

St Giles Hill –

Restoration update

Mike Biden

SECRETARY OF FRIENDS OF ST GILES HILL PARK (FOSGH)

Restoration work in this important park picked up pace during 2025 with the Friends of St Giles Hill Park receiving permission to use power tools and the regular volunteers receiving assistance from new sponsors Savills, the Ramblers, University of Winchester students and WCC staff.

At a Gathering in November the Friends announced their intention to produce a Strategic Plan for the park. The project has the support of Winchester Council, the South Downs National Park and the Hampshire Gardens Trust.

Currently, work is guided by the Council's 5-year Management Plan, which focuses on day-to-day maintenance tasks. However, it does not map a pathway for restoration nor does it define the projects needed to achieve the broader aims of the Friends and the policy goals of the Council. The new strategic plan will unify the vision and focus the efforts of all stakeholders.

The Friends have selected Ed and Abi Gant of Lichen Studio as the landscape design consultants to prepare the plan. The goal is to create a 'park for the 21st century' that brings nature and people closer together whilst providing opportunities for recreation and exercise for residents and visitors. A fund-raising appeal has been launched to meet the costs.

Chairman Dr Harry Mycock told us, 'We signed a Partnership Agreement with the City Council in July and one of the first points of agreement was the need for a Strategic Plan. We have made good progress this year and are keen to maintain momentum and continuity in our activities. A Strategic Plan supported by all the key stakeholders is essential if we are to realise our ambitions. St Giles Hill Park is too important to be forgotten. It should be one of the jewels of Winchester.'

More information can be found on the website
www.friendsofstgileshillpark.org



Photo: Mike Biden

Volunteer from Savills tending a young tree



Photo: Mike Biden

Volunteers from Winchester Ramblers