

Friends of Valley Gardens

May 2022

No 35

Progress in the Gardens

This would probably be quite a good time to assess the impact the Friends have had on the gardens since our formation three years ago. We have certainly had our successes. The display of spring flowering bulbs in the area below the art gallery and the old gardens around Londesborough Lodge have been a delight this spring. The shrub borders near the Crescent have filled out and looked very colourful last year. However they do need a tidy up and that will be the focus of our next work session. The beds below Woodend are looking a lot better and entering the gardens through the archway is a much more interesting experience. The small rockery near the urn bed was very attractive this spring and should provide splashes of colour throughout the summer.

We also persuaded the parks team to restrict weedkiller use to just the paths. Not spraying the soil has allowed plants such as windflowers, aconites and foxgloves to re-establish and for the snowdrops and scilla to spread.

The bird table has been a success and there certainly seems to be an increase in the number of different types of bird visiting the gardens. I've spotted House Sparrows, Blue Tits, Great Tits, Coal Tits, Long Tailed Tits, Chaffinches, Goldfinches, Robins, Wrens and of course Pigeons, Magpies and Crows. Butterflies seem to be more numerous and I am certainly seeing more bees.

However not everything has gone according to plan.

More about that on page 2.



***Photographs from the top
Windflowers below the Art Gallery
The small rockery
Daffodils near Londesborough Lodge***

Work Parties

Sunday May 15th

Sunday June 5th

Sunday June 26th

Meet under the bridge -10am

In mid March three members helped the park staff put in eight fruit trees next to the wall bordering, Park Dene, the Georgian House. There were only five of us at the work session in late March but we got through a tremendous amount of work. Litter was collected, wildflower plants put in, the small rockery was tidied, hydrangeas pruned, the wildflower area prepared and seeded and soil removed from the path near the grotto.

In April eight members tidied the Woodend border, removed vast amounts of wild garlic from the shade border and again collected litter.



Progress in the Park – Part 2

One of our most recent projects was the long shade border below Londesborough Lodge. Last Autumn we filled the bed with a lot of perennials we thought would do well in the shady conditions. Unfortunately they did not get the best start as first of all they were covered with leaves as the paths were cleared and then when they started to grow in the spring, the wild garlic threatened to overwhelm them. Much of the top growth of the wild garlic has been removed and the plants that remain should now grow on strongly but any plants we put in this spring will need to be well established specimens capable of out-competing the garlic. We are looking at Hellebores, Astrantia, Cranesbill Geraniums, Filipendula and Rogersia, all of which the RHS recommend for shady areas.



***Photographs from the top
Hardy guards the equipment***

The circular beds

Sue and Jane tackle the wild garlic