**FRIENDS OF OAKS PARK**

**VOLUNTEER GARDENERS**

Thank you for volunteering to do a little gardening now and then in the park. It is a very informal arrangement. You can do a bit whenever it suits you, but **please note the following:**

·        Be guided by the Idverde park keeper, Robert, if he is around.

·        Take great care not to injure yourself or get carried away and do too much.

·        You will be using your own tools so please bring them along together with your gardening gloves and something to collect waste. A soft kneeler pad can be useful for planting and weeding.

·        Think of bringing a rain hat and jacket, sun hat, wear sun-screen, layers of clothing. You could wear a Friends or a plain high-vis maybe, especially if you are working near the roadways.

·        Wear clothes that you do not mind getting damaged by rose thorns and soil.

·        Wear your ‘Friends of Oaks Park’ badge with pride and engage with anyone asking what you are doing. Promote membership of the Friends to them with a big cheery smile, if it seems appropriate. No badge? Please ask our Chairman, Anne, or me for one. Membership forms are on the noticeboard in the café and on the website.

·        Regarding waste, be guided by the Park Keeper, otherwise tip the clippings/weeds etc. onto the compost heap, which is at the far end of the upper car park or take them home.

**What are we doing?**

Assisting the Council’s contractor, Idverde, to look after the formal gardens with dead-heading, especially the roses; weeding and with occasional projects such as when a bed needs re-planting or refreshing. Also bulb planting takes place on the last Sunday in October.

The Butterfly Banks in the meadow area need some attention now and then but we must be fully guided on those areas by LB of Sutton’s Biodiversity Officer – David Warburton. He is our super educator and guide for this work, and also for occasional woodland management tasks where we can get involved.

**When do we do it?**

It’s really informal. A common time is Wednesdays from about 11:15am (after the Tai Chi group's post session coffee) until lunchtime starting in early May. People will be by the cafe or around the formal beds. However, help is appreciated any day, whenever you have the time or the inclination. You can use the WhatsApp chat group if you want to see if anyone else can meet you so you can work together or just turn up and have a go by yourself.

**How to know what to work on?**

I will update the What’s App group with a list of current tasks, some of which might have a specific date allocated to them. Particular planting activities are also shown under  ‘What’s On’ on the Friends’ website: [www.friendsofoakspark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofoakspark.co.uk/) . Otherwise if you see dead-heading or weeding that needs doing, please just get on with it. There is also an email message group for those who do not use WhatsApp.

**I don’t know anything about gardening**

Start by working with somebody else, you will soon pick up something that you can do. Not many of us are experts, I don’t know much at all, but I dead-headed a lot of roses last year to keep them blooming, and that was very satisfying. There will always be somebody willing to show you.

**Christine Hewitt**

**Volunteer Gardeners Co-ordinator for Friends of Oaks Park  
14th June 2025**