

Bromham Conservation Group Newsletter

February 2022



Welcome to our February newsletter, which includes our scheduled activities up to the end of May. You will find several new things in this issue as we revise our work programme to take on new challenges and try to broaden our appeal to attract a more diverse group of volunteers.

Group AGM

Many thanks to all who attended our AGM on 25 January, when we reviewed our achievements in the past year and discussed priorities for 2022. We were pleased to report over 1,150 volunteer hours donated to our work in the nine months of 2021 when we were able to operate. The existing committee was re-elected, apart from Lucy Craddock who decided to step down. We are grateful for her contribution and look forward to her continued support.

Facebook

One of Lucy's recent contributions was to help us set up a new Facebook page to help increase local interest in and support for what we do, and to encourage new volunteers. If you use Facebook, please visit the new page at **@BromhamConservationGroup** and use it to share information and ideas on local conservation and what we should be doing as a group. We plan to link it soon to the popular Bromham Village Group page.

Work programme

Although Covid regulations are now much less strict than they were just a year ago, 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 have returned to our regular 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 help undertake the many tasks needed here. We will re-start



Clearing overgrown reeds near the Mill



Resurfacing the Woodland Walk at the Mill

our monthly Monday evening sessions at the Mill in late April and hope working at different times will encourage new volunteers to join us.

Safety concerns

After concern about the condition of the roofs on the two large barns at the Mill, both buildings have been fenced off to reduce the accident risk. Although we still have limited access to the rear barn where our tools and equipment are stored, we have to restrict who and how many volunteers can enter the building. We will shortly be inviting volunteers to help move our kit out of the building before the much needed roof repairs begin in the spring.

Safety concern about emergency exit from the Mill building is also restricting public access to the museum areas housing the millwheel and milling machinery. We do not yet know how and when this will be resolved, but fortunately it has not adversely affected the café, which we are delighted to see proving very popular.

New projects

We have now started our new project to create a small conservation area at the Mill adjacent to the brook, where local wildlife can flourish with less human disturbance. A fence has been erected to mark off the area out of bounds to visitors. Further effort in the coming weeks will help establish this area before we leave nature to get on with life undisturbed.

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

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

Programme February to May 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 were suspended for the winter months, but will resume in late April when there is enough natural light to support both indoor and outdoor tasks.

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 liable to become muddy.

Mon 7, 14, 21, 28 Feb, 1.30-3.30pm: Weekly afternoons at 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 fallen or undesirable vegetation around the pond.

Weekend date in Feb or Mar to be confirmed: Bromham Lake Local Nature Reserve

Re-launching and anchoring the existing tern raft on the lake with kind support from a local canoe club. Volunteers needed on terra firma: let us know if you wish to take part as the job may be arranged at short notice.

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: Weekly afternoons at Bromham Mill

Essential garden maintenance, cleaning and painting buildings.



Trimming blackthorn hedges at Paddock pond



Opening new woodland clearings in Salem Thrift

April at Bromham Mill

Sun 3, Mon 4, Wed 13 Apr, 10-12.30

Mon 4, 11, 25 Apr, 1.30-3.30pm

Mon 25 Apr, 6-8pm

Maintaining and developing the grounds, including the popular Woodland Fairy Walk and garden areas. Further work to create a new nature conservation area near the brook. Painting and limited repairs to Mill buildings will continue.

Our monthly volunteer evenings at the Mill will resume on Monday 25 April, but there will be no afternoon session on Easter Monday Bank Holiday, 18 April.

Sun 8, Mon 9, Wed 18 May, 10-12.30: Parklands pond

Clearing and developing the pond near the football field, working with the Parklands volunteer group. Further information to follow.

Mon 9, 16, 23, 30 May: Weekly afternoons at Bromham Mill

Essential garden maintenance, cleaning and painting buildings. There here will be no afternoon session on the Early Spring Bank Holiday, 2 May.

Mon 30 May, 6-8pm: Volunteer evening at Bromham Mill

Gardening, cleaning, painting and making limited repairs to buildings.

Where we meet

We meet outside the rear (nature) barn at Bromham Mill, at the main entrance to the Nature Reserve, at the vehicle access off the Glade in Salem Thrift and elsewhere at the working venue. With temporary safety fencing now surrounding both barns at the Mill, access to our tool store is currently restricted.

The vehicle gate and car park at Bromham 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.

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 at the end of April. We also meet at the Mill most Monday afternoons from 1.30 to 3.30pm, to maintain the gardens and carry out cleaning, painting and servicing mill machinery inside the building. We have chosen Monday as the best day to work inside, while the café is closed and there are fewer visitors on site. We hope to attract new volunteers for these regular afternoon and evening sessions.

We are keen to reach out in different ways to residents living in or close to Bromham who may be interested in volunteering. 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 supporting our 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 in 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 available, but we can arrange for 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 garden hand 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 Steve Daniels Ben Lusby John Orchard

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New Facebook page
[@BromhamConservationGroup](https://www.facebook.com/BromhamConservationGroup)