Friends of Harington Newsletter

HARINGTON
learning to grow, growing to learn

October 2026



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Harington News Update
by Jacqui Steel, Harington Principal/CEO

As the new Academic year 2026/2027 starts, we look forward to another busy and successful year at Harington.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all of our Friends of Harington for your continued generosity and support. We are also incredibly grateful to the Friends of Harington Committee, who give their time so generously to organise events, raise funds and help support the Harington community.

As you might be aware, the Friends Committee are currently looking for a new Chair, as well as welcoming new Committee members and volunteers to help with events and activities throughout the year. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in becoming more involved with this wonderful group, please do get in touch for further information. We would be delighted to hear from you.

We continue to raise money as part of the **"Root for Harington" campaign**, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported our fundraising efforts so far.

We are also keen to attract more Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) volunteers and sponsorship to help expand opportunities and support for our students. Please do share information about the campaign with your wider networks.

In the summer, we celebrated everyone's hard work and achievements at our Celebration of Achievement event on 7th July, recognising the progress, success and contributions of our students and all the hard work of our talented staff. The sides of the marquee were removed due to the heatwave, and many parents commented on what a wonderful occasion it was, with a lovely social gathering afterwards in the Walled Garden and a chance for everyone to catch up before the summer break.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to the Friends who helped with the event and provided delicious food for our students and their families. We greatly appreciate having the Friends with us at our events and the wonderful contribution they make to these occasions.

We hope you enjoy reading some of the highlights from the last academic year, along with updates and contributions from members of staff, giving you a little glimpse into life at Harington.

Kind regards

Jacqui Steel



A full marquee at the Celebration of Achievements in July 2026.



Our much admired horticulture site and students' planting terrace.

A year in fundraising and marketing at Harington

by Yasmin Davey Corrigan,
Senior Fundraising and Marketing Officer

As I look back on the past academic year, I'm also reflecting on my first full year at Harington as Senior Fundraising and Marketing Officer. It was a busy, varied and rewarding year, and I thought it would be nice to take the opportunity to share with the Friends a little more about what I've been working on, some of the things we've achieved together, and what I'm hoping to focus on in the year ahead.

I joined Harington at a challenging time financially. As you will be aware, like many charities and organisations across the sector Harington has been navigating a difficult funding environment, with rising costs and increasing competition for charitable funding. I came into the role with a particular focus on helping to address a shortfall in our income and, importantly, on securing more unrestricted funding.

You may have heard this term before, but unrestricted funding is particularly valuable to Harington because it gives us the flexibility to use money wherever it is most needed. Rather than being tied to one particular project or activity, it allows us to respond to changing needs and put resources where they can have the greatest impact.

This is why the generous support we receive from the Friends of Harington is so important. Your donation is unrestricted, giving Harington that flexibility at a time when it is needed more than ever, and we are incredibly grateful for it. We do however provide you with an impact report with some examples of how far your money goes and how it directly supports our students (please find the 2025/26 Impact report attached separately with the newsletter email).

A large part of my role is spent working with charitable trusts and foundations. This involves researching potential funders, developing applications and writing case for support documents, as well as making bespoke approaches to funders and responding to their individual requirements. It can be a lengthy process, and competition is incredibly high, but we have had some encouraging successes over the past year. Some examples of our success





include securing funding from the Finnis Scott Foundation towards horticulture equipment for the 2026/27 academic year, as well as funding from the Insurance Industry Charitable Trust towards employability support and training for our teachers. These grants will directly support the training and opportunities we can offer our students. longside trusts and foundations, I have

also been working to develop our relationships with individual supporters. One of the biggest parts of this has been the launch of our Root for Harington fundraising campaign.

This has been a really valuable opportunity to bring together some of our long-standing supporters, while also introducing Harington to new people who may not have known about our work before.

It has also been lovely to have more opportunities to welcome supporters onto our Highgate site over the past year. We held two events at Harington, one in the winter and



another in the spring, which gave us the chance to thank supporters in person, show them around, and share more about what has been happening across Harington. I'm hoping to hold a few more events at Harington over the coming year, giving more people the opportunity to come and see the site, meet our staff and students, and learn more about what we do.

