



April 2021

Dear Members,

Spring Newsletter

Welcome to your Spring newsletter. The Friends group have really missed the monthly 'Task Days' in the park and 'Thursday Workdays' in the Old Orchard. This week we have been informed by Medway Council that we can commence 'Task Days' from the beginning of April. More details about this later in this newsletter.

Our Park has been well used by many during Lockdown and has proven to be the 'Hidden Gem' and safe haven we are so proud of. It has also been heartening to see members of public and particularly children litter picking to keep the park in good repair.

We have continued with our committee meetings via Zoom which are still working well but we are looking forward to sitting round a table face to face.

Damson Hedge at top of Broomhill Park (Footpath RR5)

You may have noticed the landscape works that were started at the end of last year alongside the pathway at the top of the park. These are to improve light levels and sense of safety, open up view points towards the Thames and to rejuvenate the damson hedge. The initial clearance and pruning works have been completed, allowing for the creation of a laid damson hedge. A hedge needs to be rejuvenated from the base and hedge laying is one of the best and most traditional ways of doing this. It is a craft which has been practised for hundreds of years. A laid hedge provides a dense habitat for wildlife but most importantly it encourages new growth that starts a new life cycle of the hedge. Our volunteers will be working on this project over the coming year, planting damson whips into the hedge line and continuing to maintain the area. We hope that by Spring 2022 there will be enough new growth to begin the laying. We would like to say a special thank you to Cllr. Stephen Hubbard who generously donated funds to support this beneficial project.



Damson Hedge Project

BeeWalk

We completed the first Bee Walk of 2021 in the glorious March sunshine, and were very pleased to see a Red-tailed Bumblebee queen and 2 Buff-tailed bumblebees. We joined this Bumblebee Conservation Trust project last year, monitoring the abundance of bumblebees on transects across the country.



Bee Walk at Broomhill Park

Crocuses for Sunlight Rotary Polio Campaign

Last November, Medway Sunlight Rotary gave us 1000 more purple crocus bulbs, which our volunteers planted in the park. Rotary has worked tirelessly since it pledged more than 30 years ago to help rid the world of Polio. I'm sure you'll agree that it is a real delight to see the carpet of purple appear in Spring!

Crocuses at Broomhill Park



Tree Planting in Medway

Last year, Medway Council secured a grant from the Forestry Commission under the Urban Tree Challenge Fund initiative, for the planting of thousands of young trees, creating new areas of community woodland on our greenspaces across Medway. Thanks to the hard work of the Council's Greenspaces team and with the support of Norse, new trees have been planted in time for spring. Ten sites across Medway have benefited from the new community woodlands, including Priestfields, Horsted Valley, the Strand and Hook Meadow. Over the coming years these new pocket-sized woods will grow, adding to our wildlife biodiversity, helping remove pollutants from the air, supporting the global effort to reduce carbon in our atmosphere and improving the landscape of our greenspaces.



New trees planted at the Strand - March 2021

Volunteering

As we ease out of lockdown, we will be resuming our workgroups and task days from the beginning of April with Covid-19 related guidelines in place as follows:

Sunday 11 April from 10 – 12 noon - Work in Broomhill Park

There will be 2 work groups of 6 (max) plus a group leader

Group 1 – Litter picking

Group 2 – Scrub and Ivy clearing

If you want to attend the Sunday session **you must book a place in advance either -**
by email to secretary@friendsofbroomhill.org.uk.
or phone **secretary (David) on 07968 380588**

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Please bring your own gloves and face covering.

You will have to maintain social distancing of 2m

We will provide hand sanitiser and sanitised tools

Meet in Broomhill car park, end of King Arthurs Drive, at 9.50 for registration and briefing

Every Thursday (commencing 7 April) from 10 – 12 am – Work in The Old Orchard

Our Thursday morning workgroup concentrates on the maintenance of the Old Orchard woodland area. Every Thursday morning throughout the year, 10am to 12 Noon, meet in the car park at 10am - all welcome, You do not need to book for these sessions, just turn up.

Whilst Government Covid-19 guidelines are in place –

Please bring your own gloves and face covering

We will have hand sanitiser available

Sanitised tools provided or bring your own

Please see our website for latest information <https://www.friendsofbroomhill.org.uk>

Friends of Broomhill will continue to thrive if we maintain a regular team of volunteers who enjoy attending our workgroups and task days, so if you or someone you know are interested in helping us, please get in touch. No experience needed, all tools are provided, so just come along and join in! (Email: secretary@friendsofbroomhill.org.uk).

Membership Renewal

We are sorry for the delay in sending out membership renewal reminders this year, but we are in the process of opening a new bank account and a paypal account, we are endeavouring to make payments as easy as possible for you our members.

If your membership is about to expire, our Membership Secretary will very shortly send you our revised membership form (containing details of the new account for anyone who wishes set up a standing order or pay by bank transfer) and a gift aid form.

We do hope that you will continue to support us. The park and orchard have been extremely valuable to the local community during the pandemic and the membership fee provides us with funding to purchase tools, plants, seeds and bulbs.

With our very best wishes to you,

May Draper Chair and the FOB Trustees