

WOKING BIODIVERSITY GROUP

VOLUNTEER WORK PARTY REPORT 2023

GENERAL

Another very productive year. The majority of the work was carried out on St Johns Lye (230 hours) and White Rose Lane (486 hours) sites. Main successes were the removal of balsam at White Rose Lane and invasive laurel at St Johns Lye. Millmoor Common is now in good shape subject to some maintenance during 2023. We were grateful for help from Affinity Water (108 hours), WWF (120 hours), Linkable (54 hours), CSG (21 hours), RPS (15 hours) and Scout and Guide Troops (88 hours). These hours contributed to approximately 43% of volunteer hours. The total volunteer hours worked was 953 hours (136 days equivalent).

VOLUNTEERS

We are also grateful to our own volunteers for all the work put in on our sites. A total of 535 hours (77 days equivalent) were worked.



Volunteers from the 6th Guide Troop at White Rose lane

SITES

During 2023 WBG carried out activities at:

- St Johns Lye
- Millmoor Common
- Mayford Meadows
- White Rose Lane
- All these sites were supported by Woking Borough Council. Advice was also given to others at various sites in Woking.



Andrew running down bonfire on heathland

HOURS/DAYS EQUIVALENT

A total of 953 hours (136 days equivalent) were completed on these sites. This includes volunteers from companies and scout and girl guide troops. A more specific breakdown is shown below under each site heading. The total hours were nearly double those of 2022. A good effort by All.

Location	Hours Spent	Day Equivalent
St Johns Lye	230	33
Millmoor Common	64	8
Mayford Meadows	125	18
White Rose Lane	534	76
Total	953	136

ST JOHNS LYE

This Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) has recreational grassland, woodland, heathland, drainage dykes with running water and a pond area. Approximately 79% of the work undertaken was the removal of invasive species such as cherry laurel and the thinning of holly in accordance with our site woodland management plan. Logs/brash were used to create wood piles for insects/animals. A small amount of brash was burnt on site.

The majority of work was undertaken in the woodland area immediately to the east of the tarmac road running from the village up to the pedestrian railway bridge. Further work was undertaken in the woodland to the east of the church up to Jackmans Lane. We have now cleared most of the area to the west of the tarmac road and we will continue to stop spread from the east side to the west.

Time was spent protecting the remaining heather on the heathland (11%) and supporting the wildflower areas around the old football pitch (10%). No further work was carried out around the larger pond whilst awaiting work to be started by WBC on the drainage situation.

Our main objective for 2024 will be to continue the prevention of further spread of laurel from the east side to the west side of the site, plus protection of the heathland and the upkeep of the wildflower areas.



Volunteers at St Johns Lye

MILLMOOR COMMON

Another SNCI site with grassland, tree areas and a large pond. Significant progress has been made on the wildflower areas and the pond area. Maintenance work will be carried out during 2024.

MAYFORD MEADOWS

Work was carried out in conjunction with volunteers from WWF to remove invasive Himalayan Balsam along the sides of the Hoe stream. Most of the work was undertaken from the Football ground/Leisure Centre end up to the bridge opposite Willow Way. The area is now almost clear along the banks of the stream. Follow up sessions need to continue during 2024.



WWF volunteers at Mayford Meadows

WHITE ROSE LANE

The most amount of time during the year was spent at this location. A total of 534 (76 days) were spent on site. This included 60 hours (8.5 days) by Affinity Water volunteers, 95 (13 days) hours by WWF volunteers, 21 hours by CSG (3 days,) 15 hours by RPS (2 days) and 56 hours (9 days) by the 6th Guides Troup and 32 hours (5.5 days) by the 8th Scout Troop. Further work will be necessary during 2024 to clear surviving balsam.



Affinity Water volunteers at White Rose Lane

BLOG and WEBSITE

The website has been brought up to date and can be accessed via the Woking Environmental Action site. We continue to post blog notes on the Council Woking Environment Action site re progress and work dates.

SUMMARY

The total volunteer hours this year increased to nearly double those in 2022. We did manage a significant amount of work on the main sites and made considerable progress. A good effort from all concerned. Continued work from our volunteers and help from Organisations/Companies was crucial to reaching our goals on the sites. We believe that help from outside companies and organisations is the way forward in the future. We would encourage anyone to contact us if they feel this type of work would benefit team bonding and volunteering days for their own companies/organisations.

IAN GAMMANS

Woking Biodiversity Group

17 February 2024