

Bromham Conservation Group Newsletter

Christmas 2021



Dear all,

Welcome to our Christmas newsletter, which replaces separate issues for December and January. A provisional conservation programme for 2022 has been prepared, although as always our scheduled activities are subject to change to meet new demands.

Although Covid regulations are less strict than they were at this time last year, the coronavirus is still highly infectious and we have to minimise the risk to volunteers. Fortunately, working mainly outside on open sites with plenty of fresh air carries a relatively low risk and social distancing is built into most of what we do.

We will continue our usual working pattern of the first Sunday and Monday mornings and usually the third Wednesday morning of each month. We also have a weekly Monday afternoon session at the Mill to provide extra effort and to encourage new volunteers to come forward. However, are suspending monthly Monday evening sessions at the Mill until April.

After concern about the condition of the roofs on the two large barns at the Mill, both buildings have been fenced off to reduce accident risks. Having moved our tools and equipment into the rear (nature) barn we need access, but may have to restrict who and how many volunteers can enter the building.



Sadly, safety concern about emergency exit from the Mill building itself has also led to restricted public access to the museum areas housing the millwheel and milling machinery. Fortunately, this has not adversely affected the popular café operation.

We have started one of our new projects at the Mill to create a new conservation area adjacent to the brook to encourage wildlife to flourish without human disturbance. A fence has now been erected to mark off the area out of bounds to visitors. See more on this below.

We are also delighted that work has started on improving the area around the pond behind the football pitch at Parklands and look forward to working closely with the local volunteers who are handling most of the work.

New volunteers are always welcome to our activities. If you like doing practical things outdoors and have a little spare time, come and join us. It's good fun, a great way to keep fit and you play your part in keeping the local environment in good shape too.

*A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
from Bromham Conservation
Group*



Christmas at the Mill

Conservation Group members have been busy helping the village celebrate Christmas by installing a Nativity scene and other seasonal features inside and outside the buildings at Bromham Mill. If you haven't seen the displays, do make time for a visit - the decorations will be on view every day until the Mill closes for Christmas. And do take the opportunity of seasonal fare at the café, which is open until 8pm right through to Christmas Eve.



Work outside also continued in December with the erection of a fence marking the boundary of the new conservation area where we need to discourage visitors. Our photo shows volunteers setting stout posts to hold the wire fence. We hope the fence will eventually become unnecessary as vegetation gradually takes over and designates the new area with a natural hedge.



Programme January to March 2022



Morning sessions

Our morning sessions are normally on the first Sunday and Monday, followed usually by the third Wednesday morning each month. Morning sessions start at 10am and finish at 12-12.30pm.

Afternoon and evening sessions

We also hold regular Monday afternoon sessions from 1.30 to 3.30pm at Bromham Mill to get indoor work done while the café is closed, as well as gardening and other outdoor tasks. Our monthly Monday evening sessions at the Mill have been suspended for the winter months, but will resume in late April when there is enough natural light to support painting and other indoor tasks.

Sun 9, Mon 10 Jan, 10-12.30: Bromham Lake Local Nature Reserve

Coppicing willow thickets, repairing screens and making repairs to the bird hide at the head of the lake.

One weekend during January or February we hope to re-launch the tern raft with help from a local kayak club. If you are interested in helping, please let us know as the job may be arranged at short notice when the kayakers are available and the weather is suitable.

Mon 10, 17, 24, 31 Jan, 1.30-3.30: Bromham Mill
Essential garden maintenance, cleaning and painting buildings if we have suitable weather for the time of year.

Wed 19 Jan, 10-12.30: Community Orchard, Parklands

Pruning apple and pear trees, and clearing brambles and other unwanted vegetation to maintain paths for horse riders and walkers.

Tue 25 January, 7pm: Group AGM at Village Hall
The AGM will be held in room 3 at the Village Hall subject to Covid regulations. If we are unable to hold a proper in-person meeting we may switch to a virtual meeting on Zoom at the same date and time.

Sun 6, Mon 7 Feb, 10-12.30: Salem Thrift

Clearing rides and managing selected woodland areas to encourage new growth. Laying waste woodchip on paths and rides that have become muddy.



Clearing the rides at Salem Thrift



Repairing the footbridge at the Nature Reserve

Scheduled sessions at Salem Thrift may include working with Parklands residents to maintain ditches and the pond area, as well as the Community Orchard.

Mon 7, 14, 21, 28 Feb, 1.30-3.30: Bromham Mill

Essential garden maintenance, cleaning and painting buildings.

Wed 16 Feb, 10-12.30: Paddock Pond, Lower Farm Road

Routine maintenance, trimming hedges and removing unwanted vegetation.