One of the highlights of our spring event was a tour led by one of our students, Nico. We were so pleased with how this went and with the lovely feedback he received. It also made us think about how valuable these opportunities can be for our students themselves.

Leading a tour gives students the chance to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise, practice public speaking, interact with visitors and build their confidence. These are all skills that contribute to their wider employability and independence, so the experience can be just as valuable for the student leading the tour as it is for the person visiting.





I want to finish by saying thank you. The support of our Friends, donors and wider Harington community really does make such a difference.

There are many different ways to support Harington, and one of the simplest is to spread the word about what we do. If you use social media, you can find us on Instagram at @haringtoncharity, and we're also on LinkedIn, just search for Harington.

If you're not already following us, we'd be so grateful if you would give us a follow. Liking, commenting on and sharing our posts is a great way to help us reach more people and introduce Harington to potential supporters, volunteers, employers and members of our wider community.

I look forward to hopefully seeing many more of you at Harington during the next academic year!

Harington Spring Sale

Saturday 6th May 2026

This year our Spring Sale took place for one day only on Saturday 2nd May from 10am to 1pm. The Harington staff team and students were as busy as ever, if not more so this year. There was a wonderful atmosphere on the whole site with sunny, warm Spring weather.

In the Walled Garden, families, friends and supporters busily making their purchases, and returning customers told us they had a very good crop from last years' vegetable and herb plants, and that the quality was excellent. This year tomatoes and courgettes were particularly sought-after and flew off the stall!

We also had a lot of admiration from the public for the stunning maintenance of the perennial flowers for sale in the Greenhouse. This work is part of the students' curriculum, and it takes a lot of work and energy from to achieve.

Harington Students, their Tutors and Learning Support Assistants are all talented with so much professionalism and enthusiasm to offer.

This year the London Metropolitan Brass received a standing ovation for their innovative musical programme. Denis, the Conductor said there are now 31 members of the London Metropolitan Brass.

Our much-loved Volunteer Janet Hurford played the tuba, and there were 5 tuba players on the day! We were all spoilt for choice with a fantastic selection of wonderful brass instruments, and it was such a joy to listen to live music in the Walled Garden. Janet kindly provided us with their Set List below:

Breezing Down Broadway, Life on Mars, The Impossible Dream (solo for our soprano cornet player Jenny), Bewitched, Deep Space Nine, Demelza (solo for our horn player Paul), Blades of Toledo (featuring our trombone section), Dr Who theme, Thunderbirds, Mad World, I Wanna Be Like You (solo for bass trombone player Vadim), Carrickfergus (solo for repiano cornet player Mike), Second Suite in F Major, Knights of Cydonia, The Addams Family, Hogwarts March.







Stalls at the Harington Spring Sale

Back in May, we had a wonderful day at our Spring Sale, with many visitors joining us at our Highgate site to browse plants, enjoy activities and stalls, and soak up the sunshine.

CJ's Bakery was established by James, who is now an Assistant Gardener at Harington, and his mother, family and friends work for this successful business.



The Harington Charity Shops Vintage Stall was popular and generated so much interest in the Walled Garden with a wonderful selection of vintage clothes and mixed items for sale, curated by Elena Alberti, Harington Retail Operations Manager and Andrea Shemelides, Shop Manager at the Highgate charity shop in Archway Road.

It was amazing to see how the careful selection of donated clothes and other contributed to Harington's sales on the day.



Elena Alberti and Andrea Shemelides, staff from the Harington Retail team.

This year we were introduced by a member of staff, to Maria from **Zenom, Wellness Rituals.** Maria is a professional provider of back and neck massages. A long line of customers formed on the day for Maria's expert chair massages, one aspect of the Zenom's wellness rituals service.



Harington Students' Crafts Stall was as busy as ever. The Students working at the stall sold hand marbled vases and glazed clay plants labels. They also sold the Harington Students' vibrant Artwork as sets of 5 printed postcards, packets of wildflower seeds, and brightly coloured moulded acrylic keyrings.

