Friends of Jesmond Dene Newsletter

Spring 2017 **Number 79**

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Postal address: 'Friends of Jesmond Dene', c/o Ouseburn Parks' Visitor Centre, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle, NE7 7BQ.

Editorial

Important Announcement from Newcastle City Council on the future of our parks

Have YOUR say about the future of Newcastle's Parks and Countryside sites!

Over the next three-months we (the Council) will be delivering a public engagement programme to help shape and develop the council's future vision for parks. The council is committed to improve the way it delivers parks services, keeping them in public ownership and free to use. We want to fully involve local people, community groups and partners in the future delivery of the service. We have been working with the National Trust to help work out a way forward, in particular researching the possibility of transferring the operation, delivery and maintenance of a large proportion of the city's parks to a new charitable trust. The consultation begins on 13 February and runs through until 21 April. There will be two ways to get involved online through www.letstalknewcastle.co.uk and www.letstalkparks.co.uk

You can also drop in to any of the consultations, the one in the Dene is on **Saturday 11 March at the Visitor Centre from 11 – 3pm** and information about the other can be found in the links above.

Sarah Capes, Park Ranger

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I urge all FOJD to make their feelings known to Newcastle City Council about the future of the parks and countryside sites. Please pass on the information to friends and relatives.
The AGM will be held on Sunday 14th May and this will include the results of the 2017 annual 'Discover the Dene' photography competition.

Clive Gerrard Chairman Friends of Jesmond Dene

FOJD Christmas Raffle

The FOJD and Volunteer Rangers Christmas Raffle raised £529 for our funds. Many thanks to everyone who bought a ticket which sold for £1 each and, thanks too to all of the people who donated the prizes: - Jesmond Dene House Hotel, Joe Risi from Millfield House Cafe, Dene's Deli, and National Trust. Congratulations to all our winners including Mrs. D. from Heaton who won first prize. The full list of winners is held by the Secretary FOJD.

Annual General Meeting

Will be on Sunday 14th May at 14:00hrs, in the Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene. The photograph competition will be held again this year. These will be judged once more by professional photographer Neil Atkinson.

Neil has agreed to run the 'Discover the Dene' photo competition again this year. To promote the event, he will organise and run a 2 hour mass photo walk in the dene prior to the event. Entries could be done via his Facebook (parents responsible for children). Neil will put some ideas on the page to start the process. He suggested that the prize for each category could be the same – Street Safari workshops. Two categories – aged 16 and under and aged over 16. Closing date for entries is 30 April.

At the AGM:-

Officers will be confirmed (please see last page).
Financial accounts will be available.
Projects update.
Date and time of next AGM to be arranged.

A Patron For Friends Of Jesmond Dene

We asked the members for suggestions and/or thoughts on the idea of having a patron. – Opinions to be in by January 2017. Feedback was very limited and only one suggestion was received.

Maggie Dowman FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Big Garden Bird Watch 28 January 2017
Friends of Jesmond Dene and RSPB Newcastle Local Group

This is the third time our joint enterprise has tried to interest the public in counting garden birds, either in the Dene or at home and add to the half a million people taking part last year. January doesn't seem optimum for a 'standing about' activity outdoors, but the count is in its 38th year and The RSPB is observing trends in wildlife populations. Birds are more visible in winter too. On the other hand, late January tends to be cold or wet or both, as on our chosen day. The following day was fine and sunny of course and the Dene thronged with visitors.

The shelter of the Visitor Centre allowed families to make bird boxes and feeders. The Nature Area and its ponds and feeders enabled 30 or more people to watch birds closely, encouraged by Friends and RSPB members. The development of the hillside here will benefit birds and bird watchers too. The timed walks allowed us to share sightings of the birds that winter in the Dene.

All the walkers were pleased to see kingfishers skimming above the Ouseburn, as well as goldcrest and nuthatch.

A Nuthatch

The day's bird list: blue tit, great tit, coal tit, long tailed tit, chaffinch, siskin, goldcrest, wren, nuthatch, robin, blackbird, dunnock, song thrush, mistle thrush, wood pigeon, carrion crow, magpie, jackdaw, moorhen, mallard and kingfisher.

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Kingfisher

Thank you to all the Friends and RSPB members who volunteered and made it happen on the day and to Sarah for her unflappable oversight, support and encouragement.

