



You ask . . .

How do I become a supporter of Bramingham Wood ?

What's involved . . . ?

In the details below, you will find brief descriptions of what we get up to. You are welcome to get involved as little or as much as you would like.
Please ask if you require any further information.

INFORMAL

Many people who enjoy the woods, help informally by reporting on anything untoward, collecting bits of litter etc. We are very grateful for this help but just ask that people let us know they are "doing their bit", so we can keep in touch with them.

NEWSLETTERS

We publish four quarterly newsletters each year and you are welcome to have your name added to our circulation list for a mere £2. Please contact Moira on 01582 581097 for further details.

HANDS-ON

Should you wish to become an active volunteer then we shall be very pleased to have you along. We meet on Saturdays, once a fortnight from early September to around the end of April when we go three-weekly until the end of July.

We meet at the rear of Lea Manor Sports Centre (near the all-weather pitch) at 10 am on work party days and usually aim to pack up around 3.30pm. You are welcome to join in at any time during the day but please let us know you intend to come along otherwise you could spend all your time looking for us. We stop for lunch around 12.30 so bring food and drink with you.



involves STRIMMING the grass in the glade and along the main ride - this gives the wild flowers a better chance in the Spring.

For working, wear suitable footwear (it can get very muddy at times) plus gardening gloves and waterproof just in case the weather turns. By the way, we never cancel a work party because of the weather though we may pack up early if it is particularly bad.

One thing is certain, in winter, the weather is much worse outside the wood than in where it is surprisingly sheltered and comparatively warm.

The working year begins with TOOL MAINTENANCE - cleaning and sharpening the tools, replacing saw blades etc. The second work party



From then until the coppicing starts, we have roving work parties around the wood attending to literally anything that needs attending to.

The COPPICING starts in late October and once an area is established, there is usually a bonfire going which you can sidle up to whenever you feel the need. For the management work we use mainly bow saws and billhooks.

Obviously they are sharp and potentially dangerous items but we give full training on how to use them safely. The technique for using them is well explained and first-time volunteers soon become adept.



We don't use power tools (except for the stimmers mentioned earlier). Apart from having to have various qualifications, safety equipment etc etc, it is anti-social - you can't hold much of a conversation when power tools are used.

Coppicing and general maintenance of rides etc can be hard work, but we expect only for you to work at your own pace - you are a volunteer after all.

Coppicing ends by mid-February when we then move on to other work which includes CHIPPING the brash created from coppicing and spreading them on the rides, ENTRANCE REPAIRS or construction, CLEARING THE PONDS, RIDE MAINTENANCE and any SAFETY WORK that is required. Unfortunately, there is always LITTER to collect.



MEETINGS

We hold regular meetings roughly every six or seven weeks throughout the year. They are very informal affairs and give everyone the opportunity to discuss the work programmes, management plan, social events -- anything at all that the group get involved with.

The meetings are held at St Augustine's Scout Hall in Icknield Way, Luton from 8pm. Refreshments are provided.

WILDLIFE RECORDING

An important aspect of our work is monitoring and recording the wildlife in the woods and even after over 20 years, we are still coming up with new records. Your first reaction may be "I don't know enough about the wildlife", but you'd be surprised how you pick it up as you go along. All you need is an enquiring mind, a couple of good reference books and some guidance from those in the group who know what to look for. It may seem quite daunting but you find one thing, identify it and then move on. Within a very short space of time you'll realise how your knowledge has built up.



NEWSLETTER

Our newsletter editor is always on the look-out for interesting pieces to include in the newsletter. If you feel like helping with this - or its production, Moira will be pleased to hear from you.

WEB SITE

Similarly, our webmaster is keep to develop our website and ensure its kept up-to-date. Help in this direction will be very much appreciated. If you have any good photos of the wood or its wildlife, we shall be pleased to include them.

SCHOOL LIAISON

Something we have never been able to develop has been a working relationship with local schools. We feel that the wood is a huge educational source waiting to be tapped but lack that someone who can liaise with schools in the area helping the pupils enjoy what's on their doorstep.

CONTACTS

For more information on the wood and its volunteer group, contact Rod on 01582 896860 or John on 079 410 76620 or email the website.

