

# FRIENDS OF BROOMFIELD PARK



## Volunteer Update May/June 2026

### Introduction

FoBP volunteer group coordinators were contacted during April 2026 with a request to report on current activities and share successes and challenges. These individual updates are collated into this report which will be shared with the Trustees of FoBP and form part of the discussions at our regular Volunteer network meetings. In addition, these reports contribute to ongoing social media messaging and will be an invaluable resource when we compile our annual report.

### Habitats Group: Matthew Pierce

#### Successes

- Three people joined the group; twelve regular volunteers attend each week.
- Trees on Aldermans Hill, from the NW corner of the park to the Boating Pond, have had plastic tree protectors removed. They are now well established, and it is good to remove plastic from the environment.
- Regular surveys of bumblebees and birds have begun, using methodologies from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and British Trust for Ornithology.
- We cut reeds on the wetlands banks and stepping stones to improve public access.
- To tackle anti-social behaviour we secured the orchard by filling gaps in the hedge between the growing space and the orchard with thorn branches.
- We have brought ten raised beds in the growing space back into use, mainly for vegetables and wildflowers.
- We have been running scything lessons for group members, which should ultimately result in more people qualifying to join the North London Scything Posse (current members: Matthew Pierce and Graham Cook).
- We are running weekly practical tutorials for group members, covering wildflowers, grasses, insects and other wildlife, plus management techniques.
- We have been advising other local groups on habitat creation and management, including Christ Church Southgate, 6th Southgate Scouts and the Southgate Green Association.
- Reed warblers have been singing constantly in the wetlands, but we don't know if they are nesting.

#### Challenges

- Vandalism in the growing space continues to be a problem
    - A compost heap was set on fire
    - A raised bed was set on fire
    - Litter was set on fire.
    - Also, our anti-mower posts on the crane base were stolen (the crane base is en-route to the growing space from Aldermans Hill).
    - The fence between the growing space and the orchard was further vandalised.
- Police and PCSOs have subsequently been seen in the park on a couple of occasions.
- We still need Enfield Council to deal with green waste that we can't compost ourselves, mainly hedge trimmings and reeds from the wetlands. They said previously that this could be done in the stable yard, but there has been no progress.

- Council grass mowers continue to damage trees, either knocking over their supporting posts or simply running over the smaller trees.

## Lakes Team: Elena Phrydas and Jennie Edwards

### Successes

- Nesting season is underway, and signage alerting visitors has been installed. Broomfield welcomes 11 goslings, 15 ducklings, many cootlets and moorhen chicks this season.
- Ramps are being used well by birds to exit water, including when they're under attack. Thank you to the Conservatory group for agreeing that we could clear the escape route from the ramp to the lawn. We value support between teams.



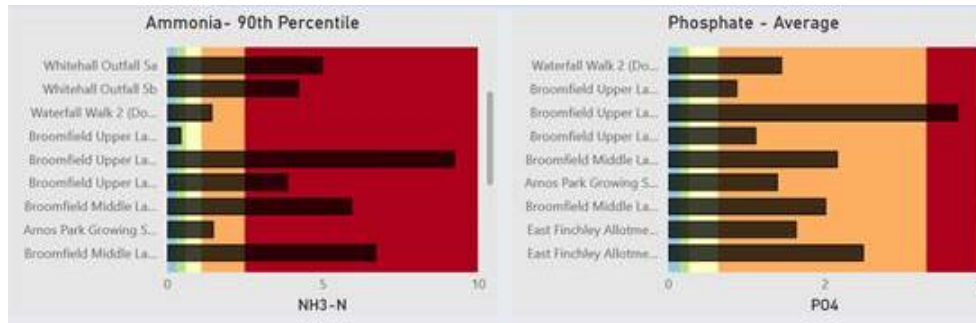
- The many antics and challenges of the birds has attracted hundreds of likes and interest on the Friends of Broomfield Park Facebook page.
- We have continued checking water quality and accessing support from the Green & Blue team at Enfield, Environment Agency, Thames Water and Thames 21 who provide a lot of training and equipment for us.
- More of the team have been trained in Leading Actions/Events in water safety.
- Two additional members of the team have received First Aid Training.

### Challenge

- Despite some improvement, it remains a challenge to keep birds safe and respected. We are grateful to dog owners who help, but some dogs still chase birds into the lakes, and on a handful of occasions enter the lakes pursuing birds, forcing them to abandon nests.



- This year two moorhen chicks were killed by a husky (see above). This was reported to the police as a wildlife crime.
- Enfield Council has a new Public Spaces Protection Order requiring dogs to be on a lead in Broomfield Gardens i.e. in the walled garden area and by the lakes. Enfield's Council staff are aware of the issues.
- Water quality remains one of the worst in the Lea catchment area.