The Friends of Harington refreshments were a particular hit, while the raffle saw lots of our visitors heading home very happily with their prizes. A huge thank you to all the Friends who worked and volunteered on the day, as well as those who secured raffle prizes and made delicious jams, preserves and cakes to sell. Your outstanding support always make the Harington Sales such a success!



Friends of Harington selling raffle tickets at our Spring Sale.

Harington Students win Jack Petchey Awards

by Dora Anyi,
Harington English Tutor



The Jack Petchey Foundation was set up by Sir Jack Petchey CBE to inspire and motivate young people across London and Essex to do their best and reach their full potential.

At Harington, students vote for their peers in recognition of their hard work, dedication, and positive contributions. We then hold an internal event which is a wonderful occasion to celebrate the achievement of the students.

This year, all the award winners were invited to attend a fun award ceremony to be presented with a medallion in front of their families and friends.

Nico, Joanna, Ruby, James, and Medhane, all smartly dressed, walked proudly and confidently onto the stage to receive their well-deserved medals. Their commitment and effort have not gone unnoticed, and they should be extremely proud of their achievements.

Congratulations to all our award winners, who are excellent role models and an inspiration to others.

🏅 **Well done, everyone!** 🎉



From Left to right at back: Rachel White, Harington LSA and student Medhane, Dora Anyi, Harington English Tutor, students Ruby and James. Front row: Tiffany Connelly, Harington Horticulture Tutor.

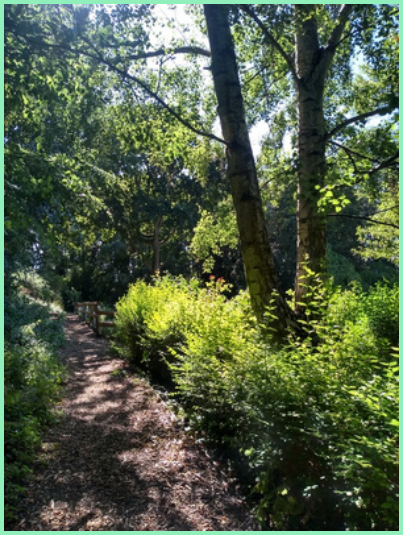
Harington Site photos Summer 2026



Pathway to the green Portacabin classroom on the right.



Odichima and Mary, Students on Placements from Middlesex University.



Shady areas downside during the heat wave in July.

Hort News

by Lee Haley, Harington Vocational Trainer

It seems early to be thinking of daffodils but now is the time to be planting them, to produce optimum blooms in time for Spring. We have an incredible selection to enter in flower shows next Spring as well as to sell to the public in the period leading up. As well as daffodils we also will be selling a range of Hyacinths, tulips, Muscari and a fantastic range of festive houseplants and bedding plants at our Winter sale.

Sweet peas will be sown in the last week of October this year. Last year we did them during the first week and found they were too advanced by January, and we would like them more stocky and less leggy by that point.

We are all keen to see what kind of flowers we will see from the new crossbreed by student Alice Thompson. Last year we grew the F1 seeds which, as expected, all bore the same characteristics.

From those plants we collected seeds for the F2 generation. These will produce different types of flowers, from which we will select whichever is the best for the F3 seed, while culling the others. Fixing a new cultivar of sweet pea can take several years and a minimum of three.

We are being given expert guidance by Roger Parsons and Phil Johnson, both of whom are our National Sweet Pea authorities.



Sweet Pea seeds developing in the polytunnel.

The best place to buy sweet pea seeds is from us, either from our stall in Pond Square, or at the Christmas sale. However, we recommend Autumn sowing in order for plants to beat the heat.

These earlier sown plants will be a bit more established and will flower sooner than those sown in Spring. We will have a great selection and are happy to advise you on how to grow and them and how to realise their full potential.

New groups of students are now settling in during the first few weeks back. For now, our main battle is against the weeds which have sprung up over the holidays and are now attempting to lay claim to various parts of the site.

It's funny how sometimes the plants that you don't do anything to help sometimes seem to do really well, and at the same time even if you do everything for your plants, they might not always do great.

