

# WOODTHORPE GAZETTE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK  
JULY/AUGUST, 2019

## Summer 2019: The June Monsoon!



With average rainfall that was way up for the month of June and the met office issuing yellow weather warnings with boring regularity it is hard to imagine last year we were comparing summer temperatures to those of 43 years ago - the glorious summer of 1976.

According to the Daily Express there was an answer to all the gloom it was the fault of “Storm Miguel,” which is why thunderous downpours were ravaging the nation!

As the report went on to predict: ‘Heavy downpours of rain and gusty winds were expected to batter the country with temperatures more akin to autumn with flooding likely to hit the M4 and the M5 especially during the rush hour bringing the likelihood of travel chaos.

How come bad weather always strikes during the rush hour is beyond me. Probably it is something to do with living in London and the South East!

However, there was no need to pack up our possessions and flee to warmer climes as again according to the Daily Express after a turbulent week of below average temperatures the heatwave would return in earnest as Britain would be expected to scorch in a mid-month heatwave with temperatures expected to soar 8 degrees Celsius above average....It is now July, and I am still waiting!

## “It’s Snowing in Australia”

With the reassurance of the Daily Express that summer would soon return to our shores, spare a thought for the poor inhabitants of Queensland, Australia, as it is snowing!

Again, according to that august red top journal the Daily Express, Australia has been hit by a rare blanket of snow. As a consequence, Australia’s

Bureau of Meteorology described the snowfall as a “rare” sight in subtropical areas such as Queensland as the state has not experienced any significant snowfall since 2015.

In the same report it goes on to say: Up to 5cm (1.9 inches) of snow also blanketed the Blue Mountains region, west of Sydney, prompting road closures and travel warnings.



As the poor folks from the antipodes are experiencing weather conditions what we Brits have to put up with on a regular basis, you can bet, like us, they too are having a good whinge (a phrase the Aussies like to refer to us Brits as) about the weather, especially as Queensland, referred to as the “sunshine state,” is experiencing one its coldest winters in decades as the local inhabitants are not used to the cold weather. Therefore, it is important we as Brits show our sympathy by feeling sorry for them – Arr, there!



Finally, for all you folks out in the antipodes, when I took the above photograph on Woodthorpe Park when, like Queensland, it was blanketed in 5cm of snow the temperature measured -5 degrees Celsius. In fact, it was so cold I couldn’t feel my finger on my camera’s shutter – **‘now that’s what you call cold!’**

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## Community Activities

In spite of our recent topsy-turvy weather that is the spring and summer of 2019, Woodthorpe Park has seen a flurry of local community activity, which began on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April, with an Easter Sunrise Service led by the Rev. Brigette Baguley the Vicar of St. Martin's Church, Trevoise Gardens, Sherwood, and was reported on in the May/June edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette. The second occasion was on Spring Bank Holiday Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at the Meet the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park stand.

As the photograph below shows, a stand set up to display to the members of the public the voluntary activities the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park are involved in, and to encourage others to become involved in caring for the park's environment.



The third community event took place in true British summer weather – the rain on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at a 'Pray and Play' event that was again organised by St. Martin's Church in Sherwood and included all other churches in the Sherwood and Mapperley area as well.

In all, two gazebos were pitched adjacent to the footpath that runs from the entrance on Mansfield Road.

As the picture above shows, in spite of the weather it didn't stop the children enjoying themselves. After all, if you are to let the weather dictate to you, in this country at least, you wouldn't do anything! There was another event that was held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 when Junior members of Sherwood Football Club held their annual prize giving event, which was held outside the Grange, again in true British summer weather – the rain.

In spite of the recent inclement weather what the four above examples show is that Woodthorpe Park is the

ideal place for events and the local community to come together.



Woodthorpe Grange Park,  
A Park For All Seasons

**Woodthorpe Grange Park,  
A Park For All Seasons**

Winter Spring Summer Autumn

**ADMISSION FREE**

Beginning at 7pm on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2019  
at St. Martin's Church, Trevoise Gardens,  
Sherwood, Nottingham

**An Illustrated talk on the History of  
Woodthorpe Grange Park given by  
Local Historian, Paul R. Swift**

"Revised with illustrations & historical information"

Woodthorpe Grange Park:  
A Park with its own History and Heritage

As it says on the above poster, with more illustrations and photographs, beginning at 7.00pm on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at St. Martin's Church on Trevoise Gardens off Mansfield Road, Sherwood, local

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historian Paul R. Swift is to give an illustrated talk on the History of Woodthorpe Grange Park.