## Conservatory Group: Geraldine Anwar

### Successes; Conservatory Events

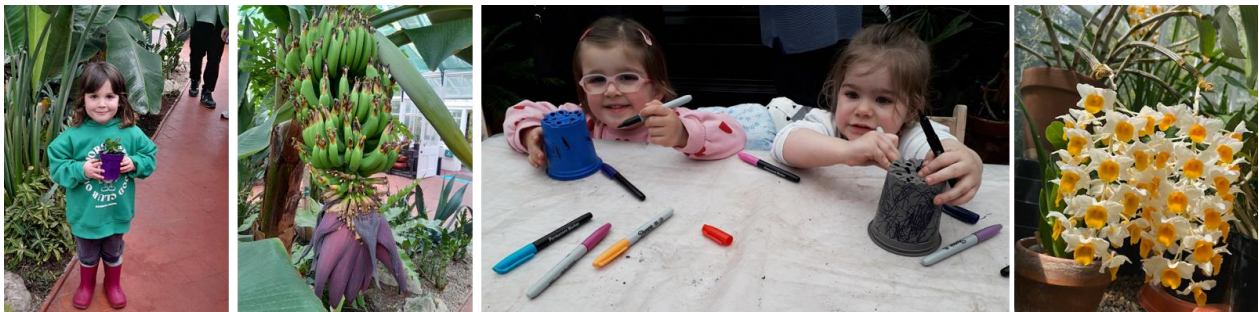
- The Conservatory programme of events started with a workshop where children decorated pots and planted them up as gifts for Mother's Day.
- Annual Chili and Tomato Plant sales were successful
- We hosted a music event with songwriter, Marc Harris. This relaxed, well-attended event ensures visitors can visit the Conservatory while listening to music.
- Our House Plant sale, at the end of June, gives the public a chance to purchase some of the exotic plants they see growing in the Conservatory. The plants are all cultivated by volunteers who take cuttings or by dividing the plants in the Conservatory.

### Work-ins

- The Conservatory Group continues to hold regular work-ins throughout the year, which gives us an opportunity to get together and learn from each other. We usually have a dozen volunteers in attendance, and our last session included two new volunteers. The Orchids are doing well, and our information board has been updated with facts about the Orchid collection. The Banana plant has produced fruit again this year and the bananas are ripening in the heat.

### Challenges

- Our main challenges are lack of rain and increasing temperatures. The Conservatory's underground tanks collect rainwater. When the levels fall we are unable to access water. This can happen in summer, but it happened in April this year. Temperatures have reached high 30s in the Conservatory, causing distress to plants, volunteers, and visitors. We feel that the proposal to cut back mature trees around the Conservatory, as part of the memorialisation of Broomfield House, will lead to loss of important shade.
- This year during the Red Weather Warning we closed to the public as it was unsafe for visitors to be inside. This is the first time that we have closed due to excessive temperatures in fifteen years of operation.



## Orchard and Apiary Group: David March

### Successes

- We have two new adult volunteers working regularly in the orchard on Sunday afternoons
- Our DofE volunteering programme continues to be very popular
- The wonderful spring blossom drew a lot of visitors into the orchard as did the infestation of the caterpillars of the cherry plum Ermine moth

### Challenges

- Sadly, all our honeybees perished in the very damp conditions that followed the long period of very wet weather this year. It will take some time to re-establish the apiary
- Climate change (and high humidity levels) has resulted in a large increase in Codling moths in the orchard. We are trying to control them using pheromone traps.



## Education Group: Jean Thomas and Helen Blairman

Our school visits team has been finalising the dates and coordinating volunteers for the 2026 visits. Bowes Primary and Walker Primary are confirmed for 16<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> July. For the workshops this year, we will be hosting the following:

- Wetlands, led by Helen Blairman
- Apiary, led by Cathy Hooper.
- Orchard, led by David March
- Birds/Lakes, led by Jenny/Elena

Most of our existing volunteers have confirmed their availability for these sessions. We will share an agenda for the day with both the volunteers and the school to ensure smooth coordination.

As a new activity this year, Helen led a Hoverfly Lagoon project with Katherin Spinnler creating micro habitats for minibeasts. This was an unqualified success with positive and rewarding feedback. The children had a wonderful time participating with several parents and grandparents. This is a project to repeat, alongside similar projects for different minibeasts.



## Art and Wellbeing Group: David March

### Successes

- We have continued to have weekly art activity sessions at the Clubhouse on Wednesday and Friday mornings for clients from two local care homes and a group from the local Mental Health Trust
- Participants have benefited from developing their artistic skills in a very positive and empathetic environment.
- We have had some success in attracting another volunteer to help at the art activity sessions
- On the last Friday of the month, individuals in the group are encouraged to take photographs This popular activity is facilitated by Barbara Luckhurst



*Apple Blossom in the community orchard  
Photo: Anthony Kerr*



*Self portrait by Eric Ly*

### Challenge

- To continue to attract volunteers to help out at the art activity sessions

## Events: David Williamson

### Successes

- **Plant Sales & Nature:** Our horticulture and conservatory volunteers successfully ran the Spring Plant Sale and Tomato Plant Sale, raising vital funds for the park. We also engaged local families with our hands-on Sunflower Planting and Wildlife Walk.
- **Community & Family Fun:** It was great to welcome the Cogger family again to bring the fun fair back to Palmers Green for the bank holidays. Volunteers also hosted a free Mother's Day "Paint & Plant" craft session and supported the local Scout groups for their St George's Day celebration.
- **Conservatory Music:** Marc Harris treated the community to a relaxing hour of acoustic music, helping gather donations for new conservatory plants.