However, this is not a lesson to learn, as we believe that it pays to keep trying, rather than giving up and not doing anything!



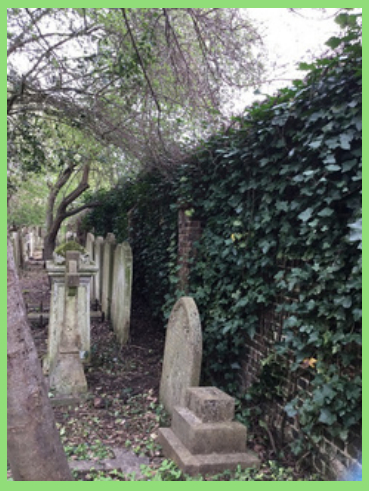
Our prize winning Chrysanths at Muswell Hill's Autumn show.

Harington Students Restore Highgate Cemetery

Harington Students have been making a massive difference in the community through a weekly work experience placement at the historic Highgate Cemetery. Each week, the group rolls up their sleeves to take on essential landscaping and maintenance tasks, learning valuable hands-on skills while helping to preserve one of London's most famous landmarks.

The team has been incredibly busy improving the safety and accessibility of the grounds. They have successfully recontoured uneven banks to create gentle, safe curves and cleared heavy debris and rocks from steep paths. Using a professional range of equipment, including border forks, loppers, and hand forks, the students have been busy weeding, pruning hedges, and removing moss to keep the walkways clear for visitors.

A major highlight of their work has been the restoration of the cemetery's heritage features. The students have carefully removed ivy from six large wall panels, as well as from various graves and monuments. By clearing this overgrowth and removing epicormic growth from the trees, they have completely transformed the aesthetic look of the cemetery, revealing the beautiful historic stonework that was once hidden.



Highgate Cemetery wall covered in ivy.



The heritage wall tansformed by Harington students.

The project is also a lesson in teamwork and environmental care. Working in small groups, the students have been using string-tyne rakes, landscaping rakes, and leaf blowers to collect debris for composting. They have even taken on he task of tilling and top-soiling muddy areas, spreading fresh grass seed to help turn bare patches of ground into lush, grassy banks, all while using wheelbarrows to transport heavy materials safely across the site.

The pride they take in their work is evident in the visible "glow up" of the cemetery grounds, and they are quickly becoming a vital part of the Highgate maintenance team.







A few of the Harington Work Placement Students working at Highgate Cemetery.

Looking ahead, the partnership with the cemetery is set to grow even further.

The class have now set up the stall on-site on a weekly basis and have already sold £125 worth of Harington stock and fresh produce grown by the students themselves.

This will provide a brilliant opportunity for them to develop their enterprise and communication skills while interacting with the many visitors who come to admire their hard work.

We are also delighted to share some wonderful news about the impact our students have had during their work experience at Highgate Cemetery as part of the Unlocking Highgate Cemetery project.

Highgate Cemetery has recently been awarded a £6.7 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

This is an exciting milestone for the site, and our students have played a meaningful part in this journey.

You can read more about the announcementand watch the new film in which Harington features at around the 3 minute 30 mark.

You can also view the section of the Highgate Cemetery website that highlights our work experience partnership.

We were especially touched to receive the following message from the cemetery:

"I'd particularly like to thank you and Harington Scheme participants for being part of our film. We really are grateful to you for making the time and agreeing to be filmed.

The passion and wonderful words that were captured really help share what is special about Highgate Cemetery, what it means to many people and what it could mean to many more people in the future."

This feedback reflects the dedication, enthusiasm, and maturity of the students throughout their time at the cemetery. Their contribution has been genuinely valued, and they should feel incredibly proud of the role they have played in such a significant project.

Pond Square Market Stall News

By Stephen Hamill, Harington Day Service Lead/ Learning Support Assistant



Since April this year L1 students, together with Day Service, have made a consistent effort to run the Pond Square market stall every Thursday. Having a regular stall is a great way to cultivate links with the local community whilst generating some extra revenue for Harington.