Jeff Mason (RSPB)

Friends Of Jesmond Dene Committee Open Meetings

As friends, you know that funds are obtained from an annual subscription of £5 per person (or family) augmented by donations and bequests. This money is used in a variety of ways, such as new tree planting, working on the archive collection, tools, publicity and much more.

Meetings are open and everyone is welcome to put forward their own ideas. It is also a chance to see the committee in action and we welcome people interested in taking part. Currently there are still two vacancies (See words from Chairman). Anyone interested is welcome to attend meetings before deciding if supporting Jesmond Dene in this way is for them.

Thursday	**9 March**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Tuesday	**25 April**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Sunday	**14 May (AGM)**	**2 pm**	**Classroom**
Tuesday	**6 June**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Tuesday	**18 July**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Tuesday	**12 September**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Tuesday	**31 October**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Tuesday	**5 December**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**
Tuesday	**23 January 2018**	**2 pm**	**Meeting Room**

Maggie Dowman FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

FOJD: WE NEED YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

As in the last Newsletter you can help the Friends of Jesmond Dene by becoming a member and contributing financially but you can also contribute in other ways. Some Friends contribute by joining the Volunteer Rangers and providing active support to the Council Rangers who work in the Dene. Volunteer Rangers work under their guidance to look after the Dene by tidying up areas which have become overgrown or where trees or shrubs have been damaged or litter has been left. We clear paths and deal with obstructions and we deal with invasive plants like Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. We also undertake Projects like the Nature Area or the Old Mill Project, and we make a variety of things to sell.

Most of these activities are arranged to a schedule set by the Council Rangers but if you prefer to work when it suits you, you may prefer another scheme managed by the Council Rangers, the 'Adopt-a-Plot' scheme.
We need a wide range of different interests, knowledge and skills and there are lots of ways you can help.
To join the FOJD contact **Keith Pringle,** at the address on the last page of this newsletter**.**
To join the Jesmond Dene Volunteer Rangers or if you are interested in the Adopt-a-Plot scheme please contact Sarah on 0191 2650564 or email sarah.capes@newcastle.gov.uk

L**ynda Fean,** Treasurer FOJD, and Volunteer Ranger

In this instance we are particularly looking for people who know about:

- **Electronics:** skills in electronic design and construction, both analogue and digital. In particular innovative re-purposing of consumer level electronics to support audio/visual media. Contact clive@kelso.demon.co.uk

Skills in use of the above equipment very welcome

JESMOND DENE HISTORY

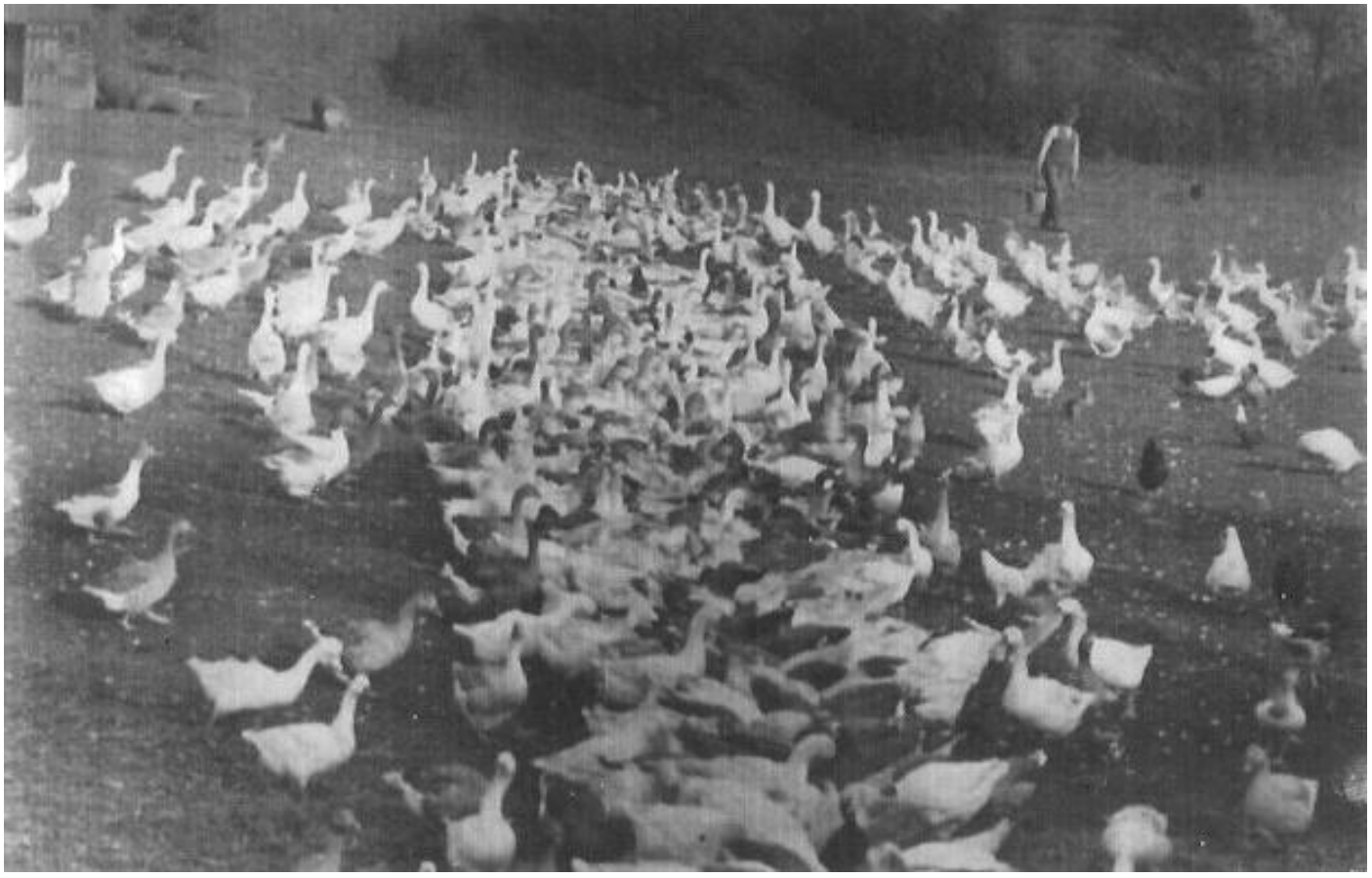
You can contact us and/or send your memories for possible inclusion in the Newsletter: - **c/o FOJD Archives Project, Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Millfield House, Jesmond Dene.**

