

A banner image featuring a field of yellow daffodils in bloom. A white rectangular box with a black border is centered over the image, containing the text "SPRING NEWSLETTER" in a bold, green, serif font.

SPRING NEWSLETTER

A horizontal bar with a blue border and a light grey background. The text "FRIENDS OF BRAMCOTE RIDGE" is written in a green, sans-serif font.

FRIENDS OF BRAMCOTE RIDGE

The feedback received following the first issue of this new style newsletter was very positive but any suggestions you have for any changes are always welcome.

SANDY LANE LNR : GRASSLAND RESTORATION UPDATE

After the clearance of the trees and scrub at the end of 2013 the plan was to bring another machine on to the site which would strip off the existing top layer of soil. This would reduce the fertility of the land in this area and so make it more suitable for grasses to establish. Unfortunately, as you know only too well, we had almost two months of exceptionally wet weather and this made the ground conditions totally unsuitable for this stage of the work to be carried out on time. In early February our group carried out some planting on the main path side of the newly laid hedge. For details of this see the section on "Working Sessions" below.

At the beginning of March the conditions improved enough for the heavy machinery to get back on site. In a day and a half the topsoil had been stripped off and transported a short distance to fill in a large depression in the land near to the entrance point from Jasmine Close. This particular area is alongside the existing heathers and will be suitable for sowing more heather seed.

The main area will now be harrowed and a mixture of native grass seed will be sown here by the Council.

The Friends group raked out a narrow strip alongside the hedge on the opposite side to the path and has sown a woodland mixture of seed here. This includes Red Campion, Sweet Violet, Wild Foxglove, Wild Strawberry and Greater Celandine.



WORKING SESSIONS JANUARY to MARCH 2014

January saw a good turnout of members to carry out the annual clear up of the two reserves. Even though the amount of litter has generally declined over the last few years we still managed to fill seven bags of general rubbish. In addition we collected carpets, a car wheel hub, pieces of fence posts and concrete, a rusted wire section of fence, a jacket and door! Two of our group also cleared the bottom end of the bridle path where soil had been washed down again from the hills.

In February around 120 hawthorn whips were planted as part of the ongoing project to restore the hedgerow and grassland area on the Markham Road site. The Mayor of Broxtowe, Councillor Iris White, joined us that morning to plant these hawthorns along with a mixture of primroses, oxlips and cowslips along the line of the newly laid hedge. Fortunately it was a bright, mild, sunny morning and 20 of our members were present, an excellent attendance. After the planting we split into smaller working groups, some clearing ash saplings from Ivy Wood, others preparing two areas near the entrance to the Markham Road site for sowing poppy seeds. This follows a request from the Green Flag team to commemorate the beginning of WW1.

At the March session we sowed the poppy seed in the prepared plots and also erected another six bat boxes. The rest of the group collected the larger pieces of tree branches from the grassland site and removed these from the area. **Future working sessions will continue to be held on the first Sunday of the month ie on April 6th, May 4th, June 1st, July 6th etc.**

WILDFLOWER AREAS ON ALEXANDRINA PLANTATION LNR

We all know that our two annual wildflower areas were a complete disaster last year.

This was probably as a result of delaying sowing until May because of the very cold April and the sudden abundance of vigorously growing weeds like Dock and Cow Parsley. We asked Broxtowe BC if they could zap the areas with a weedkiller (something we try hard to avoid) and then rotovate these. This they have done for us and we are very grateful for their help. The Friends group has bought the cornfield mixture of seed for the area near the entrance from Sandy Lane and the Council has provided us with the same seed mix for the Brookside Avenue triangle. Both these areas will be sown on April 6th so let's keep our fingers crossed for a really colourful display this summer.

SUMMER WALKS

Last summer Enid arranged two walks for us which were enjoyed by everyone. I am glad to say that she has agreed to arrange two more this year, an evening walk on July 1st and an afternoon walk on July 17th. Details of exact start times and venues will be issued nearer the time but put these dates in your diary.

BROXTOWE WILDLIFE DAY APRIL 12th

As part of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, Broxtowe Borough Council has arranged this event. It will be held in Beeston Square from 10.00am to 4.00pm. Several local groups have been invited including FoBR. We shall have a display of photographs showing our area in the different seasons and including some of the recent work on the hedge laying and grassland renovation. A rota of members will be in attendance throughout the day to answer any questions and hopefully interest a few people in joining.

As well as local group displays the event will feature the following:

An urban wildlife safari

Hoot owls birds of prey

Honey tasting and bee information

A range of children's activities

Come along and enjoy the day and spread the word around to friends and neighbours.