This will be an occasion not to miss as altogether there will 99 different photographs and illustrations all depicting Woodthorpe Park's and the surrounding areas history. Finally, as it also says on the poster the **admission is free!**

Also, to be mentioned will be Woodthorpe Grange Park's centenary, which is in three years' time, and how the local community can become involved in celebration of that historical occasion.



**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1922, The Mayor, Edward Manning formally opens Woodthorpe Grange Park.**

Finally, in the same year as Woodthorpe Park celebrates its centenary HM The Queen will be celebrating her Platinum Jubilee to mark 70 years on the throne which, according to [www.royalcentral.co.uk](http://www.royalcentral.co.uk) will take place in the same year as The Queen turns 96-years-old. As a consequence it is expected to be celebrated on an even larger scale than the Diamond Jubilee of 2012



**HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations Woodthorpe Park 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2012.**

## Woodthorpe Grange Park's Greenhouses and Plant Shop

Question: What have Blackpool and Flyde Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Amber Valley Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council and Broxtowe Borough Council, together with Wilford Hill Crematorium, Wollaton Park, the Arboretum and Nottingham's traffic islands all have in common? They all receive plants and shrubs grown in the Greenhouses on Woodthorpe Park.

It should also be pointed out that the greenhouse staff even prepare floral displays for one of Nottingham's major sporting events such as the Nottingham Tennis Open held annually at Nottingham's Tennis Centre on University Boulevard.



**Propagated plants all ready for transportation to other UK councils and traffic islands in Nottingham.**

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As a regular visitor to the greenhouses and plant shop on Woodthorpe Grange Park, I can only marvel at the riot of colour that is produced all year round by such a small team of dedicated employees, and how it is all taken very much for granted.



The traffic island that adjoins Mansfield Road with Gregory Boulevard and Sherwood Rise, just one of the many examples of floral displays on Nottingham's traffic islands.



Wollaton Park Camellia House



Italian Gardens, Stanley Park, Blackpool

In all, the small dedicated team of staff who work at the park's greenhouses propagates and grows half a million plants each year for the city's displays as well as producing plants, as already shown, for neighbouring local authorities and others further afield.

The photographic examples of floral displays seen on many of Nottingham's traffic islands together with the examples of the floral displays seen outside the Camellia House on Wollaton Park, and the Italian Gardens on Stanley Park in Blackpool is proof of how the work carried out by Woodthorpe Park's small team of dedicated greenhouse staff is an immense success, and how, by their actions can show to others what Nottingham's team of horticulturist's produces is a countrywide success.



Apart from growing plants for the city's displays and for neighbouring local authorities and those further afield, plants are also grown for public to purchase via the park's Plant Shop.

The Plant Shop stocks a great range of seasonal plants, which changes on a regular basis to suite the season. For example, the Plant Shop have on sale a wide range of summer bedding plants that are ready for hanging baskets and planters.

Apart from bedding plants, the Plant Shop also has a stock of trees, shrubs and perennials.

Of course, if there is something you want and you can't find it ...then please ask as the staff who work in the shop, they will be only too happy to help.



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## Re-cycling your Plastic



As the photograph above illustrates, when purchasing plants and shrubs from the Plant Shop, apart from the plastic plant pots your plants come in, if you are purchasing a large quantity you will be given a plastic tray, which, depending on the size, can hold up to a dozen plants or more. However, once the plants you have purchased have been planted in your garden it is knowing what to do with the plastic that is leftover.

As I was to find out, the Plant Shop do not accept returned used plastic, even if it has been cleaned. Instead, they ask you to simply put the unwanted plastic pots and trays in your re-cycle bin.

## A place to hone your photographic skills

If you are like me and a keen amateur photographer, the Plant Shop is a great place to advance your photographic portfolio, as the photograph below illustrates.



If you like me like macro photography and you especially like taking photographs of flowers and producing abstract images, the Plant Shop is the ideal

location. However, a word of caution, you may get some funny looks from unknowing members of the public when it appears you are getting up close and personal with your camera!



Soon to grace Nottingham's City Centre, along with other examples yet to be displayed, floral sculptures from plants grown at the Greenhouses on Woodthorpe Park.



Summer bedding plants at prices that can beat our main street rivals!