Thomas Richardson, Poultry Manager

According to the 1911 census Thomas Richardson lived with his family in Heaton Dene Cottage, Jesmond Dene. It seems likely that Heaton Dene Cottage was part of Heaton Dean House which was the home of William Colman, poultry and game dealer.

Thomas was the manager of the poultry farm for 36 years, and going by newspaper accounts at the time of his death he was a remarkable man of many other talents. Although his day to day work involved looking after the birds on the farm, he also demonstrated a strong artistic side to his nature. He was able to make and play violins or fiddles and liked to play reels and other Scottish dances. Thomas was also a notable local poet and wrote about Jesmond Dene as shown below.

O my heart's round the heath o my own little home,
The rustic and humble; I've no wish to roam;
From the sweet flowin' burn, wi' its banks high and green,
That sings to me daily in Old Jesmond Dene.



Thomas Richardson feeding the geese circa possibly 1920's

Thomas is described as 'A modest, unassuming man, he loved to pass his days in touch with nature, and as so many have said, he died as he lived one on natures gentlemen'.

Yvonne Shannon FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Membership FOJD

- Membership subscriptions are set at a flat rate of £5 p.a. for households. This is paid by standing order. Our Membership Secretary is available if you need help or advice on how to join - contact **Keith Pringle,** FOJD at the address on the last page of this newsletter. Details you will need to set up the standing order are the bank details for the Friends bank - The Sort Code / Account Number you will need are **30 93 55 / 01464356**. Would you also please ask them to assign a payment reference of your own full name (forename and surname) so that we can correctly identify your payment.

- The Newsletter is available online and the Friends' website is the primary news source for both members and the general public. We will also be sending the newsletter to all FOJD who have given us their email address. Printed copies of newsletters are still available for collection at the Ouseburn Parks' Visitor Centre.

- FOJD has a presence on Facebook. Please join the group to share thoughts and/or photographs of the Dene. Please like our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofJesmondDene and/or join our Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/757773184342507/, to find out about future events in the Dene.

- If you have concerns or suggestions, please contact us using the form on the website at http://www.jesmonddene.org.uk/?page_id=2 or write to us at Friends of Jesmond Dene - Newsletter Feedback C/O Ouseburn Parks' Visitor Centre, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle NE7 7BQ.