It represents the final stage where the flowers and vegetables that have been grown from seed by students can then be sold on to and appreciated by members of the public.

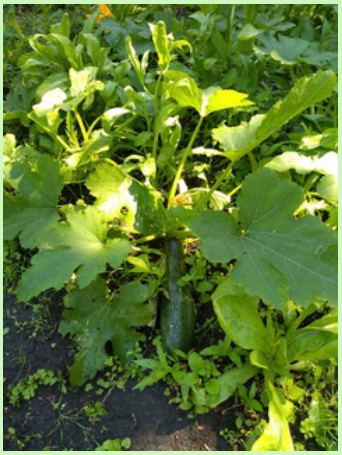
From our range of potted plants, last year the Osteospermums were very popular as well as sweet pea posies. Customers also bought a lot of Pelargoniums, Cornflowers, Calendulas, Cosmos and Sunflowers along with tomato, cucumber, courgette and bean plants.



In addition to the Pond Square market stall, E3 Students started running a stall at Highgate Cemetery as part of their work experience on Tuesdays.

Students involved with both stalls have had the opportunity to gain valuable sales experience interacting with customers, as well as handling card and cash payments.

Thank you to everyone who has visited our market stall, and we hope to see you this academic year!



Harington Students' Work Placements at London Zoo

by Marcus Pieters-Pindelski, Harington Job Coach



Harington learners have, since early 2026 worked closely with ZSL London Zoo staff to engage in litter picking and tidying, sweeping, window cleaning, watering and seed planting onsite. This has given students the opportunity to learn valuable skills in a public environment.

It is, of course, a unique environment and one of the most recognisable and famous zoos in the world. The students have greatly benefited from this, not least in their enthusiasm to learn and gaining valuable life skills in a London landmark.



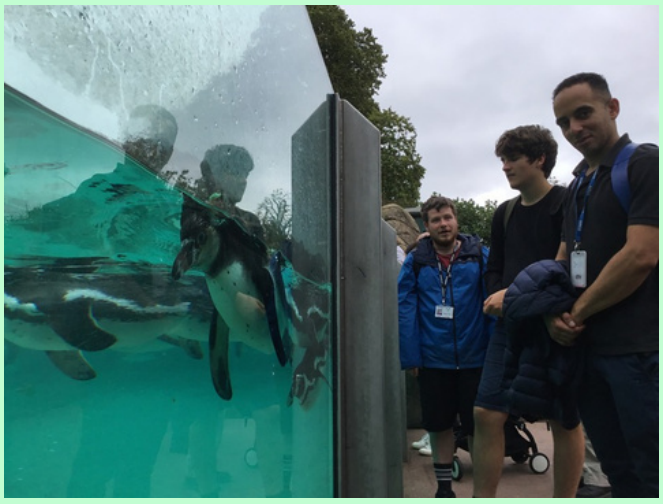
Harington Students Sam and Youla experiencing their work placements at London Zoo.

The placement itself has been eventful. Learners got to see different animals around the site, interact with staff, work alongside animal enclosures and learn employability skills such as emptying public bins, seed planting and site maintenance.

As memorable as this was, one particular day stands out also. For security reasons information was kept secret from Harington learners until the day itself. Towards the end of their time at London Zoo, the zoo staff and people onsite were gifted a visit by their Royal Highnesses King Charles and Queen Camilla in honour of London Zoo's 200th anniversary. The learners got to see them both up close and had a particularly memorable day, experiencing not only the zoo itself but a public event also.

The zoo has, overall, left a lasting impression on many of our learners. Many of them also got to





Valuable time out to enjoy the London Zoo.

experience regular interaction with the staff, learnt more about animals that inhabited the zoo as well as improved their confidence and communication.

The students have experienced a lot in a short space of time by being there; learning not only skills onsite but improving their ability to travel safely on public transport in areas of busy transit. This experience has been valuable for both students and staff alike.

"A big thank you to all the staff at ZSL London Zoo as well as all the staff at Harington who made this opportunity possible. Most of all, thank you to the students. With your hard work, you have done us proud."