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## Woodthorpe Grange Tropical House



According to [www.haarkon.co.uk](http://www.haarkon.co.uk) The Tropical House adjacent to the Plant Shop and greenhouses is the kind of greenhouse where cacti and palm trees lean against each other for some extra support; the very mature Monstera is fruiting gloriously and of course there's a dinosaur for the kids to discover. Also, Woodthorpe Grange Tropical House is just lovely and because as it is always with us, foliage proves to be king.



**Collage of photographs of the animal sculptures that are to be found in Woodthorpe Park's Tropical House.**

In more recent times, to keep the tropical house, in a condition suitable for visitors to Woodthorpe Park to come and look around, volunteers from the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park now look after the plants in the Tropical House, which includes regular watering along with weeding of the flower beds.

In the final analysis, tucked away in the far corner of the Mapperley end of Woodthorpe Park, Nottingham has a hidden gem. The small band of staff who run the

greenhouses and the Plant Shop deserve our praises for the work they do.

Without their efforts Nottingham and other parts of the country would be a less colourful place without the small band of staff who run the greenhouses and propagate the wonderful flowers we all take for granted.

I therefore ask you, the next time you visit the Plant Shop give the staff there a little bit of praise for the work they do, and let them know how much their work is appreciated. After all, praise and appreciation go a long way!

This finally leads me on to say:



***For the staff who run Woodthorpe Park's  
greenhouses and Plant Shop!***

### **To the tune of Flowers in the Rain by 'The Move'**

*"I'm just busy picking litter in the rain. Feel the power of the rain making us soaking wet!"*

As the photograph below testifies that is what five people, which includes myself, were doing during the beginning of the June Monsoon on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.



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It was during the first weekend in June in glorious sunshine after taking the dog for walk on the park and having a good look around, I began thinking to myself: 'there are certain areas of the park that are in need of a litter pick.' So, I came to the decision I would carry out the litter pick next weekend on the Saturday, which would be the 8<sup>th</sup> June.

Mulling it over in my mind, and to test the public's enthusiasm for a litter pick I decided to advertise the litter pick on the Friends Facebook Page and Twitter with the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park's Litter Pick Logo, Larry the Litter Picker.



However, as the week progressed the weather began to turn wetter and wetter, and as Saturday approached the weather showed no signs of any improvement. Thinking to myself, no one will turn out in this weather, I made my way reluctantly to the Plant Shop, arriving just before the allotted start time of 10.00am.

Standing amidst the puddles of water with rain falling from leaden skies and the accompanying gusts of wind, I said to one of the staff members who was running from the shelter of one of the greenhouses to take refuge in the Plant Shop; 'No one's going to turn out in this weather!'

Thinking to myself, I'll give it 10 minutes then I'm going home, a family of three approached me of which one said: 'are you Paul Swift?' With the look of surprise on my face I said, yes! 'Oh, good' she said, 'we're here for the litter pick!'

Thinking to myself that I am not the only daft person in this world, I went off to fetch four litter pickers, one for myself and three for those who had just joined me.

After deciding on where we would concentrate our litter pick, which was the area surrounding Woodthorpe and Winchester Court Flats, we set off. However, just as we were about to set off,

I was approached rather hurriedly by a young lady who it turned out to be the newly elected councillor for Sherwood, whose first words were, 'sorry I'm late I got held up!'

As we were making our way down towards the two blocks of flats, I asked her how she found out about the litter pick. Her reply was: 'I saw the notice on the Friends Facebook page and thought I had better turn up!'

With the prevailing westerly wind blowing into our refuse sacks, due to their size, making them look like meteorological balloons, I suggested we should start in the area that was once a railway cutting at the southern end of the capped Ashwell Tunnel, where the Woodthorpe Court residents garages are and where it is sheltered from the wind.

Moving on from where we began our litter pick, we as a group made our way along past the two blocks of flats on towards the junction where Chestnut Walk meets Winchester Street.

Apart from picking large quantities of litter, quite a number of passers-by thanked us for the work we were doing in such appalling weather conditions.

The only thing that stopped us from carrying on was in spite of wearing waterproof clothing we were all becoming, like the weather – damp! Also, with the amount of rubbish we had collected, our sacks were becoming increasingly heavy. So it was decided to make our way back to where we all met, the park's greenhouses, and to where the above photograph was taken.



Finally, it leads me to say **A BIG THANK YOU** to all of you for turning out in such inclement weather. All being well the next litter pick will be in much more agreeable weather!

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Readers will recall in the March/April 2019 edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette I reported on the litter pick that took place on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January, which was in the same area, that which surrounds the Woodthorpe and Winchester Court Flats. Readers will also recall how fly tipped rubbish was discovered at the end of the Woodthorpe Court resident's garages, from the picture below.