Plant Stall at the monthly Food Market on Armstrong Bridge

The Friends of Jesmond Dene have been running a Plant Stall at the Food Market on Armstrong Bridge since May 2016. It takes place on the third Saturday of each Month and lasts from 10am till 3pm.
We have been selling plants at the Visitors Centre for a few months but at the Food Market, the Friends run all aspects of the stall. Volunteers make all the arrangements for the stall, including providing good quality plants and various other items for sale, setting up and running the stall and responding to queries about the Friends and events happening in Jesmond Dene and other Newcastle Parks.

Please come along and support our stall. If you would like to help with the stall or provide plants, please contact Lynda Fean (email: fean@blueyonder.co.uk)

Lynda Fean, Treasurer FOJD, and Volunteer Ranger

Planting Apple Trees in Coleman's Field, Jesmond Dene

Some of the trees in Jesmond Dene have reached the end of their natural lives and the Friends of Jesmond Dene have a Project to replace them with native trees like Oak and Lime.
There were also areas of fruit trees in the Dene, such as Cherry Walk, but most of these have been neglected and are no longer productive. We would like to replace some of these trees too.
We want to encourage local people, particularly young people, to become involved in growing and harvesting local fruit.
With support from Jesmond Community Orchard, last year, we applied for a Community Trees Fund grant from the Tree Council and we were successful.
As a new approach in this Project, we are working with our nearest local school, Heaton Manor, specifically with their Community Crew. They helped the Volunteer Rangers to clear the site for the trees and prepare the holes for planting. Then, on the 29th November 2016 (during National Tree Week), with a little help and guidance, the Community Crew planted the trees, fed and watered them, and secured them with stakes. We all had great fun.

So, we now have four large standard apple trees, along the edge of Coleman's Field. Their varieties are Ellison's Orange, Court Perdu Plat, James Grieve and Laxton's Superb, all eating apples. We will label them and indicate when the fruit should be ripe for picking.
We run family events throughout the year, and hope to include some apple events in future. These might include harvest events such as apple pressing – as Jesmond Community Orchard does every October on Apple Day.
We hope to continue to develop our work with fruit trees in Jesmond Dene. If you would like to get involved in this project, please contact Lynda Fean, Treasurer FoJD (email: fean@blueyonder.co.uk)

Lynda Fean, Treasurer FOJD, and Volunteer Ranger

Jesmond Dene Volunteer Rangers Update

Autumn and winter tasks

Path clearing The Volunteer Rangers spent several sessions scraping mud and leaves from the paths in Jesmond Dene as well as tidying the edges where grass and weeds have encroached. When the leaves have lain on the paths for a while they tend to form a layer that superglues itself to the surface and is very difficult to scrape off. We spent several sessions at the top end of the Dene near the quarry and the picnic field, as well as in Paddy Freemans. We also did some work clearing paths in Heaton Park, working with the Friends of Heaton Park.

Two of the paths at the north end of Jesmond Dene, near the lodge were covered by a thick layer of mud that had been washed down the bank by escaping water from a sewer. It took a lot of hard work to shovel away the mud and make the paths passable.

Cutting back shrubs that were encroaching on paths in the Dene, Paddy Freemans, Heaton Park and Walker Riverside Park - a task that takes place over most of the winter months.

We had a couple of sessions in September cutting back laurel bushes on the far side of the river from Fisherman's Lodge to allow more light into the undergrowth.

Cleaning up the river Debris is often carried into Jesmond Dene from further up-river, especially after heavy rainfall. The debris often gets caught upon rocks or against the buttresses of bridges and can build up into quite a large pile. In these cases we have river clearing sessions, where Volunteer Rangers in waders go into the river to clear the blockages while other Volunteer Rangers on the bank haul the debris ashore with ropes and dispose of it. It's amazing how much stinky rubbish one session in the river can produce. One definitely needs a shower after taking part in one of these sessions.

Clearing fallen trees and chipping High winds during the winter have caused quite a few trees to come down. In October we had a chipping session next to the Quarry to chip the timber from a fallen tree that we had stacked there during the summer.

A tree fell across the foot bridge behind Pets Corner at the bottom of Cherry Tree Walk, damaging the hand rails and causing the bridge to be closed for several weeks. We spent a couple of sessions clearing the wood away. This added to our supply of logs which will be split, put into bags, allowed to dry and eventually be sold.

We recently spent a session with Friends of Heaton Park clearing away a poplar tree near the dog-walking area that had blown over. Mike, the Ranger, cut up the larger pieces with a chainsaw and we fed the resulting timber into a chipper where it was reduced to wood chip.

