



Skylarks

Winter is fast approaching but please come along to the important General Meeting and then the January Jaunt where there will be hot mulled wine and mince pies to keep you warm. All the latest news from the Friends of the Wick Country Park is here.

A Message from the Chair

Dear Friends

Sadly this will be my last Chair's message. After 12 years on the committee it is time to move onto pastures new. I have had a wonderful time working on projects to benefit the park, fund raising, organising events, maintaining the pavilion garden and building up the membership from 19 to over 119 households. But of course I have not done this alone; there has been the Ranger Mark, a great committee and you the 'Friends' that have made it possible, and such rewarding fun. Nothing worth doing comes without its challenges and we have had a few, but that only adds to the immense sense of achievement that we as a group have the right to feel.

But now the future of the Friend's group is looking very insecure, unless the remaining committee can attract 4-5 new members to assist them. So we are calling a General Meeting at 7 pm on 13th November in the Pavilion. Please come along meet the Ranger and the committee, ask questions and make suggestions. Help us plan and construct a positive future for the Friends of the Wick Country Park so we can carry on our valuable work, which benefits both the community and wildlife.

Finally I would like to thank Mark and all the committee who have put up with me for so long. We started as colleagues and I now consider you all as dear friends. I would like to make a special mention of Alaric and Dorothy who are also leaving the committee and who have given so much of their time and support to the Friends.

Nikki, Chairperson

****IMPORTANT NOTICE****

**GENERAL MEETING regarding
the future of the
Friends of the Wick Country
Park**



**Monday 13th November 7pm
in the Pavilion
Tresco Way, Wickford, SS12 9GP**



Everyone welcome

**Meet the committee and help
decide how the Friends Group can
continue its valuable work
next year**



Refreshments provided

For more information contact Nikki
nikkigibson621@btinternet.com

General Meeting on Monday 13th November 2017 at 7pm

Come to the open general meeting for everyone who thinks the park and the Friends are worth supporting. Meet the committee, find out what needs to be done to keep the organisation going after January. Ask questions and put forward suggestions.

Do the local community want a Friends group?

Do they value the way the park is developing?

Do they want Paws in the Park, Nature Quest, Kite Festival or other smaller events?

Do they want the Pavilion garden to be maintained?

Your support would be very much appreciated!

Free Membership for 2018

FREE

Due to the transition period within the Friends of the Wick Country Park it has been decided to not take any payment for next year's membership. At the moment our main priority is the future of the FOWCP!

PLEASE COME ALONG TO OUR NEW YEAR EVENT IN THE WICK COUNTRY PARK



The January Jaunt

*A winter ramble led by the Park Ranger
(1-1½ hours)*

*Meet at the Pavilion, Wick Country Park
(If using sat nav, please use post code SS12 9GP)*

Sunday 21st Jan. 2018 2pm

followed by



Mince Pies and Mulled Wine

then the **AGM of the FOWCP**



Everyone welcome to all or part of
this **free** event

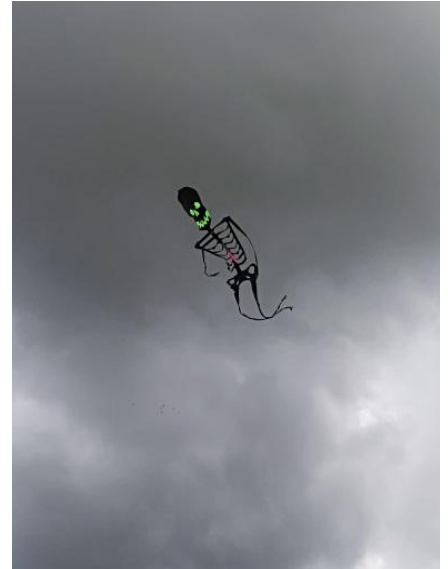
for more details phone Nikki on 01268 734293

or website www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk

'The Kite Festival & Classic Car Display - 2017'

This year we were very lucky to have two junior reporters attend the Kite Festival and Classic Car Display and to provide the following report:

I am Erin, a 10 year old girl and I went to the Kite Festival with my 8 year old brother Harry and we were both reporters. We asked people questions and this is what they said. Here is a picture of me interviewing someone and one of my brother with his new kite. I don't know who the skinny guy is!



