

Highfield Residents Association

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2026

HRA - representing the interests and concerns of Highfield

HRA@50

AGM and Anniversary Reception Thursday 12 November, 7pm, Highfield Church Centre


The Portswood Centre Boarded up

Chair's Comments

2026 is proving to be an important year for HRA. First and foremost, we are celebrating our 50th anniversary. There cannot be many residents' associations anywhere that have been in existence for such a long period and which are still firing on all cylinders, as we are at the moment. As my report to this year's AGM on 12th November will show, we have had a very full agenda over the past year and the next year promises to be just as busy. Major achievements included, in March, the pausing of new student accommodation at Avenue Campus which HRA had campaigned against strongly and our relentless reporting of Anti-social Behaviour on Portswood Broadway leading to a Dispersal Order in August.

I urge everyone to attend the AGM and join in the reception which will take place after short formal business. The annual subscription of £10 a year for household membership entitles you to discounts from a number of local traders as well as HRA support and news. HRA welcomes new members and, for those who may have allowed their memberships to lapse, please rejoin so that we can celebrate another 50 years of work together on behalf of our community.

Professor Roger Brown-HRA Chair

Members' Discount at Local Shops, Bars and Services

Bayleaf Kitchen - 15% discount on food
Baboo Ji Vegetarian Kitchen - 10% discount on everything before 6.45pm and after 8.45 pm
Brewhouse and Kitchen - 10% discount on food and drink (only with food)
Centenary Restaurant at University Highfield Campus - 10% discount on food, evenings only, Mon - Thurs only
Figures Bookkeeping Services - 10% discount on services. Email: figuresbooks@outlook.com http://www.figures-bookkeeping.co.uk/
Garden Restaurant - 10% discount on food
Innervision Hair and Beauty - 10% discount Tues only
Kohinoor of Kerala - 10% discount on food (includes takeaways)
Mango Thai Tapas Bar-10% discount on food & Restaurant
Muse Coffee Company Ltd-10% discount on hot drinks, 7am - 3pm Monday to Friday only
Quick Click Repairs (Rose Road)-10% discount on repairs (includes computers, laptops, consoles, soldering PCBs, data recovery)
October Books - 10% discount on books
Scoops Ice Cream Parlour - 10% discount
ShoKuDo Japanese Southampton- 10% discount for payment in cash (not card). Closes in Highfield Lane 3/10/26. Reopens in Portswood November
Sravs Kitchen - 10% discount on food (includes takeaways). Must book ahead on Fri - Sat
T Rex Supermarket & Bubble Tea- 10% discount on drinks
Trago Lounge -10% discount on tea/coffee/cakes, 9am - 4pm Mon - Fri only
Vibe Hair Salon - 10% discount
Woodies at the Junction Inn - 10% discount on drinks Monday-Friday (ends Fridays @ 5pm)

**Terms and conditions apply; members must present a valid HRA Membership*

HIGHFIELD
Residents Association
@50

Speedwatch Starting in Highfield

I am delighted to say that, thanks to considerable assistance from HRA in publicising the Community Speedwatch Scheme and providing funds for the equipment required, we have recruited 8 trained and registered volunteers: we are ready to start! We will shortly meet with our local PCSO Sayma Khan, who is based at Portswood Police Station, to agree the appropriate locations on four roads Church Lane, Highfield Lane, Brookvale Road and Westwood Road and to confirm communication required with Hampshire Constabulary as the Police have to be informed of our exact location each time. At least nine volunteers are required to operate the radar gun and record the registrations, makes and colour of cars. Monitoring sessions are expected to be for an hour and data must be submitted to the Hampshire Speedwatch Coordinator at the end of every session. The Police handle things from that point including issuing advisory letters to any motorist recorded travelling 24mph or more on our nominated roads as the speed limit will soon be 20mph across Highfield.



We intend meeting with Speedwatch groups already operating in and around Southampton and learning from their experience. I look forward to meeting you all soon out and about Highfield.

Simon Fidler Co-ordinator

How to report Anti Social Behaviour

Street drinking (having an open can/bottle of alcohol), rough sleeping, abandoned street furniture and drug paraphernalia left on the street should be reported to the Council's Community Safety Team by email: community.safety@southampton.gov.uk. Behaviour including street drinking, any drug use on display or incidents of aggressive or criminal behaviour should be reported to the police, preferably in person, to Portswood Police Station in St Denys Road (open Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm) or by phoning 101. Ring 999 to report an emergency, violent or serious incidents or risk to life.