Using the chipper, Heaton Park

Part of a beech tree and two yew trees also came down in the area of the Dene behind Jesmond Dene House. These blocked a path and had to be cut up by a Ranger using a chainsaw. Because the site wasn't easily accessible for a chipper, the Volunteer Rangers hid the smaller pieces in the thick undergrowth and loaded the larger pieces onto the Rangers' truck to be added to our timber store.

Splitting and bagging logs. Every year we seem to get several trees blown down in storms and much of the smaller timber from these can be saved and sold for logs. The Volunteer Rangers have a log store where they save the timber to allow it to dry and periodically they split the timber into suitably-sized logs and bag them ready for sale in the Visitors Centre.

Planting apple trees. Some apple tree saplings were obtained late last year and it was decided to plant them next to Coleman's Field. Spaces were cleared by the Volunteer Rangers between the footpath and the eastern wall, and school children were invited to plant the saplings in the spaces indicated. We hope that the trees will prosper.

Volunteers at work

Cleaning out the pond near Fisherman's Lodge. The outlet of the pond periodically gets blocked with leaves and debris. Now and then it is necessary to take some drainage rods up to the pond and clear the outlet until the water is running freely into the river

Bird box kits and bird feeder kits have been made in large numbers. These are for sessions that Sarah often holds for children to fit together their own bird feeders, with a little adult guidance. The bird boxes are pre-drilled to make it easier for the children to screw them together.

Christmas preparations. Leading up to Christmas, Sarah, the Ranger, had the Volunteer Rangers collecting cuttings of yew, holly and other greenery to be used in wreath-making sessions. The volunteers also made some reindeer kits from spare timber for sessions in which children could put together a Christmas reindeer.

The Volunteers spent some **sessions at Havannah and Big Waters Nature Reserves** tidying up paths and repairing board-walk paths. A session was spent thinning out some of the woodland by removing trees marked by the Rangers. These were subsequently chipped. These sessions provide a nice change of working in an urban environment as opposed to working in the Dene.

Wild flower meadow. A couple of years ago an area alongside the Coast Road was prepared as a wild-flower meadow. This involved raking the growth from the previous year and removing it so as not to provide a high level of nutrients for wildflowers. When this was done new wild-flower seeds were sown. Every year we need to rake off the dead growth and remove it to maintain a low nutrient level.

The Nature Area. The Nature Area, across the river from Pets Corner, always needs a tidy-up at the end of winter. This involves cleaning out the gutters of the shelter, putting down new chippings on some of the paths, clearing weeds from the pond, weeding and cutting back around the wildflower meadow. There are several bird boxes with CCTV cameras in them, and these had to be cleaned out and the cameras checked and reset. Repairs sometimes need to be made to the electrics that supply cameras to transmit pictures to the Visitors Centre.

Woodland improvement. The Friends of Jesmond Dene provided funding for the Volunteer Rangers to begin a project to improve the quality of the woodland on the hillside next to the Nature Area. This meant that some trees were felled and the Volunteer Rangers have been digging up the brambles that thickly cover the ground in that area. In the autumn we will plant smaller native trees such as hazel, hawthorn and rowan along with some wildflower bulbs including blue bells, daffodils, ransoms and snowdrops.

Heaton Park weekends. Several weekend sessions were arranged in conjunction with Friends of Heaton and Armstrong Parks in which the Volunteer Rangers helped them to tidy up Heaton Park by cutting back shrubs, path clearing, clearing blocked drains and litter-picking.

Clearing brambles near the Nature Area

Dave Poste FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Please see up to date activities on the FOJD Facebook page

Please like our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofJesmondDene and/or join our Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/757773184342507/, to find out about future events in the Dene.

Woodland Improvement Project

The Friends have provided funding for the Volunteer Rangers to begin a new project to improve the quality of the woodland above the Nature Area.

The original Nature Area project was always planned to provide three broad habitats for wildlife – the pond and the meadowland were built within the enclosed part of the Nature Area. The adjacent haugh next to the riverside plus the triangle of hillside above the Nature Area were planned to accommodate the third - the woodland habitat.

Over many years, the existing hillside vegetation has become dominated by a poor mix of trees and ground cover. Self-seeded none native sycamore dominate the trees and ground cover mostly consists of brambles. The new project is setting out to improve this by removing some of the very ‘leggy’ trees to improve the quality and mixture of the canopy and replacing the brambles with a more varied ground cover.

