on plants like Buddleia and Lavender, they simply love the colour purple. I have also come across a moth which flies around during the day, it is black with red wings but when it lands it has black wings with red spots, it is called a Six Spot Burnet Moth and to be honest I never knew they existed but having seen lots of them locally, they most certainly do.

It will soon be grasshopper season, even though you may see some in spring, they are usually more noticeable in late August and early September and they make a funny sound too, the grasshoppers song is created by them rubbing their legs about their wings. Grasshoppers feed on plants and are different from crickets

because crickets have shorter, stubby antennae. Grasshoppers are also larger, and they prefer to fly and jump away from danger, whereas crickets will often walk away.

As well as grasshoppers, all sorts of butterflies will start to appear, the bigger and more common ones like the Peacocks, Commas and Red Admirals and they have beautiful colourings. They can live from a few days to several months depending on the type of butterfly they are. You might see 3 types of White Butterfly too, the Cabbage White is the most common with the Small White and a delightful one called Green Veined, which has lines all over it and looks stunning in the sunshine. Keep your eye out for one of them.



With this warm weather, a lot of birds that do not usually come into our gardens are doing so, for a drink of water or just to see what they can find to eat. Carrion Crows and Magpies are the ones I have seen in my Mum's garden - sitting on the bird bath, having a drink and the Carrion Crow does something really unusual, it brings bread to the bird bath dips it into the water and then eats it, I guess it must soften the food so it makes it easier to eat but I must admit I have never seen that type of behaviour before.

If you have seen any unusual bird or animal behaviour in your garden or you have taken a nice picture that you are proud of and you want to show it off, then please send it to us at hbp@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk and if you want it identified - we will do so. Images could also be put in the next newsletter edition or even put up in the visitor centre. Go along and have a look, there is a nice Café which serves great food and drinks too.

NEW!

Butterfly Identification



Print off this activity sheet and visit the park to look out for these widespread species!



Peacock



**Small
Tortoiseshell**



Painted Lady



**Red
Admiral**



Comma



Ringlet



Meadow Brown



Gatekeeper



Wall



**Speckled
Wood**



Common Blue



Marbled White



Small Copper



**Green-veined
White**



Holly Blue



Large White



**Small
White**

**GOOD
LUCK!**



Brimstone
Rests with wings
closed

**We hope
you find
lots on
your walk!**

Keep in touch

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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