



Annual Report 2023

Houndwood Community Group

Email: getintouch@houndwoodcommunity.org

Website: <https://houndwoodcommunity.org/>

Background

The Houndwood community Group continues to work towards their aim of 'Making Houndwood a better, safer place to live in and caring for our environment and neighbours, encouraging a spirit of community amongst the residents of the 398 diverse housing units on our Icon/Houndwood Estate.

Finance

We have attached our latest set of accounts. The committee are very grateful to Street Parish Council for their contribution to our running costs. We also continued to utilize equipment and material provided by Mendip District Council in the form of two grants that were awarded to us in 2022 (but partially spent in 2023). Thanks too to LiveWest who gave us a donation towards our community events. Donations from residents are also much appreciated. Having residents from diverse backgrounds means we feel unable to charge a membership fee as this might exclude some residents from joining in our activities.

Estate Management

As most residents are aware, Premier Estates are currently managing the common areas on the estate that are not designated road or paths. Their contractor Avery Landscapes manage most of the common areas; however, some areas and trees are not included in their contract.

The environment of our Icon/Houndwood Estate makes for a nice place to live, surrounded by waterways and mature trees. We are still very disappointed by the inadequate nature of Premier Estate's support especially to the trees, waterways, and nature area maintenance.

Road repair is still an outstanding issue on both halves of the estate. The two developers, Crest Nicholson and Barratt Homes will have to repair them before Somerset Council adopts them. There still doesn't seem to be any progress on this.

Communication with residents.

We published two newsletters in 2023, one in the Spring and one in the Winter. Several flyers were distributed to all houses advertising events, see events below. We continue to use the three noticeboards, updating them on a regular basis. Facebook is very active and the main port of call for many residents. Our website has a lot of useful and interesting information for residents.

Events

Annual General Meeting. Our AGM was held online on 24th June 2023

Events on the Green. We decided to have three picnics on the green, one for the Coronation on 8th May and one called “Gather on the Green”, to celebrate the summer on 8th July and 28th August, one with rain, one without. We have two large tents to keep the rain off and committee members provided games for the children to play, archery, rounders, Jenga, parachute game and Connect Four plus many others. Prizes were given.

Halloween. (31st October) We had a competition to encourage residents to decorate their houses and roads. Congratulations to the winners, prizes were awarded to the best and most novel. It is always great to see all the children dressed up and trick or treating on the estate each year.

Christmas decorations. Another competition for residents with prizes given for best road, best house, and best window/balcony. It was great to see so many residents joining in.

Ecology Group

We encouraged residents to be involved in “**No Mow May**”. We had a **nature event** on 26th July counting butterflies, bugs and identifying birds. **Bat Walks** were carried out on 21st April. We have three bat detectors to enable this. There are huge numbers on the estate which fly certain paths around us. We continued to look after the **bird boxes**, those used need cleaning once a year. We used our endoscope to check which ones had been nested in, 12 had been. One of our two **hedgehog** boxes was used, we suspect by a mouse.

Houndwood Community Group
2018, 2019, 2020, & 2022 Calendar Years

Houndwood
Community Group

Item	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Balance Brought Forward	£ 33.22	£ 741.18	£ 1,027.56	£ 1,375.12	£ 2,603.70	£ 1,678.50
Grants	£ 1,400.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 600.00	£ 1,708.57	£ 600.00	£ 675.00
Community Project Grant	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1,713.72	£ -
Lottery	£ -	£ 55.50	£ 269.00	£ 220.00	£ 233.50	£ 221.00
Donations	£ 931.59	£ 850.49	£ 144.55	£ 59.18	£ 1,064.06	£ 50.00
Fete Income	£ 840.00	£ 328.15	£ -	£ -	£ 400.00	£ -
Income in Year	£ 3,171.59	£ 2,334.14	£ 1,013.55	£ 1,987.75	£ 4,011.28	£ 946.00
Admin (other)	£ 163.93	£ 163.99	£ 195.39	£ 119.61	£ 171.07	£ 25.00
Insurance	£ 269.98	£ 269.98	£ 269.98	£ 160.32	£ 188.30	£ 213.80
IT Costs	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ 90.00	£ 93.00	£ 93.00	£ 45.00
Newsletters	£ 87.06	£ 87.00	£ 65.60	£ 152.98	£ 247.75	£ 211.67
ECO Grant Spend (recvd. 2021)					£ 1,183.51	£ -
Community Grant Spend					£ 1,709.88	£ -
Equipment	£ -	£ 253.98	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 22.60
Fete	£ 1,474.40	£ 1,027.28	£ -	£ -	£ 1,342.97	£ -
Halloween	£ 312.64	£ 45.43	£ -	£ 39.70	£ -	£ 47.77
Xmas						£ 48.59
Gardening	£ -	£ 81.91	£ 126.91	£ 160.32	£ -	£ 40.00
Litter Pick	£ 55.62	£ 43.75	£ 90.66	£ 33.24	£ -	£ 47.48
Expenditure in Year	£ 2,463.63	£ 2,047.76	£ 665.99	£ 759.17	£ 4,936.48	£ 701.91
Carried Forward	£ 741.18	£ 1,027.56	£ 1,375.12	£ 2,603.70	£ 1,678.50	£ 1,922.59