This transformative project is likely to take several years of hard work by the Volunteers, under the expert guidance as always of the City Rangers. The first stage has recently been completed with the removal of a small group of unwanted large trees to open up the hillside canopy. This required expert tree surgeons and was funded by the Friends of Jesmond Dene.

Tree clearing in progress

The next stage will be to remove the brambles in preparation for replanting to begin. We will be putting in place a mix of smaller native tree species such as Rowan (Sorbus Aucuparia), Hazel and Hawthorn and some wildflower bulbs such as blue bells, daffodils, ransoms and snowdrops.

This will also be the time to reassess the remaining tree cover and consider whether we would like to (or need to) take out any more old trees at this point – this could be done in autumn / winter 2017 before we carry out the new planting.

In future years we will need to keep control of the ground cover – removing any regrowth of the bramble and encouraging the new plantings until we get the new woodland habitat properly established.

Elsewhere in the Dene, again funded by the Friends, the Volunteer Rangers are continuing with their long term project to plant new trees to improve the mix and to help replace some of the older trees from Armstrong's time. We tend to lose several of these each year to winter winds or in heavy rain and are currently planting a range of hardwoods such as Oak (Quercus Robur) and Lime (Tiliax Europaea).

The wood from the felled trees will not be wasted – the smaller branches from their canopies have already been chipped and used to refresh the path down from Jesmond Dene Road to the riverside. Some of the timber from this project will be processed into firewood to sell next winter (proceeds go to the Volunteers funds to buy tools etc.) and other sections will be available to schools, wood turners and artists to purchase. Anyone interested in buying any timber should contact Sarah on 07966 264391 or email: sarah.capes@newcastle.gov.uk

If you would like to be involved with this project please contact the Ranger, Sarah – contact details above.

Keith Pringle FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

April – October 2017 Ouseburn Park Events

Sunday 2 April 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Sunday 2 April 1.30 – 3.30pm
Heaton Park Walk
£3 per person
Explore the history of Heaton Park, on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. Meet at the Pavilion. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 8 April 11.30 – 2.30pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Sunday 9 April 1 - 4pm
Nature Area Open Day Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, mini beast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Monday 10 April 1 – 3.30pm
Bushcraft, Campfire and Games Heaton Park
£3 per child, £3 per adult
Join the Rangers for some fun games and activities followed by learning to light a fire along with some campfire refreshments. Activities are aimed at 7-13 years. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please wear appropriate clothes for being outdoors in the woods. Booking essential, please call 0191 2812082 to book and for more information.

Wednesday 19 April 11 - 2pm
Nature Area Open Day Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, mini beast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Wednesday 19 April 10am-3pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun seasonal games and activities. Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

Tuesday 25 April 6 - 8pm
Paddy Freeman's and Wild Jesmond Dene
£3 per person
Find out about the Freeman Family and see some less well known sites of Jesmond Dene on this guided walk, in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Sunday 7 May 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Friday 12 May (Evening - time to be confirmed on booking)
Bats and Moths Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre- Jesmond Dene
£5 per person
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
Learn about the different species of bats that live in the UK with a short talk and then we'll set out for a walk and see which ones we can find, so don't forget your torch! We will also be running a moth trap throughout the evening and we will have a look to see what has been caught on our return to the Visitor Centre. Suggested age 8+, children must be accompanied. **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for access details.

Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 May 10 – 3pm
Friends of Jesmond Dene Open Weekend
(including AGM on Sunday at 2pm followed by a talk - TBC)
Drop by either day and find out what the Friends and Volunteer Rangers get up to, how they help and support the parks staff in keeping Jesmond Dene a popular visitor attraction. There will be history displays, information about the archive project, the "Adopt a Plot" scheme, video footage of the wildlife in the Dene and history walks. The Visitor Centre and gift shop will also be open.

Saturday 13 May 10am – 12pm
Pond Dipping and Moth Morning
Nature Area
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
We'll go through the moth trap from the night before to see what we've managed to catch and try our best to identify them before letting them go. You can also try some pond dipping to see what creatures live under water in the Nature Area. This is a drop in event and you can stay as long or as little as you like. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Saturday 13 May 11.30 – 2.30pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Sunday 14 May 4.30 – 7.30am (yes am! The walk will be about 2 hours.)
Dawn Chorus
Ouseburn Parks – Jesmond Dene
£6 per person
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
To celebrate International Dawn Chorus Day join the Rangers and Volunteer Rangers on this early morning walk through the Dene to listen to the delightful sounds of the birds. We'll come back to the Visitor Centre for a breakfast roll, a hot drink and show you some footage of other wildlife in the Dene. Suitable for adults and older children (12+). **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for more information.