I now have to report that since January, and the clearing of the fly tipped rubbish more rubbish has since been dumped and, because of what has been dumped, has become an environmental hazard. There was a forced entry into the end garage and rubbish has been dumped inside it. The rubbish was spilling out of the door!

As part of the forced entry bricks were forcefully removed, thus rendering the garage at the end unsafe. The remaining bricks had become loose thus causing subsidence on one side of the complex. Also, as there was nothing to support the roof from underneath it was starting to collapse.



As you can see from the attached photograph after being reported as unsafe the damaged part of the block of garages has since been cordoned off to prevent further access. However, since the two litter picks by the Friends of Woodthorpe Park, despite repeated protestations to those in authority, with the exception of the barriers placed around the damaged garage nothing appears to have been done as regards to cleaning up the immediate area. In other words, no sooner have the Friends cleaned the area of litter etc. and it is very soon back to how the Friends found it in the first place, as you can see by the photograph below.



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## **Taking the Bull by the Horns**

*There comes a time if you want it doing,  
Do-It-Yourself!*

How many times have you asked someone for help and that someone has never turned up and you end up doing it yourself? That certainly was the case on Saturday afternoon the 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

For those who live on Sherwood Vale, and for those who walk up and down it, you cannot help but notice how overgrown with nettles and bindweed the lower part that leads onto Woodthorpe Park has become. So much so, that to walk up and down that section of Sherwood Vale you are compelled to walk in single file, if you are with someone, or walk on the road because someone has parked their car partly on the pavement too close to the undergrowth or that the undergrowth has completely covered the pavement.

In the case of those who use the local bus service, and catch the bus from that section of Sherwood Vale, the undergrowth has completely covered the bus stop!

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So, it was with that in mind, with the aid of my strimmer and being suitably clad in protective clothing I began my quest of clearing the undergrowth that was gradually overtaking the pathway, which can be seen from the photograph below.



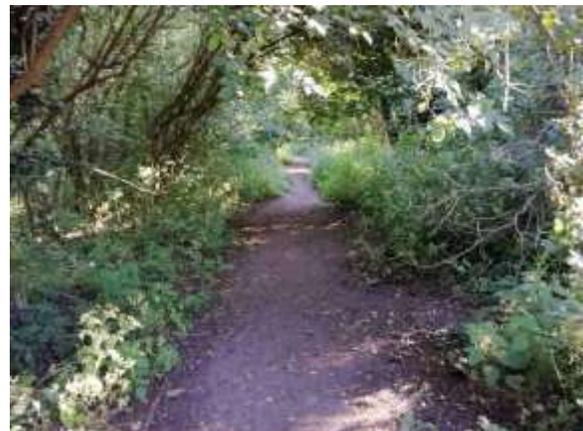
As I was working away the noise from the strimmer attracted the attention of a few of the nearby residents who stopped to speak, and all agreed with me that despite repeated phone calls from residents, and promises that things will be done, the local council never seem to want to bother with this part of Nottingham. In other words, Sherwood Vale is always last on the priority list when it comes to something as simple as cutting back the vegetation which is gradually taking over the pathway!

I must add that to do something as simple as clearing the pathway of vegetation I did have a feeling of satisfaction, especially as I felt I was doing something that would benefit the local community. However, where do you draw the line. Is it really our job to clear the area of undergrowth? Or, due to budgetary constraints and the cuts in so many of the council's services is it now up to a citizen's army to keep the immediate environment tidy?

## Before and After: A job worth doing!



As you can see from the above photograph taken of the undergrowth that is growing on the pavement alongside the former railway bridge that is restricting the pathway, I could have carried on.



**The Pathway leading from Sherwood Vale onto Woodthorpe Park.**

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The same also applies to the pathway on Sherwood Vale that leads onto Woodthorpe Park. Is this fast becoming an area which an army of volunteers should be taking care of? A pathway that is slowly being overrun with nettles and is falling victim to what I call low level vandalism. In other words, branches being deliberately broken from trees, and as reported in previous editions of the Woodthorpe Gazette, a haven for fly tippers.



**Looking up the pathway that leads from Sherwood Vale towards Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats.**



**Photograph taken of the same pathway adjacent to the fenced off area where the refurbishment of Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats are taking place.**

The Pathway that leads to Woodthorpe and Winchester Court Flats: Whilst I agree that not a lot can be done to clear the area of undergrowth whilst the contractual work on the flats is still in progress; as the contractors have said, they will restore the pathway way and make good the ground that has been churned up during the flats renovation, however the rest is up to the employees of Woodthorpe Park!