Mencap - still baking and weeding!

Need a helping hand with your garden - or something delicious for your next event?

Southampton Mencap's Garden and Maintenance Service and Bakery provide supported meaningful work opportunities for people with learning disabilities, helping them develop skills, confidence and independence.



MG&M offers lawn mowing, weeding, planting, garden tidying, and small garden maintenance jobs. Based in Portswood, the team is available to the wider community, with priority given to local older and vulnerable people needing extra help.

Our Bakery produces delicious homemade bread, loaf cakes, scones and other treats, as well as occasional catering for small local events.

Support our services - and enjoy something delicious!

To order or find out more, call 023 8058 4088

The Drought Dilemma – Portswood Rec

None of us can be in any doubt that we're now experiencing far hotter summers alongside periods of severe drought. According to Government sources, 2026 has seen the driest July in 190 years with just 5% of expected rainfall. Ironically, just as we face severe water shortages, domestic demand for water increases, sometimes by as much as 30% a day in hot weather (The Rivers Trust). One solution is to abstract it from our rivers, which despite strict regulations, brings its own environmental consequences.

So, what to do at the Rec? We have put a great deal of time, energy and money into restoring the gardens, which might seem reason enough to take advantage of the exemption from the hosepipe ban. But another compelling reason was to provide for the insects that rely on pollen and nectar to survive. Plants flower less in drought, go over far more quickly and generally contain less pollen and nectar. And, as the leaves themselves wither and die, the insects' larval stages are also deprived of their food source. Mindful of these things, we did take the decision to continue to water the garden as well as the 9 young trees recently planted by the Council.

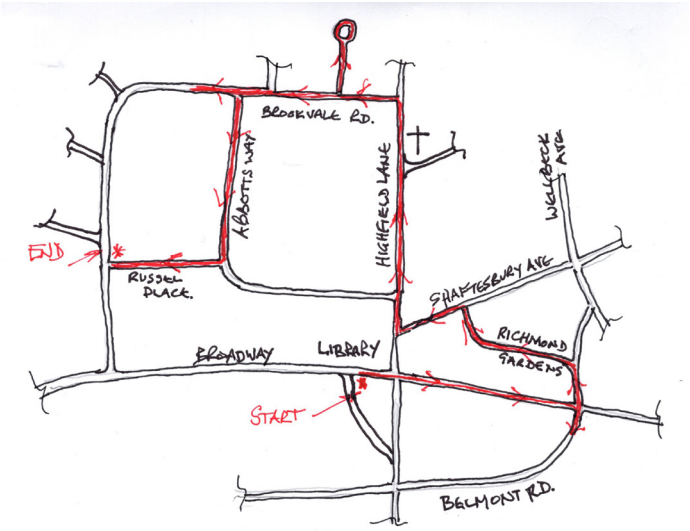
But the effort was gargantuan and not sustainable in the long term. So, like all good gardeners we have to plan for a future in which there are very likely to be more hot, dry summers. We need to consider where and what we're planting, and issues such as adequate ground preparation and mulching. We are asking if residents could share their experiences of plants (native or otherwise) that have coped well in the drought conditions. Any suggestions, email info.friendsofportswoodrec@gmail.com. I'll then compile a list and include it in the next Nature Notes, with tips on coping with drought and still supporting our wildlife

Denise Long

HRA@50 History Walk Quiz - Thanks to Godfrey Collyer

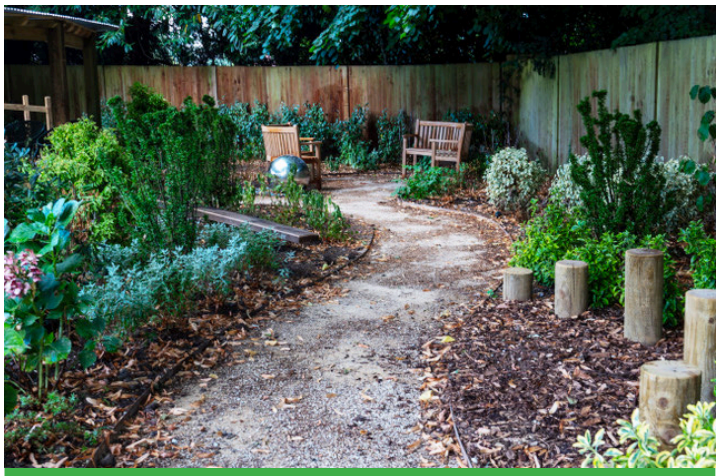
Here are a few questions I wrote about the walks around Highfield in May this year that might make a lighthearted contribution to your newsletter.