Tuesday 16 May 10 – 12.30pm
Volunteer Open Day
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre - Jesmond Dene
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
Come along to Jesmond Dene and meet the Friends and Volunteer Rangers to find out what they get up to. We have various different volunteer opportunities: guided walks, practical sessions, bee keeping, events, archive project and lots more. We can show you more detail of our various activities and discuss how we manage them all. We're also interested in hearing your ideas for other ways people can contribute to the well-being of the Dene, its wildlife and visitors. Do you have skills and interests you think we should know about? For more information contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 281 2082 or email parks&countryside@newcastle.gov.uk If you are interested in volunteering but can't make this date, please get in touch and we will let you know other dates that you can come along to.

Thursday 18th May 6-8 pm
St Mary's Chapel and Well, £3 per person
Learn about St Marys Chapel and Well as well the surrounding area on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 20 May (Evening - time to be confirmed on booking)
Bat Walk Heaton Park
£5 per person
Learn about the different species of bats that live in the UK on this walk around Heaton and Armstrong Park and Jemsond Vale. Don't forget your torch! Suggested age 8+, children must be accompanied. **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for access details.

Saturday 20 May 10am-3pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun seasonal games and activities. Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

Tuesday 23 May 6.30 - 8pm
Wildlife Walk
Newcastle Great Park - Greenside
Join members of Newcastle Green Space Initiative (NGSI) and the Ranger on the walk around the Greenside area of the Great Park, exploring its wildlife. Booking advisable to avoid disappointment, but not essential. Please contact the Community Centre on 0191 2368196 to book your place.

Wednesday 24 May 6 – 8pm
Bird Walk for All, Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre – Jesmond Dene
Donations
Come and join members of RSPB Newcastle Local Group, Rangers and Volunteers to see how many birds you can identify on this walk through the lovely Jesmond Dene. Booking advisable to avoid disappointment, but not essential. Please contact 0191 2812082 or email newcastlerspbgroup@gmail.com
Refreshments will be available at the end of the walk.

Saturday 27 June 10.30 – 12.30
Family Nature Morning
Newcastle Great Park - Greenside
Join the Ranger on this walk and activity morning, exploring the wildlife around the Greenside area of the Great Park. Booking essential, meet at the Community Centre and please contact them on 0191 2368196 to book your place. Suggested age 5+

Wednesday 31 May 1 – 3.30pm
Nature Area Open Day Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, minibeast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.
Thursday 1 June 6.30 - 8pm
Wildlife Walk
Newcastle Great Park – Walkworth Woods
Join members of Newcastle Green Space Initiative (NGSI) and the Ranger on the walk around the Walkworth Woods area of the Great Park, exploring its wildlife. Booking advisable to avoid disappointment, but not essential. Please contact the Community Centre on 0191 2368196 to book your place.

Sunday 4 June 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Saturday 10 June 10 - 12noon
Family Nature Morning
Newcastle Great Park – Walkworth Woods
Join the Ranger on this walk and activity morning, exploring the wildlife around the Melbury area of the Great Park. Booking essential, meet at the Community Centre and please contact them on 0191 2368196 to book your place. Suggested age 5+

Saturday June 10th 1.30 - 3.30- pm
Armstrong Park and Jesmond Vale
£3 per person
Learn about Robin Sheep's cave and visit the Shoe Tree on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 10 June 11.30 – 2.30pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Saturday 24 June 12 – 7pm
Heaton Festival
Heaton Park
Bring your family and friends to Heaton Park to enjoy this lovely community festival. They will be stalls, activities, live music and more. For information check the Heaton Festival Facebook page.

Saturday 24 June 12 – 5pm
Garden Party
Heaton Park Lodge and Garden
(part of the Heaton Park Festival)
Join the Friends and Rangers to find out more about the past, present and future of Heaton and Armstrong Parks. The Friends will be offering refreshments and plants will be on sale to raise funds. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Sunday 2 July 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Saturday 8 July 11.30 – 2.30pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Tuesday 25 July 1 – 4pm
Nature Area Open Day, Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, minibeast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Thursday 27 July 6 - 8pm
Jesmond Dene Walk, £3 per person
Explore the history of Jesmond Dene, on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. Meet at the Visitor Centre. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Friday 28 July 10 – 3pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun seasonal games and activities.
Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