Sun 6, Mon 7, Wed 16 Mar, 10-12.30: Bromham Lake Local Nature Reserve

Selective coppicing, clearing paths and repairing bridges, fences and steps on footpaths, reconstructing viewing points around the lake.

Mon 7, 14, 21, 28 Mar, 1.30-3.30pm: Bromham Mill

Essential garden maintenance, cleaning and painting buildings.

Where we meet

We meet outside the rear (nature) barn at Bromham Mill, at the main entrance to the Nature Reserve, the vehicle access off the Glade in Salem Thrift, or on site at our other locations. With temporary safety fencing now surrounding both barns at the Mill, access to our tool store may be restricted. The vehicle gate and car park at the Mill are now open during daytime hours. We hope the outside toilets there will reopen soon, but there are no toilet facilities at our other sites.

Parklands pond

Following an environmental study commissioned by the parish council, a new project has started to renovate and improve the area around the pond on the brook near the Parklands sports field. A group of local residents will undertake the work in the coming months, following their own timetable. We have scheduled a few dates when other BCG volunteers will be available to support the work if required. If you would like to be involved in the project, we will gladly put you in touch with project leader Al Barnes.



Volunteering at Bromham Mill



With the Mill café now open six days a week, we will continue cleaning, painting and making small repairs to the buildings, helping maintain the mill machinery and keeping the grounds in good order, including the woodland fairy walk. We hold regular sessions at the Mill throughout the year and supplement these with ad hoc working parties to get specific tasks done.

Our monthly Monday evening sessions from 6.30 to 8pm at the Mill will resume in late April. We also meet at the Mill every Monday afternoon from 1.30 to 3.30pm, to maintain the gardens and carry out painting and cleaning inside the building. We have chosen Monday, when the café is closed and there are fewer visitors on site, as the best day to work inside. We hope these regular afternoon and evening sessions may attract new volunteers to take part.

We are keen to reach out in different ways to residents in or near Bromham who may be interested in volunteering at the Mill. We will continue working closely with Friends of Bromham Mill, Bromham Nature Club and the parish council as we develop our plans and undertake further work at the Mill.

All scheduled sessions are listed in our monthly newsletter and anyone is welcome to join us. If you are interested in learning more about ad hoc work at the Mill, please phone Phil Grabham (07840 140166), who can add you to a new WhatsApp group called **Work at Bromham Mill**.



We do not expect anyone to volunteer for all the work we undertake, either at the Mill or elsewhere in the village. We hope working at various locations, at different times, and the very varied types of work in our programme will attract a more diverse group of volunteers. Any time that you can donate to voluntary work anywhere part of the village is greatly valued by both the parish and borough councils and we hope the results are appreciated by the whole community too.



How to join us



Just turn up

There is no need to tell us beforehand if you want to join a particular work session. If more volunteers turn up than we need for the main tasks in hand, we find other jobs that need doing on the same site or elsewhere in the village.

We suggest you provide an emergency phone number to help the team leader get in touch if you should feel unwell or have a minor accident. Basic first aid is always available, but we can arrange for other volunteers to receive first aid training.

Team leaders

The team leader for each session is usually a committee member or another volunteer familiar with the task. The team leader manages the work done, organises the issue of tools, and completes a log to record who takes part and for how long. This is to record how much work we do on a particular task and does not require sharing personal data.

To share the workload, we welcome other experienced volunteers prepared to act as team leaders. Please let us know if you are interested in helping to lead our tasks.

Issuing and using tools

Our collection of loppers, secateurs, forks, spades, rakes and other tools is available for the tasks in hand. The team leader or a designated deputy is responsible for issuing and returning tools to our store at the Mill.

Volunteers are encouraged to bring and use their own basic hand garden tools, such as trowels, loppers, secateurs and pruning saws. Tools brought from home are for the owner's use and should not normally be shared.

How we use your personal data

We hold your name, email address (and home address and phone number if provided) to send you this newsletter and to tell you about our work and local projects in which you may be interested. We also record your participation in our work sessions to provide statistics on the effort given by volunteers, but no personal data is shared. We keep your details secure and when you no longer wish to hear from us we will promptly delete them.



Group Committee

Chairman:	Phil Grabham
Secretary:	Peter Argyle
Scientific adviser:	Helen Muir-Howie
Others:	Anne Cotton
	Ted Cotton
	Lucy Craddock
	Steve Daniels
	Ben Lusby
	John Orchard

Contact us

Peter Argyle
Group Secretary
01234 822698
07756 671588

bcg@peterargyle.plus.com

Phil Grabham
Group Chairman
07840 140166