1. Who produced pulley blocks for the Royal Navy?
2. Who must we thank for Portswood Library?
3. What did the Mayor Henry Bowyer ask people to give to the library when it first opened?
4. Who was in charge of the Titanic when it hit the iceberg on 14th April 1910 and where did he live?
5. What were the Aslatt family famous for?
6. When the trams first started where did they keep the horses?
7. When were the trams electrified?
8. Where did R J Mitchell the aircraft designer live in Highfield?
9. Who designed the houses in Orchard Way?
10. When was Portswood Lodge built?
11. How is Captain Abbot remembered in Highfield?
12. What famous sports club did Sir Henry William Russell Bancroft save?
13. On which famous ship did Thomas Davies and Alfred Jeffrey serve?
14. What building in Highfield was designed by Joshua Brandon?
15. What important farming event took place in Portswood in 1844?



16. Ellis Martin was employed by the Ordnance Survey to do what?
17. What famous film director lived in Belmont Road and enjoyed going to the cinema in Portswood with his mother?
18. Henry Hodges was a local shopkeeper who lived in Highfield Lane and drowned on the Titanic. What did he sell in his shop?
19. Why is Henry Hodges unique amongst the 550 Southampton people who drowned on the Titanic?
20. During which conflict was Reginald Biddle the Docks and Marine manager in Southampton?

Answers on display at the AGM!



Yellow Door's Launch New Therapeutic Garden

Yellow Door, a local charity supporting people impacted by domestic and sexual abuse, has celebrated the launch of its new therapeutic garden: a peaceful outdoor space designed to support recovery and wellbeing. The garden was officially opened on 10 September at a celebration event attended by around 40 guests, including funders, supporters, community leaders and partners, with the Lord Mayor of Southampton, Councillor Pat Evemy, cutting the ribbon.
Satvir Kaur, MP for Southampton Test and Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls, said: "It's been wonderful to support this incredible local charity. The work they do to support women and girls is exceptional, and their new outdoor space is a beautiful addition to their service." Co-designed with service users, the garden offers a calm, welcoming and trauma-informed environment where adults, families, young people and children can pause, reflect, connect with nature and take part in therapeutic outdoor activities. Time in green spaces can help reduce stress and anxiety, improve mood and support emotional and physical wellbeing.
Yellow Door's CEO, Nicci, described the launch as, "a very special moment", while Rachel, Head of Therapeutic Services, said the garden is a beautiful extension of Yellow Door's work to create safety, trust and hope.The garden has been generously supported by The Wolfson Foundation, Help to Create Hope Trust and Bernard Sunley Foundation.

Sarah Johnson Head of Fundraising

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10% discount applied on production of an HRA membership card.

Kate's Café Lounge – Lease extended!

Local girl and qualified, classically trained chef, Kate Ledward, opened the Café on 1 August 2010 after 20 years of managing wine bars/restaurants in Bedford Place and Oxford Street. She has just renewed the lease for another five years.

Kate specialises in breakfasts and lunches with plenty of vegetables. She sources her produce locally and uses seasonal food. Everything is fresh, home cooked and there is nothing processed. She can tell her customers exactly what is in their food and caters for everyone's needs including coeliacs (gluten free). When I visited, there was chicken and leek casserole and roast pork and trimmings on her extensive menu! Her cakes are divine. For Kate, cooking is her obsession.

She says the Café, "is all about my regulars". Some of them received meal deliveries during Covid. Many have become friends: often Kate's is a lifeline, their community.

The Café has experienced a turbulent time - a new landlord put the rent up 20%, her accountant disappeared, Covid had a substantial impact and in 2025 it faced closure with Bus-Gate. Thankfully, a regular couple kindly donated to enable her to overcome a difficult time.

Things are much better now as Kate's is also the engine room for a sandwich shop she recently opened in Bedford Place. Cooking everything for 'Breadford's' at the Café, enabled Kate to fill a financial hole.

To the people of Portswood, she says, "Thanks for supporting me. I want everyone to know I've got another 5 years"!

Kate's is open Tuesday to Saturday, 9am to 3pm.

Nadine Johnson HRA Communications



Scan the QR code to become a member of HRA

Or visit the HRA website: https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/join-renew/ information. Membership is £10 per household per year – pay BACS, on-line, by cheque or cash

For further information about joining HRA, please contact
Barbara Claridge; hra.honsec@gmail.com
Nadine Johnson; highfieldracomms@gmail.com



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