



SUMMER NEWSLETTER – June 2013

Dear Friends,

The months since our previous newsletter have seen considerable changes in the management of Christchurch Park. After many years of dedicated service to the Park, Sam Pollard has been relocated as controller of the hub based at Chantry Park. At the same time, many of Sam's team have also been moved around the department of Parks and Open Spaces, so although we are sad to say goodbye to David, Trevor, we can now take this opportunity of welcoming Alan and Colin as new members of the Park team. In Sam's place we are delighted to welcome the experienced and knowledgeable Alan Gilbert who has worked in and with the Parks of Ipswich for a number of decades (I promised not to say how many but he gives the game away in his own piece later in the newsletter...). In addition to Alan and our stalwart receptionist Janet, the Reg Driver Centre (open 10am to 5pm throughout the summer months) is now staffed by our Wildlife Ranger Joe Underwood and Tree Inspector Steve Leech. You will find introductions from all three later in the newsletter, but we warmly welcome them to the Park and very much look forward to collaborating with them over the coming years.

At our AGM (attended by 37 members) at the end of March we also welcomed new Committee Members Emma Black, Kirsten Hubert and John Woodcock. One of the most notable features of Christchurch Park is, of course, the Mansion, and we were delighted that our guest speaker at the AGM was Emma Roodhouse, Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service's Curator of Art. Recently, Emma also led a hugely enjoyable private tour for members of the new Constable gallery at the Mansion, and so we make no apology for dedicating parts of this newsletter to items about Suffolk's most famous artist and this very special Grade 1 Listed building. (We are very grateful to the authors for permission to reprint an article about the Mansion that first appeared in the Ipswich Society newsletter.)

In our newsletters we always try to inform readers of events taking place in the Park, and this edition is no exception (although we suggest you check the calendar on our website, www.focp.org.uk, for all up-to-date information). We highlight Wildlife Ranger events, Mansion events and the many Ip-art events taking place here this summer. We would particularly like to bring to your attention our three "Brass on the Grass" concerts (we are certainly counting on glorious summer weather this year...) and a FoCP bat walk in early September that has been added to our ever popular bird walks.

Whatever your reason for visiting the Park this summer, we hope you enjoy all that it has to offer.

Richard Wilson