

# Friends of Wollaton Park

Members Newsletter / August 2024

## Notice of AGM

**The Friends of Wollaton Park AGM will be held on Wednesday 11th September in Wollaton Hall. All members welcome.**

- At 4:00 PM the Walled Garden will open for members for a look around.
- At 5.30 PM there will be a walk around the Formal Garden to highlight work undertaken by Volunteers.
- Hall doors open at 6:00 PM
- Short organ recital by Wendy Smith from the recently restored organ.
- Formal AGM proceedings will begin at 7:00 PM.
- Membership can be renewed at the AGM / Walled Garden.
- New members can join on the night.

The AGM is a time where we elect officials and committee members for the forthcoming year. Kevin Beswick, our current chair has indicated he would like to step down as chair. Nominations for the role or chair are now open, as are nominations for other committee members and roles. We are also keen to hear from anyone who may be interested in the Secretary role to organise meetings and take monthly meeting minutes.

Please contact us if you are interested in joining us.



## Membership – PayPal

In September, annual membership of £5 is due. You can pay in person at the AGM, or via direct bank transfer as previously. We can now also accept membership payments online. The simplest method is to point your phone camera at this QR code, which will take you to a PayPal page to donate now.



Alternatively, you can now go to the “Donate” page on the FoWP website and click the donate button – like the one below.



The Friends of Wollaton Park is a not-for-profit organisation that HMRC has recognised as a charitable company, allowing FoWP to reclaim 25% of the donation amount from HMRC under the Gift Aid scheme.

## Park News in Brief



- Green flag award retained.
- Splendour returns to the park in 2025.
- Repairs to the Hall roof have started.
- A reptile fossil dating back to the Jurassic era will be displayed in Wollaton Hall after being kept in storage for almost 30 years.

Details of each of these stories, and more, on our website: <https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/news/>



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Website: <https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/>

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# Friends of Wollaton Park

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## Volunteering Update

Saturday Conservation sessions saw volunteers' clear rhododendrons from encroaching on the path around the lake, tidy lodge 1, clear the path outside Mr Mans and hunt for water sprinkler heads in the formal garden lawn (40 out of 42 located!)



The sensory garden team are actively looking for new volunteers to maintain the Sensory Garden. They meet most Saturday mornings from 10.00 to 12.00.

The Walled Garden Project is looking for Volunteer Bricklayers to help with rebuilding, pointing, replacing worn bricks, repairing walls, and restoration work.

For more information in volunteering activities undertaken see our activity blogs:

<https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/news/>



## Volunteering Opportunities

Our activities are all run by volunteers. We need your help...

- Walled Garden (Tuesdays and Thursdays)
- Formal Garden (Wednesdays)
- Sensory Garden (Most Saturdays)
- Hall and Park Tasks (Ad-hoc Fridays. Members only)
- Conservation Tasks (3rd Saturday of the month)
- Litter Picking (Last Saturday of the month)

For more information see our website:

<https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/volunteering/>

## Formal Garden

Volunteers, supported by FoWP have worked with the park staff over the last 4 years on the maintenance of the Formal Garden. Due to council budget controls, some adjustments to the usual planting have had to be made this year. The vibrant summer bedding displays you might be accustomed to seeing will be a little less extensive. The border along the camellia house has been planted with cottage-garden style perennials but they will not mature until next year. The other formal beds still contain our spring bedding and being made to look the best they can with maintenance from the Wednesday volunteers. Discussions are underway with Park Rangers to explore alternative planting options for the future. FoWP and the Council are committed to keeping this space a source of beauty and interest throughout the year.



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## Farewells...

Message from Kevin Beswick, Chair of FoWP...

As you may know the Friends of Wollaton Park is in its 11th year and in that time we have always had an active committee group. Three members who have been on the committee from those early days are Moyra Cornish, Peter Forster, and Mark Jacobs. They have decided to step down this year and I want to pay tribute to all three.



**Moyra** has spent countless hours selling cards to raise funds, helped at many volunteer sessions, organised a fashion show and helped with the Wollaton Arts Festival. Moyra and her late husband Michael were instrumental in laying the

foundations and making the group the success it is today.

