

Forum Publication

Winchester City Magazine

ISSUE 29 MAY 2026



NEWS & EVENTS FOR MAY

Find out what's going on in Winchester City

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT TRUST

Winchester area residents can help save a rare moth

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Delicious Vegan Cherry Cake

GARDEN FEATURE

Hampshire Gardens Trust - Gardening tips for May

STYLE • INTERIORS • HEALTH & BEAUTY • INTERVIEWS • FOOD & DRINK • ENTERTAINMENT • EVENTS

Image: Supplied by Stephen Jeffery Photography (www.sjimaging.co.uk)

What's on in St Giles Hill Park in 2026

BY HARRY MYCOCK

St Giles Hill Park is renowned for its views and its contribution to the city of Winchester. In 2026 I would invite you to enjoy the Park and join in with some of the activities and events put in plan by the charity, The Friends of St Giles Hill Park, as we move our focus on to funding and creating a Framework for the Park for ourselves and generations to come.

Bats, birds and butterflies

On the birding front then we are planning a Dawn Chorus stroll on Sunday 26 April at 5am, the time when the crescendo of song is at its greatest.

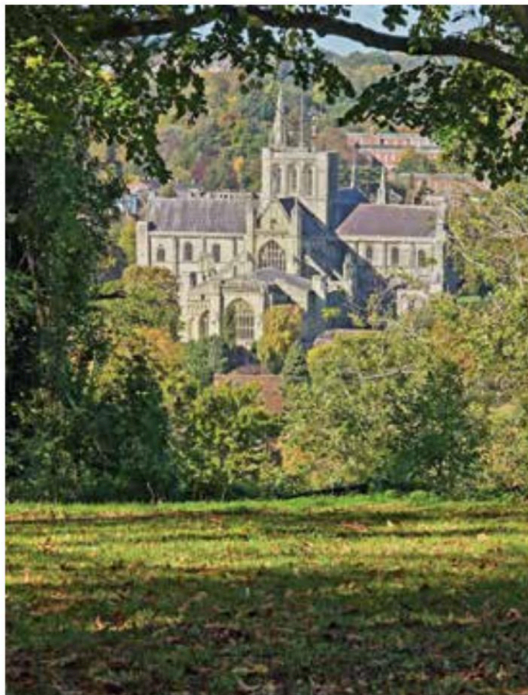
Tom Jordan of Hampshire Ornithological Society will be on hand to help interpret what we see and hear.

St Giles Hill is a bat hotspot and on Wednesday 29 April at 8pm and Saturday 5 September at 7.15pm we will be holding bat observation and detection nights in association with the myself and Bailey Riches of the Hampshire Bat Group.

On Saturday 18 July at 2.30pm we will be having a Big Butterfly Count with Steve Bolton of the Hampshire and IOW Wildlife Trust. We shall also be providing a grassland and pollinator training session in June as we increase our linkage with the HIWWT who this year have already provided guidance and seeds for areas of the Park where we have been busy clearing encroaching scrub such as clematis and brambles over the winter.

St Giles Hill walks and talks

There will be themed walks during the year to enjoy Winchester's iconic St Giles Hill Park including several during the Winchester Garden Festival, the dates for these being Thursday 25 and Friday 26 June both at 10.30am and a third on Sunday 28 June at 4.30pm. For the Heritage Open Days programme two walks are to be held on Thursday 17 September at 10.30 and Friday 18 September at 10.30. The title of the walks is "Exploring the heritage and everyday history of St Giles Hill, the Soke and its Park".



The Execution of Earl Waltheof – 950 years ago

Earl Waltheof, once favoured by William the Conqueror, fell out of favour and Waltheof became the only English Earl to be executed on the orders of William the Conqueror. Waltheof was beheaded on St Giles Hill at dawn on 31 May 1076, 950 years ago. The plan is to mark this occasion both on the 31 May and there will also be a talk on Waltheof and the history of St Giles Hill for the Friends of Winchester Cathedral in the Cathedral Pavilion and on Zoom given by Harry Mycock on Tuesday 2 June at 7.30pm.

Eclipse Night

Several years ago, myself and family joined a large gathering in Hungary to witness a total eclipse of the sun. It was

sharing the experience that made it so memorable.

On 12 August there will be a 93% eclipse to experience (with suitable eye protection) from St Giles Hill. It will begin at 6.17pm, peak at 7.14pm and end at 8.07pm. This makes this a perfect evening to gather and maybe bring a picnic to the Park and enjoy this rare event from the vantage point of our wonderful Park and in great company.

St Giles Day – 1 September

Starting at 6pm there will be an opportunity to learn a little more about St Giles and why our Park is named after him. There will be a short walk to take in the Park and the nearby St Giles Hill Graveyard.

Working Parties

Last but not least, you are welcome to join Working Parties which are on the last Saturday and first Wednesday of each month, meeting at 10am at the junction of Northbrook Avenue and Baring Road. There are tasks for everyone, all with the aim of improving the Park in line with the City Council's Management Plan. There is an opportunity to meet up with local people and sometimes other guest volunteers such as from The Ramblers, Winchester City Council, Savills and students from the University of Winchester.

To become a Friend and learn about planned activities please visit <https://www.friendsofstgileshillpark.org>