



Welcome to the Friends of Wickford Memorial Park Newsletter Spring 2026

We are a constituted group of volunteers working with Basildon Council Parks and the Countryside Manager and the Parks Manager to safeguard and improve the park.

Message from our Chair, Kim Oakes

Hello all

This 19th newsletter is just a snapshot of the work we do and doesn't include the normal weeding and maintenance that we do every week.

The Friends Volunteers have achieved so much! It still amazes me how much we do. The Memorial Park is a real asset to Wickford, and continues to go from strength to strength.

We have a lovely group of dedicated volunteers. Many thanks to everyone involved.

We are starting a new year with lots going on please check our Events in 2026 and feel free to join us. Events are posted when we know the dates, please keep an eye open on the Events Tab on Facebook.

Please feel free to join us on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. All Welcome, even if you stop by for a chat.

Events coming up

Planting the Stumpery – April/May

Planting the Beacon- April/ May

Planting Mount Road- April/May

Painting the Crazy Golf May/June

Love Parks Week 26th July – 1st August

Bat Walk 2026-15th July 2026 Evening Walk

High Sheriff of Essex Awards

Friends of the Wickford Memorial Park Volunteers honoured with two High Sheriff of Essex awards!

The volunteers 🧑🧑🧑 received a return visit from The High Sheriff of Essex -Julie Fosh. Julie visited the Memorial Park last month to meet the volunteers; she returned for a tour on 25th March 2026.

She was blown away by the work of the volunteers and the impact we have on the park and wider community.

We were honoured to receive two prestigious awards. One for the Friends of the Wickford Memorial Park Volunteers and the other for the chair- Kim Oakes.



We were overwhelmed and truly grateful for the nomination by Jane Parmenter- one of the Wickford town Councillors.

The whole team are very special, work so hard and achieve so much. Thank you to everyone.

The volunteers are very special to Wickford as they

overlap with their other volunteering groups.

We were joined by James Hendry and Mark Aldridge from Basildon Council; we thank them for supporting us.



War Memorial Tidy Up February 2026



Volunteers tidied up the War Memorial, weeding, sweeping and clearing the old wreathes- leaving one out of respect.



River Clearance March 2026

Two of our men volunteers donned their waders to clear one section of the River in the Memorial Park.

It is very upsetting to see so many items thrown into the river.

Nine Shopping Trolleys were dumped into the river. One of them was as ASDA trolley- where did that one come from?



Many thanks to Dave and James for clearing so many items.

Donations to The Friends of Wickford Memorial Park

We would like to thank the following for their very kind and generous donations to the projects of the volunteer group:

Fowler Smith and Jones Trust :£1000

Royal British Legion :£720

And the Royal Antediluvian order of Buffalo's: £100

This will be spent wisely in the park in particular – mature trees, orchard trees, plants for the Home Front Garden and Stumpery and wildflower seeds for the Bee Planters and Stumpery

It is very much appreciated.

Orchard Planting



February this year we planted an extra thirty whip trees to the Orchard

- Ten Crab-apple
- Ten Blackthorn
- Ten Hazelnut

We have approx. 240 Fruit trees in the Orchard

The Stumpery



Work continues on the Stumpery.

So far this year we have planted 100, crocuses, 100 Bluebells, 100 tulips and 1500 snowdrops.

80 whip trees including, silver birch, bird cherry and lime.

6 small pine trees

6 Oak Hydrangeas

14 Mature trees including; 4 Liquid Amber, 4 Silver Birch- Betula, 3 Multi stemmed Silver Birch

80 ferns, grasses and hellebores.

4 sacks of donated pond plants- water lillies, Marsh Marigolds and others

More planting to be arranged late Spring- All welcome to join us.

The Stumpery will provide a natural habitat for insects, frogs, toads, birds, hedgehogs etc,

Poppy Knitting Group Reinstated

We would like to add another two mesh nets to the Remembrance Display. We estimate we need approx. 600 more poppies.

Margaret Clarke will be organising groups for knitting and tying the poppies to the mesh- including maintenance to the existing meshes.

Anyone who wants to help please contact Margaret

Thank you in advance.



Company Community Volunteer Days

Now and then we have larger one-off projects where we need extra help just for that day- normally a morning.

Are there any Businesses or Companies that offer Community Volunteering Days for their Staff, who would like to help on one of these mornings?

We have hosted quite a few companies over the years and they have all enjoyed themselves. There is a licenced Café which is available for refreshments and lunch.

There are a couple of projects coming up in the new year for you to look out for:

Painting the Crazy Golf; Weeding the Reflection Garden, replanting the Beacon and Mount Road

- dates to be confirmed.

Group Information

- ♣ Volunteers usually work in the park on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. No special skills are needed, and we are always very pleased to see new people of any age. Before starting work, we usually meet at our lockup in the Council compound near The Park café. The times and dates of the work parties can be found under the Events tab on our Facebook page.

The mission of the Friends of Wickford Memorial Park is to:

- enhance and protect the Memorial Park
- ensure that all visitors have a pleasant experience
- promote community spirit in Wickford
- encourage good health and wellbeing for the volunteers.
- ensure the park is open and accessible to all

We have a small committee and have lots of ideas for future projects and we hope eventually to hold events for the public in the park. The committee are looking at ways to finance future ideas and we will be looking at applying for

grants and support from local organisations. Please let us know if you can point us in the direction of grants and funding.

Email: friendsofwickfordmemorialpark@hotmail.com.



Friends of the Wickford Memorial Park

Website: www.friendsofwickfordmemorialpark.co.uk

If you have any comments on the contents of this newsletter, please email us or post on our Facebook page

Newsletter compiled by The Friends of Wickford Memorial Park Committee