**Mark**, a former chair of the group has applied his skills to collecting photographs and making the cards, helping at tasks sessions, and joining in at the Walled Garden Group. Mark also contributed significantly to the Wollaton Arts Festival. He has been partly responsible for our healthy bank balance over the years.



Finally, **Peter**, a former chair of the group, has given freely of his time, knowledge, and experience as a former member of staff at Wollaton Hall. He has led informative tours of both the Walled Garden and the Hall helping to raise funds for our group.



He is passionate about all things connected to the park regularly voicing his opinions to ensure that the park is a

better place for all. However, he has devoted most of his energy to encouraging the community of volunteers in the Walled Garden and it would not be what it is today if it was not for his efforts and good humour.

It goes without saying that these three will leave a legacy and a void as they step down but I know they will be supporting us from the wings. It has been my privilege to work with them all these years and, on behalf of the Friends of Wollaton Park committee, I want to formally thank them for their efforts and wish them well for the future.

## Deer

New research from University College Dublin reveals that feeding deer is causing serious health and behavioural issues for these beautiful animals. Key findings show:

- **Health Problems:** Deer are developing digestive issues and even testing positive for human viruses like Omicron.
- **Behavioural Changes:** Feeding disrupts their natural habits, causing stress and danger for both deer and park visitors.
- **Physical Impact:** Stags are growing weaker antlers and does are birthing larger fawns, posing risks for their health.

Other research has shown why feeding deer ultimately causes the deer to die from being unable to eat due to rotten teeth.

More:

<https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/wollaton-park-wildlife/deer/>



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## Wollaton Walled Garden Project

The Walled Garden Project continues at pace, with an increasing number of opportunities for members and the public to explore the site. This has led to increase activity in garden maintenance tasks such as weeding and grass cutting. Additionally new signage has been added.



## Summer Fair

The weekend of July 20/21 saw the Walled Garden host a summer fair, welcoming over 1,000 visitors. Here are selection of the comments received:

- “The work the volunteers have put into this is amazing;”
- “Absolutely loved it. Found the dead hedges fascinating;”
- “Thank you to all involved - really appreciate your unpaid voluntary time;”
- “The cake was delicious too!”
- “The scale of the change this year is breathtaking.”

If you missed the open day, there will be another chance to see the garden in September – dates will be published on our website once confirmed.

The garden will be open for self-guided tours on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> for the Heritage Open Days events.



For more about the Walled Garden Project, see our website:

<https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/walled-garden/>

## FoWP Need You...

FoWP is run and organised by a small, dedicated group of individuals. We meet at 6PM on the first Wednesday of the month, with representatives of the park management as well as the local councillors.

- Can you help us with social media – we need someone to set up and run an Instagram channel for us.
- We need a University / Student representative to open communication with this vital group of potential volunteers. Please can you help?
- Can you take minutes of our meetings?

There is lots we can do to support the park – our main limiting factor are people – if you cannot donate some of your time, we will find a way of using your skills!



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## Ornamental Pond

Work is progressing on Phase 1 of the restoration of the Ornamental Pond, in collaboration with Wollaton Historical and Conservation Society and the Parks team. This phase involves identifying restoration options and scoping the costs involved.



To take the project beyond Phase 1, we need a volunteer Project Manager and need help from someone with experience of crowd-sourced fundraising and / or grant application. If you can help, please get in touch.

## Forest Bathing

We are keen to re-introduce a schedule of regular informal and informative walks in the park.

In July, as part of the Wollaton Community Festival, Helen ran two Forest Bathing walks as an introduction to the art of Shinrin Yoku. During the walk attendees learnt about the calming and health benefits of spending time connecting with nature and immersing yourself in the park / forest, using all your senses as a way of improving wellbeing and helping relax from the stresses of everyday life.

If you have a passion for something in the park and could lead an informal walk in the park to share knowledge with other FoWP members, please get in touch.

## Mystery Boxes

The mystery boxes dotted around the park are part of a scientific study to unlock the secrets of Saproxyllic beetles.



More information on the website:

<https://friendsofwollatonpark.org.uk/2024/mystery-boxes/>

## FoWP Contacts

- Chair:  
Kevin Beswick
- Secretary:  
Helen Mitchem
- Website / News:  
Colin Robbins



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