



# FRIENDS OF OLD DURHAM GARDENS

Registered Charity No. 1164516

## NEWS ... March 2019

Issue 12

### Open days

The Walled Garden re-opens **31 March 2019**  
(Thursdays and Sundays, 2.00-4.00)

### Dear Friends and Supporters

Restoration work in the Gardens is progressing well, both horticulturally and structurally, with continued planting in the walled garden, replacement fruit trees in the lower garden and repairs to the Gazebo and walls due to be carried out in 2019. Thanks to all our supporters, our small band of regular volunteers, plus our corporate and student volunteers for keeping this venture going.

### GARDENS

#### Fruit

The espalier apples in the walled garden have started to yield really good crops. In addition, two Medlars have been planted in the north wall border. The cherries on the south wall are yet to produce fruit, but we are hopeful for this year.

We have continued to replace lost damson, greengage and apple trees in the orchard, some new to Old Durham: Gilliflower, Colonel Vaughan and Calville Blanc d'Hiver.

Unfortunately some of the apple trees in the lower orchard were so heavy-laden that some branches were badly damaged and we had to do some restorative pruning which will continue in 2019.



However, we still had a bumper crop of apples and damsons, enjoyed by many members of the community and we were also able to donate apples and pears to a school fruit scheme.



### ☆☆☆ Dates for your diary ☆☆☆

**Annual General Meeting**  
Thursday 21 March 2019 at 6.30 pm  
County Hall Committee Room 1A

Join us to hear how the gardens are developing and to chat informally with Trustees after the short meeting.

**Shakespeare in the Gardens**  
**The Merry Wives of Windsor**  
Sunday, 16 June 2019, 2.00-4.00 pm

**Music in the Gardens**  
**Our main event of the year**  
Sunday, 14 July 2019 at 1.00-4.00 pm

### Walled Garden Parterre

The herbaceous planting in the squares mostly survived the bad weather and we had a lovely summer flowering. Our newly planted lavenders died, but fortunately the nursery agreed to replace them. We also thought we had lost the conical bays. However, they recovered - we just need to encourage them to be conical again! We plan to develop planting schemes for the wall borders.

We are remodelling the large yews to create a more historically accurate shape. The one we trialled last year recovered brilliantly, so we are going ahead with the rest. We think the overall look of the parterre has improved.



### Walled Garden – seats



Battered by the elements the seats are due some maintenance. A



generous donation has allowed us to purchase protective covers.

Website: [www.olddurhamgardens.co.uk](http://www.olddurhamgardens.co.uk)

Find us on:



## Lower garden - Terrace border

This is still a work in progress. Unfortunately several of the climbers planted on the wall a couple of years ago have “disappeared” along with their fixings. These will be replaced this year.

## VOLUNTEERS

As you know the work of the gardens is not just about funding, important though that is. Without our regular Thursday gardeners plus other group visits the restoration of the gardens would stall. So thanks to all those who have helped us during 2018 and all who will continue to volunteer in 2019.



Durham Wildlife Trust  
scything the meadow



Durham University

## EVENTS

### Wassail

The January Wassail is becoming a regular event in the gardens' calendar. This year it was held in the walled garden due to poor weather. All who attended enjoyed the singing and the mulled cider. Thanks to those who braved the weather making it a very enjoyable afternoon.

### Music in the Gardens – 8 July 2018

Another successful event - even though it clashed with other events the Durham area. However 460 people turned up to enjoy the music, refreshments and the good weather. Thanks to the musicians for making this another great occasion: Durham Station Band, Durham Scratch Choir, Durham Harmonics Choir, Step This Way with Bones Creek Band and Quar Tete. Thanks also to all those who helped out providing cakes, plants, stewarding on the day and organising the event.



## Shakespeare in the Gardens – 22 August 2018

On one of the hottest days of the year Durham Shakespeare Group performed “Twelfth Night” in the walled garden.



This was another excellent afternoon enjoyed by all who attended. The trustees would like to thank the Group for their performance in near heat-wave conditions. We look forward to this year's June performance of “The Merry Wives of Windsor”.

## Heritage Open Days

The gardens were open on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> September and also Sunday 16 September, manned yet again by June Wright, her regular helpers and the trustees. We were fortunate that June agreed once more support us for HOD - her wealth of knowledge regarding all aspects of the history of the gardens is invaluable. Our grateful thanks to June and her helpers.

## SIGNIFICANT PURCHASES IN 2018

### Events Tents

We became increasingly aware that we were not providing enough weather protection for our performers so have purchased a sturdy 6m x 3m wind and weather-proof tent. In addition we also bought a similar 3m x 3m tent.



## PLANS FOR 2019

- Durham County Council plan to do some restoration work, mainly to the Gazebo and the walls in the lower garden
- Terrace border: replace climbers and wiring and consider re-stocking the border
- We plan to label all orchard fruit trees and produce a leaflet listing the different varieties
- Continue improvements to the planting and maintenance of the fruit trees
- Develop links with the local community and the Culture and Community Arts Dept at DCC

## Thinking about joining us?

We'd welcome some help with gardening and a range of other tasks.

Please contact Angela on 0191 3865188 or contact us via our website:

[www.olddurhamgardens.co.uk](http://www.olddurhamgardens.co.uk)