Gardening Group

The gardening group has continued to utilise all the equipment purchased with the Mendip Grant for 2022. The greenhouse is being used to produce abundant plants. Bulbs were donated by residents to increase the amount around the estate. Our own compost is now being produced. Most of the planters on the estate are maintained by the gardening group. Plant donations are also gratefully received and plants transplanted around the estate for the best effect. If the sun is out so our gardening team.

Litter

Monthly litter picks are carried out if it is not raining. We have been doing this for 10 years on the estate. In addition, many residents pick up litter when they see it. If you would like to join us, just look out for posts on noticeboards and Facebook, we have all you need to do this safely and it is quite addictive once you start. Items are then collected by Somerset Council's contractor. We try hard to find the most interesting item that has been abandoned on the estate. Winners are a horse's head mask and a 10-mph speed sign with post

Supermarket trolleys are often left abandoned on our estate. We use an App (Trolleywise) to report them, and the company comes from Bristol to collect and return them to the relevant store.

Conclusion

It has been another successful year. The Facebook group membership has grown. We have seen new faces at our summer events and the Halloween and Christmas decoration competition are going from strength to strength. Plans for 2024 include Frog and Toad Safaris and Bat Walks and well as gatherings on the green during the summer with children's activities.

2023 Newsletters

Houndwood Community Group

SPRING 2023

Newsletter

For the Residents of Icon & Houndwood

Gardening & Ecology Updates

Gardening Update

After a long cold wet winter the weather is finally improving and the raised beds are beginning to bloom with plenty of forget-me-nots and then daisies to follow. The community gardeners are concentrating on weeding and also getting cuttings and seedlings (sunflowers, calendula, marigolds, snapdragons, hollyhocks, lavender and mesembryanthemums - currently in the greenhouse and assorted warm window ledges) ready to go into the beds. Hopefully it will mean there will be plenty of flowers this summer to attract bees and butterflies.

Ecology Update

After a quiet winter, it is great to see the birds returning and nesting. In our garden for the first time since we moved in the blue tits have been coming to the feeders. We have even seen a wren on one of our flowerpots, as well as out on the estate. Earlier this month we took the endoscope around and checked the hedgehog and bird boxes

- One of the hedgehog boxes had been used, but not by a hedgehog, we suspect it was a mouse!
- One of the bird boxes had a young chick in, this was very exciting.

On Friday 21st April we held the first bat walk of the year, despite the late spring and it still being cold we saw plenty of bats at the by-pass end of the estate.

If you would like to be more involved with either the gardening or ecology group - do get in touch with us - contact details overleaf.

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GARDENING & ECOLOGY UPDATES

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HOW TO CONTACT US



SPRING 2023



In our Community...

Street Murals in the Library Gardens

Street Parish Council working in partnership with Street Library Trust and Mendip District Council commissioned 4 exciting new murals for the wall of the Library Gardens (BA16 0HA) from talented local artist Jonathan Minshall. Funding for the project came from a Mendip Creative grant and a smaller grant from a local charitable trust. The four murals depict the history of Street from shoemaking, farming, quarrying and peat cutting. The second phase is now being undertaken by the Parish where the two pavilions and being repaired and decorated. Jonathan Minshall is now undertaking murals representing the Notre Dame de Gravenchon in France and Isny im Allgäu in Germany. Representing the two towns Street is twinned with on the continent. In addition, the wall seating is being restored and the area being tidied up.



GETINTOUCH@HOUNDWOODCOMMUNITY.ORG

Connect & share via Facebook - Houndwood Community Group
or visit www.houndwoodcommunity.org



Proud to be supported by

Houndwood Community Group

WINTER 2023

Newsletter

For the Residents of Icon & Houndwood



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WINTER 2023

Gardening & Ecology Updates

Gardening Update

What a splendid Summer we had!