Wednesday 2 August 10 – 12.30pm
Bushcraft, Campfire and Games, Heaton Park
£4 per child, £3 per adult
Join the Rangers for some fun games and activities followed by a learning to light a fire with some campfire refreshments. Activities are aimed at 7-13 years. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please wear appropriate clothes for being outdoors in the woods. **Booking essential**, please call 0191 2812082 to book and for more information

Sunday 6 August 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Wednesday 9 August 11.30 – 2.30pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus

Friday 11 August 10 – 3pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun seasonal games and activities.
Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

Friday 18 August 1 – 4pm
Nature Area Open Day
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, minibeast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Sunday 20 August 6-8 pm
St Mary's Chapel and Well
£3 per person
Learn about St Marys Chapel and Well as well the surrounding area on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book

Sunday 3 September 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Thursday 7 September 1 – 3pm
Jesmond Dene Guided Walk
Meet at Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene
(Part of the Heritage Open Days)
Join our fantastic guides on a walk through Jesmond Dene finding out about the past, present and future of this park.
Booking essential. Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Friday 8 September 1 – 3pm
Heaton Park Guided walk – Mines, a Temple, Bears and much more!
(Part of the Heritage Open Days)
Explore the history of Heaton Park, on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks.
Booking essential. Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 9 September 11.30 – 2.30pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Saturday 9 September 1 – 3pm
Paddy Freeman's and Wild Jesmond
(Part of the Heritage Open Days)
Find out about the Freeman Family and see some less well known sites of Jesmond Dene on this guided walk, in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Sunday 10 September 1 -3 pm
St Mary's Chapel and Well
(Part of the Heritage Open Days)
Learn about St Marys Chapel and Well as well the surrounding area on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book

Friday 15 September (Evening - time to be confirmed on booking)
Bat Walk
Great Park Community Centre
Learn about the different species of bats that live in the UK, and then we'll set out for a walk and see which ones we can find, so don't forget your torch! Suggested age 8+, children must be accompanied. **Booking essential**. Please contact the Great Park Community Centre on 0191 2368196 to book your place and for access details.

Sunday 1 October 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Wednesday 25 October 10 – 11.30am, 12.30 - 2pm
Pumpkin Carving and Camp Fire
Jesmond Dene
£7.50 per child (including pumpkin), Adults £2.50
Join the Rangers and Volunteers in the woods, carve a pumpkin and other spooky activities around a camp fire. There will be hot chocolate, marshmallows and toffee apples too! Booking essential and all children must accompanied. Maximum 2 adults per child. Suggested age 5+. **Booking essential.** Please call to book your place 0191 2812082.

Friday 27 October 10 – 11.30am, 12.30 - 2pm
Pumpkin Carving and Camp Fire
Jesmond Dene
£7.50 per child (including pumpkin), Adults £2.50
Join the Rangers and Volunteers in the woods, carve a pumpkin and other spooky activities around a camp fire. There will be hot chocolate, marshmallows and toffee apples too! Booking essential and all children must accompanied. Maximum 2 adults per child. Suggested age 5+. **Booking essential.** Please call to book your place 0191 2812082.

Friday 27 October 10 – 3pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun seasonal games and activities.
Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

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Friday 27 October 6.30 - 8.30pm
Halloween Pumpkin Walk
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre - Jesmond Dene
Children £5, Adults £3
Bring you own pumpkin lantern along with your spooky Halloween costumes and join us an evening walk through the woods - there may be eyes watching us from all sorts of places and you never know who we might meet on the way! We'll return to the Visitor Centre for pumpkin soup and hot chocolate. Minimum age 6 years. Maximum 2 adults per child. **Booking essential** and all children must be accompanied. Please call to book your place and for more information on 0191 2812082.

Please also look out for events on the notice boards around the Visitor Centre in the Dene or follow the Friends of Jesmond Dene on Facebook.

Committee list:

Chairman	Clive Gerrard
Vice Chairman	<post vacant>
Treasurer	Lynda Fean
Secretary	Sue Stokel-Walker
Members	Maggie Dowman, Geoffrey Carter, (vacancy)
Membership Sec.	Keith Pringle
N**ewsletter Team**	Maggie Dowman, Yvonne Shannon

Sarah Capes (Ranger, 0191265 0564) sarah.capes@newcastle.gov.uk mobile 07966 264391

Webmaster Carlton Reid http://www.jesmondDene.org.uk

Next Newsletter contributions or any other queries to:-
Friends of Jesmond Dene, c/o Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Millfield House, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7BQ or email as above