I hope I will not be too long before the undergrowth in that area together and the areas I have mentioned is cleared away, as it does look unsightly, and what comes with unsightliness is the feeling of neglect – that nobody cares!



Finally, you will recall in an area adjacent to Woodthorpe Park last year saw a deliberately started fire from fly tipped rubbish, which destroyed three conifer trees and partially set fire to decking that had the fire and rescue services not arrived when they did could have had tragic consequences. After all the fuss and reporting had died down, it was said by someone that it is being looked into to prevent such an incident of that nature ever happening again. So far as I know nothing has happened. Therefore, I ask this question, is being looked into a metaphor for doing nothing?

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## Woodthorpe Grange Park's Poets Corner

For those who read the Woodthorpe Gazette will notice each edition is ended with a poem that best describes the season we are in. With that in mind, with Woodthorpe Park's centenary just three years away a page on the Friends website was opened calling for all Sherwood and Mapperley's budding poets to compose a poem (no matter how big all small) that best describes Woodthorpe Grange Park. I also said there is no limit to how many poems an individual can submit, all I ask is that you place your name at the end of each poem and email it to my email address, which can be found on the Contacts and Additional Information page on the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park website.

After posting links on the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park's Facebook page and the Sherwood in Nottingham Facebook page as well, the response by local poets was quite overwhelming. So much so that I opened an additional page on the

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Friends website entitled Woodthorpe Grange Park's Poets Corner, which so far has the even number of twelve poems posted.

The poets are: local poet Pam Shepperson, who submitted eight poems; one by school teacher Glen Hickson, who submitted a poem in the style of Benjamin Zephaniah entitled: 'Mi Luv Woodthorpe Park'; another by local poet David West entitled: 'The Tropical House', and two by another local poet and resident, Christine Baldwin.

All poems submitted, I am sure you will agree, all show great affection for Woodthorpe Park.

As there is little space to reproduce all the submitted poems, you can read all twelve poems by clicking on the Woodthorpe Grange Park's Poets Corner page on the Friends Website.

However, to give you a taste of the quality of the poems submitted please read the following poem by Christine Baldwin, which is simply entitled:

## Woodthorpe Park

*"What does Woodthorpe mean to me?"  
That was the question asked  
It means so much, so many memories  
Of times both recent and past*

*Of children playing, happy in the sun  
Watching the birds take flight  
Of conkers gathered in the Autumn  
Much to the children's delight*

*And, what about the golf course  
Where I first learnt to play  
Or, the train peeping out of the tunnel  
An unusual sight, hidden away*

*There are so many different aspects  
To write about through the year  
The sledging in the winter snow  
The Carol singers bringing good cheer*

*Or, explore the tropical gardens  
A peaceful place to rest  
So much to do, all through the year  
Or time just to sit and be blessed*

*This Park holds so much treasure  
For one and all to see  
For fun and rest and leisure  
Woodthorpe's the place to be.*

## Nottinghamshire Hospice's 2019 Party in the Park



Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2019 between 11am and 4pm Woodthorpe Grange Park will again play host to Nottinghamshire Hospice's annual Party in the Park, which promises to be even bigger than last year.

Apart from arts and crafts stalls, this year will see a family litter pick entitled: **Woodthorpe Park Young Environmentalists**



Photograph taken during the 2018 Nottinghamshire Hospice's Party in the Park

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**ROLL UP, ROLL UP  
The Circus is coming to Town!**



Between Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, Woodthorpe Grange Park will be the venue for Europe's largest touring big top show Gandeys Circus.



As someone who has lived all their life facing Woodthorpe Park this has got to be a first. Woodthorpe Park playing host to a travelling circus, all I can say is about time too.

To book seats for shows visit the Dates for your Diary on the Friends of Woodthorpe Park website on <http://www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk/page256.html> where you will find the dates of when the circus is coming to Woodthorpe Park and where you will be directed to Gandeys Circus website and booking page.

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To sign off this edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette, I began this edition by remarking on how Woodthorpe Park was becoming a soggy morass due to the unseasonal wet weather that was referred to as 'The June Monsoon.' Yet, as I now look out of my window, apart from rain this morning, which lasted into the afternoon, the sun is finally creeping out from under the clouds, to end the day on a sunny note and hopefully a beautiful sunset!



**Red Sky at Night, Shepherds Delight!**