Plenty of lovely flowers for bees and insects - most grown from seed or from cuttings brought on in the greenhouse. We have also had some great donations of plants from people and have been busy on many areas of the estate. Of particular note we have worked hard on the areas at the entrance to Bullmead Parade, the herb garden and one of the old lavender beds in Oberon, the lavenders had got very old and leggy and have been replaced by Russian Sage and homegrown ice plants - should look lovely next summer.

Unfortunately when gardening it is not only weeds we find but all sorts of things dumped on the beds, rubble, grass, toys and rubbish - Please respect our communal areas so that everyone can enjoy them.

Ecology Update

Bird Boxes - A check of the bird boxes was done recently and 12 were found to have been used so will need to be cleaned. Help doing this will be greatly appreciated so we will let you know when a date has been arranged. During the check a number have gone missing, please if you find any on the ground, please let the committee know via Facebook.

Pond - The committee are investigating what can be done to get the pond back to where it should be, which is 60% water being visible.

Bats - We will be organising another bat walk once the bats come out of hibernation.

If you would like to be more involved with either the gardening or ecology group - do get in touch with us - contact details below.

In our Community...

Who else bought into the dream?

I first came to the Icon / Houndwood Estate in May 2019, whilst house hunting in the area. Immediately, I felt this was somewhere I wanted to live, it was like no other estate I had been on - beautiful architecture, fabulous green spaces and room for nature to live alongside the community. I went away to do my homework, and found out that it was multi award winning - Landscape Institute Awards - Best Medium Scale Private Development 2013, Civic Trust Awards - Commended, Housing Awards - Overall winner 2010 and C&BE Building for Life Standards - Gold Award. Wow... there are not many, if any places that can have this said about them!

The reality of living here does not always live up to my dream, or those who created this unique place that we all call home. As a whole community we need to understand that we live somewhere very special, and to keep it that way we need to respect our environment and our fellow residents, and to invest in its future. We all have a role to play!

"Living in a housing scheme which has been well designed adds to quality of life. Good design can provide opportunities for social interaction, opportunities to get outside and do things, opportunities for children to enjoy their environment and an uplifting place to come home to."

Wayne Hemingway MBE, Chair of the Building for Life, Talking about our estate in 2013.

Spooktacular Halloween

Another Halloween and the Houndwood estate did not disappoint! Well done to all the children and accompanying grown-ups who braved the rain. Once again, we saw some spectacular costumes with witches, skeletons, demon doctors and grim reapers taking to the streets. It was great to see so many houses dressing up their homes as creepy crime scenes, along with some very impressive pumpkins - from the vegetable-eating kind to artful floral creations. Congratulations to Elgin Grove for being the 'Best Halloween Street 2023' and 27 Californian Parade for the 'Best Dressed House'. The spooky skeleton construction worker at 5 Californian Parade was a particular highlight (earning them the 'Those with Flat Roofs' prize!) and we saw some spooky originality, with a special congratulations to 7 Bosun Walk for 'Best Creepy Creation'.



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Proud to be supported by

2023 Posters and Flyers

Let's Clean Up Our Estate
We all have a role to play



We Provide
Bags, rings, litter pick tools,
& hi-viz jackets

Free tea & coffee

Saturday 21st October
Saturday 18th November
Saturday 16th December

10 AM
12 PM

20 Couture Grove
(via back gate on Eskimo Court)

cancelled if raining!

Everyone is welcome!

Houndwood Community Group Supported by **STREET**

Bug Hunt



Butterfly Count **Identify the Birds**

CONNECT
WITH NATURE AND THE
Houndwood Community Group

AT 2.30PM
ON WEDNESDAY 26TH JULY
MEET AT THE WILDLIFE POND



BAT WALK
FRIDAY 21ST
APRIL - 8PM

MEET AT THE WILDLIFE POND
Houndwood Community Group



Houndwood Community Group



CORONATION PICNIC
ON THE GREEN

Sunday 7th May
from 3pm

Bring your own food, drinks & seating

Gather on the Green
'the reboot'

MONDAY 28TH AUGUST
from 3pm on the green

Houndwood Community Group

Bring your family, friends & pack a picnic basket!



Supported by **LiveWest** **STREET**

Houndwood Community Group

"Gather on the Green"

SATURDAY 8TH JULY 2023 • FROM 3PM



BRING YOUR PICNIC, FAMILY & FRIENDS!

You're invited to participate in

HALLOWEEN
'Creepy Creations'

PRIZES

For the the Best Halloween Decorations

Look out on the Houndwood Community Facebook Group for the thread to nominate or self-nominate from 23rd October.

Committee Member Judges decisions will be made on 31st October

Houndwood Community Group Supported by **STREET**

