Jubilee Park Annual Report for November 2026

Regular volunteers: Anne, Debbie, Gill, Janice, Linda, Lois, Nigel, Val and Vivienne, as well as Paul Richardson, Dorothy Thornton and members of Upper Eden Rotary Club. The team usually meets on the second Saturday of each month, from 10.00 to 12.00. Outside of these regular meetings, several members of the team continue to carry out jobs, such as controlled burning of brash, wall rebuilding and removal of sycamore seedlings.

17 January 2026 – the meeting date was changed because pavements were very icy on the usual Saturday (10 January). 5 volunteers met in the afternoon (after the J38 protest in the Market Square) and pruned much of the willow den and felled a small tree. It was noticed at the last meeting of 2025 that a neat pile of silver birch logs, retained for wildlife, had been moved, perhaps to create a mountain-bike obstacle course? Members of the team returned to put these back into a neat pile.

14 February 2026 – 5 volunteers planted 3 hazel saplings, burned the brash, and checked for activity in the bird nesting boxes. Much blue tit activity was noted in and around one of the nest boxes on the eastern side of the park. There were many good clumps of flowering snowdrops.

14 March 2026 – many volunteers carried out general tidying, including members of Upper Eden Rotary Club who cut back much of the willow in the pond area. Anne Taylor and Paul Richardson walked along the drove road and selected boulders for use as seats.

11 April 2026 – several volunteers dug up all the garden daffodils that had been planted on the western side of the central path. Many of these had been planted unofficially before we took over managing the park and made a stark contrast with the softer yellow of the wild daffodils on the eastern side. They would, unfortunately, also hybridise with the wild daffodils. The garden daffodil bulbs were replanted in verges outside the park, given to volunteers to plant, and left for visitors to collect and plant elsewhere.

9 May 2026 – 4 volunteers weeded out many of the surplus sycamore seedlings. The orchids in the goat willow meadow began to come into flower. Several volunteers worked together to compile a list of the native flowering plants seen in the park.

No June meeting. Appleby Horse Fair took place between 4 and 7 June and horses were noted grazing in the park on 7 June, and the damage was photographed. As a result, it is planned to restrict, temporarily, the width of the entrance at both gates next year, during the Apple Fair period, so that people can enter but not horses. To protect the orchids 3 volunteers produced a trail of woodchips and some small notices to show where visitors could walk without damaging the plants.

18 July 2026 – the usual session was altered from 11 July because of the clash with the 1940s weekend at Kirkby Stephen East station (many of the park volunteers are also KSE volunteers). 6 volunteers carried out a great deal of general tidying up in readiness for the Open Day on 25 July.

25 July – the annual Open Day, 11.00 to 3.00, as part of the Westmorland Dales Festival. The introductory panel for the top entrance, designed some years ago, was printed and put in place in time for the Open Day and was much admired. Steel handrails at the stone steps as well as

boulders to be used as seating were also in place in time, although there was some plant damage from the use of heavy machinery to bring in the boulders. Tubs of plants were brought by one volunteer to decorate the stone steps. 4 volunteers joined in putting up bunting, and assisting with the activities. The first families with children arrived before 11.00 and enjoyed the activities, but then there were far fewer visitors compared with last year. No one turned up for the guided tour.

8 August 2026 – 4 volunteers worked on pulling up more sycamore seedlings and brushing the steps. The ground was very dry.

12 September 2026 – no meeting. Several volunteers made a trip to the park to decide where the new wooden seat made by a member of Upper Eden Rotary Club would go – at the top of the park, looking north over the pond, towards the summerhouse. It was in place and being used by 19 September.

10 October 2026 – annual Rake and Cake but because the weather had been so dry there was not enough growth to strim. Instead, 5 volunteers cleared the ground of brambles and sycamore seedlings in readiness for bulb planting later. There are many different species of fungus in the park including several clumps of wood/jelly ear fungus (*Auricularia auricula-judae*). Some of the hazel saplings had died because of the very dry weather and replacements were planted.

31 October 2026 – another 1000 wild daffodil bulbs planted, on the western side of the central path. More, 'in the green' plants will be ordered in the spring to be planted in the gaps. The wild daffodils on the eastern side are thriving, making a splendid show in the spring. The western side will soon match them.

Summary – another successful year with several major jobs accomplished.

The Open Day at Westmorland Dales Festival was very quiet; Kirkby Stephen East did not run trains on the Saturday so there was much less activity at this end of town. This is not the best time of year to visit the park because the orchids are almost over. It has been suggested that wild flower and orchid tours might be arranged next year, soon after the Horse Fair, when the flowers are at their best. Family activities at the park have been enjoyed by holiday makers, from Pennine View campsite and elsewhere, perhaps another day could be chosen for next year (when trains at KSE are running?), with advertising sent to local campsites.

At some time, a slate slipped off the top of roof of the summerhouse and needs to be replaced. The wooden bench tops in the summerhouse still need to be replaced.

The paddock adjacent to the southern boundary has been full of wild flowers and therefore pollinators, to the benefit of the park.

There are now 92 names on the flowering plant list, 10 of which are not common, with 6 grasses/sedges. A list of fungi will be compiled soon.