### Planned Events:

- **June:** We kicked off summer with Centre Stage and their Summer Sun-sation (June 14), followed by a Teddy Bear's Picnic (June 20), a free family event to Make a Hoverfly Lagoon (June 21), the Orchard Supper Club (June 26), open-air theatre featuring A Midsummer Night's Dream (June 27), and a House Plant Sale (June 28).
- **July:** well attended events included The RVoices choir (July 2 & 16), Yebo! Fest (July 4), the Saturday Love All Dayer (July 11), Conservatory Music and an Orchard Picnic (both July 12), and a guided walk around the park (July 19).
- **August & September:** We welcome back Broomfield Blues for four Sundays in August, a free family blue flower print workshop (Aug 16), the massive Palmers Green Festival (Sept 6), Open Air Theatre Dracula (Sept 12), and Apple Day (Sept 13).

A massive thank you to everyone who has pitched in, shared their expertise, or supported these initiatives. Your hard work keeps Broomfield Park thriving!

### Challenge

Our continuing challenge is one of capacity. Lots of volunteers are already involved in creating and running events, but for resilience we always need new blood to build of the work that has been done to day.

## Heritage: Colin Younger

### Successes

- **Hazelwood Year 5 Visit:** Three classes of Year 5 pupils spent a morning hearing about the history of Broomfield House and its owners, the significance of the Remembrance Garden, and the plans for the future of the park. Colin Younger, Ivor Evans, Sue Younger, and for the Council, John Cole dealt with varied and interesting questions
- **Continuing support for Unlocking Broomfield interpretation design:** We dealt with final inputs to the consultants' draft submissions to the NHLF which met the 28 May deadline
- **Initial meeting with "Broomfield Stories Group":** As a step in dealing with capacity issues facing heritage learning, we had an initial meeting with a "Bromfield Stories" group.

### Challenge.

**The future of the Stableyard:** The London Historic Building Trust will be preparing a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant application for the stableyard. An initial meeting to form connections and share broad aspirations for the project has been arranged.

## Horticulture: Elizabeth Dobbie

### Successes

- **A Summer Volunteers Picnic** has been arranged for July 15<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the work completed in the park over the last year. Volunteers will be travelling to see the recently established [Queens Garden](#) in Regents Park
- **Fundraising Open Garden:** An enormously successful Arnos Park Open Garden Event generated £900 which will be spent on plants and bulbs for the long border. These will be purchased later in the year – once the very hot weather has subsided
- **Dyeing Plant Workshop:** A two-day workshop will be held in August demonstrating hands-on techniques using plants from the growing space for dying fabric. Details to follow.

### Challenge.

**Handling Tools:** when working in the long border tools taken and returned to the tool store - adding to the time taken and effort needed to complete any tasks. A suggestion to keep tools in a barrow near the working area for the duration of the session will be explored.

## Other volunteer activities:

### Learning in the park group:

A Friends of Broomfield Park working group has begun exploring how learning takes place across the park and how it can be strengthened. The group recognised that learning already happens through volunteering, horticulture, the conservatory, school visits, community events and heritage activities, benefiting people of all ages. Future opportunities include recruiting more volunteers, improving collaboration between groups, developing a Junior Park Rangers programme, expanding outreach to schools and care homes, and increasing citizen science and heritage learning activities.

### Signage and Waymarking:

A volunteer working group has begun developing proposals to improve signage and information across Broomfield Park. Priorities include better welcome signs, maps and wayfinding, alongside engaging interpretation of the park's heritage, wildlife and horticulture. Draft design principles have been produced, and wider volunteer consultation will take place later in the year.

### Bandstand:

Following meetings with Enfield officers and elected members, an application was made to fund the restoration of the bandstand through the 'Pride in Enfield' initiative. The work is now underway with a finish date before the annual "Blues in the Park" events begin.

Initial discussions are taking place about how best to celebrate the centenary of the bandstand in 2027.

### Broomfield Stories:

A series of social media posts showcasing individual volunteers has been published and will form a template for future storytelling – this will highlight the work of the individuals and groups that care for Broomfield Park. A meeting with a group of people interested in this aspect of the work of FoBP took place (referenced in the Heritage section above) and the group will also be sharing heritage stories as the Broomfield House project develops.