Helpers:

- I am enjoying today, the food is good and I am meeting lots of nice people.
- I have been a helper with the crafts for 6 years. I really enjoy it because it is always different. My favourite kite is the skeleton.
- I enjoy helping a lot; my favourite part is helping the children with the aeroplane fridge magnets.
- Everyone is having a good time, 170 kites have been made and all for free. It is a very friendly event, in a lovely park. We have been very lucky with the weather.

Visitors:

- I like the crafts and that we can bring our dog. My favourite classic car is the Austin Healey.
- I heard about the event on the internet. My favourite part is being out in the fresh air and sunshine.
- I give it 10/10!
- Brilliant! Making and flying the Kite was great, so was the ice cream! I'd definitely come again.
- It is nice to lie on the grass, relaxing and watching the kites.
- I planned to come for an hour and I stayed all day.

Tree House Nursery: We are helping the children to make mud faces and glittery elephant masks. I like seeing everyone enjoying themselves.

Classic Car Club: I am very impressed that the kites the children made fly so well, they are better than the one I bought.

Park Warden: My job is to meet people and patrol the park. I have to tell people what they can and can't do. It is nice to see people enjoying themselves.

Ice Cream Van: I am having a lovely time, it all looks like fun. I've not been before, but I would come again.

(Written by Erin and Harry, FOWCP Junior Reporters)

'The Bat Walk 2017'

Having had a successful bat walk earlier in the year, it was decided to go for a repeat but on this occasion, there were even more numbers, such was the popularity of the event, with a magnificent 23 people registering for the walk.

We were met by Ella of the Essex Bat Group at the gates of the Wick Country Park who gave us an overview of the bats in the UK along with the work the Bat Group carry out.

Ella then went on to explain about the bats we would probably expect to find around the park, the Pipistrelle, either Common or Soprano and maybe a Noctule bat. There are 17 breeding species of bat in the UK with 10 of these species being found around Essex. Fake bats were handed around so that we could gauge the weight of a living bat, which was very light.

Part of the work the Essex Bat Group do is to take in injured bats and attempt to nurse them back to good health, not an easy feat. When injured bats come in, they are fed "soup" which is basically the inside of mealworms with the head and tail being removed. Ella had three injured bats in a box so that we could all get up close and see what cute creatures bats really are. They look really tiny but when on the wing much larger.



Having been given plenty of information we set off around the park towards the Alder pond, stopping short before the bridge, arms in the air, looking like a retro 70's rock concert but instead of lighters, electronic bat detectors !! With the setting of the detectors around 50kHz success, we picked up the quick clicking sound from around the whole area of Pipistrelle bats but could not locate anything else. We moved into the upper field, along the top and down to the main track, then turning left before stopping by the side of the lake. We again managed to pick up Pipistrelle's, flying above the hedgerows and around the edge of the lake. We moved on around the park towards the pavilion and back for one last attempt at the Alder pond but this time all the bats had either moved on or gone to roost, probably the former as Ella said that bats need to catch on average 3,000 insects a night to survive.

A highly interesting and informative evening was enjoyed by all with thanks to Ella for her time in leading the walk and making the experience even more pleasurable by greatly improving our knowledge about bats with all the facts she had at her fingertips.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the work of the Essex Bat Group they can be found at the following:

Essex Bat Group website: www.essex-batgroup.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/EssexBatGroup

Twitter: @EssexBatGroup

(Written by Paul Clarke)



WICK COUNTRY PARK EVENTS 2017



DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
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Usually the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month	Wick Weeders	Starting at 1.30 pm (see the website & posters for confirmation of the dates). Help is always needed to maintain these gardens. Equipment is provided.
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For more information on the above please contact Nikki Gibson on 01268 734293 or email nikkigibson621@btinternet.com The latest information on events throughout the year can be found on our website: www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk A full programme of the 2017 events will be published soon.

Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:
Nikki Gibson - Chairperson/Membership Secretary, Richard Rowsell - Vice Chair, Dorothy Cundy - Treasurer, Marie Singleton - Secretary, Alaric Cundy - Webmaster
Committee Members: Ali Riley, Christine Lee, Peter Bates

Basildon Borough Council Countryside Services:
Mark Williams - Countryside Ranger, Telephone: 01268 562921
Rob Baker - Parks and Countryside Supervisor, Telephone: 01268 553992

Neighbourhood Policing Team: Telephone 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503



Please do not forget the January Jaunt, an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon in the new year:-

