

Woodside Park Shul – Conservation Projects

As outlined in its Environmental Policy, WPS is looking for opportunities for its members to support local conservation projects. These projects will need to be:

- Local to Woodside Park – to maximise participation and also to avoid unnecessary car travel. Any projects further afield should be accessible by public transport.
- Taking place on suitable days and times. Sundays would be ideal, to maximise participation amongst members with weekday commitments. Early autumn is a popular time for planting projects but this coincides with the New Year Chagim which is a busy time for many members.
- Accessible and welcoming to all ages and fitness levels, and require no special skills or specialised equipment, unless provided by the project.

With these criteria in mind, a number of local, regional and national projects have been contacted, and the findings are outlined below.

Projects with opportunities this summer and a good fit for WPS

Darlands Conservation Trust

<https://darlandsconservationtrust.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/DarlandsNatureReserve>

The Darlands Nature Reserve sits in the Totteridge Valley between Totteridge and Mill Hill. Its 80 acres of woodlands, wetlands, grasslands and the Darlands Lake are home to a diverse community of wildlife.

The Trust offers regular volunteering opportunities for all abilities. Individuals can register their interest on the Darlands website or email volunteers@darlandsconservationtrust.org.uk with their details.

Friends of the Welsh Harp

<https://www.welshharpfriends.co.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FOTWH>

Also on Instagram, Twitter and WhatsApp

Also known as the Brent Reservoir, the Welsh Harp is a Local Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest, providing a valuable habitat for wildlife. It is located on the border of Barnet and Brent, just outside Hendon.

Friends of the Welsh Harp was formed in 2021 to highlight neglect of the site by its owners (Brent Council, Barnet Council and Canal & River Trust) and organise conservation volunteer days.

Conservation Volunteer Days take place regularly, usually on a Sunday, and are listed on the Friends' website when confirmed. Volunteers are asked to confirm their attendance by booking a place through the website, which also provides practical details about the

conservation days. Activities include litter picking, pond maintenance and bramble bashing. All equipment is provided. Under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. Well behaved dogs welcome.

We have contacted the Friends via email and received a response confirming that they would love us to get involved and that we can book individual places via their website.

Friends of Barnet Environment Centre

<https://fobec.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/barnetenvironmentcentre>

Barnet Environment Centre is situated on a 7.5 acre nature reserve, just outside High Barnet, about 1 mile from Barnet Hospital. The site is owned by Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. The nature reserve and Environment Centre are only open to the public on open days and volunteering events.

Working parties take place usually on the first Sunday of each month, from 10.00 until 12.30. There are also volunteer afternoons, where work can be done inside and outside, on Monday afternoons from 1.30 until 3.30.

Dollis Brookers

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/dollisbrookers>

<https://www.twitter.com/BrookersDollis>

Dollis Brook runs through Totteridge, Whetstone and Woodside Park. The Dollis Brookers are an informal group of local people who organise conservation events through Facebook.

Friends of Windsor Open Space

<https://fowos.wordpress.com>

<https://www.twitter.com/FofWOS>

Windsor Open Space is situated between Finchley and Hendon. The Dollis Brook runs through it. Some parts are wooded and others have extensive areas of grass.

The Friends are an informal group of local people who aim to protect and enhance Windsor Open Space. They meet every third Sunday of the month at 9.15am and work for approx 90 minutes. Activities include litter picking, sowing seeds and planting bulbs, depending upon the season.

Projects with opportunities this summer but a less good fit for WPS

Pymmes Brookers

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/297495897516661>

<https://www.twitter.com/pymmesbrookers>

Pymmes Brookers is a volunteer-run community group that works to clean up, restore and rewild the Pymmes and Salmons Brook in north and north east London. The Brook flows through East Barnet, New Southgate, Arnos Grove, Palmers Green and Edmonton.

Information about upcoming volunteering sessions is posted on the group's Facebook and Twitter pages. We have made contact with the group's Chair, Eamonn Canon, who has added us to the distribution list for future events. Most events are on Saturdays, but sometimes take place on Sundays or midweek.

London Wildlife Trust

<https://www.wildlondon.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/LondonWildlifeTrust>

The Trust manages 36 nature reserves across London and recruits volunteers for practical conservation projects including habitat restoration, grassland management and tree care. All equipment is provided and volunteers must be aged 16 and over. Unfortunately there are no reserves local to WPS – the closest are Hillingdon and Walthamstow. The Trust would pay travel expenses.

No immediate volunteering opportunities

Tiny Forests

<https://tinyforest.earthwatch.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/tinyforestbarnet>

A Tiny Forest is a dense, fast-growing native woodland, about the size of a tennis court. EarthWatch Europe is pioneering Tiny Forest in the UK, working with partners - including businesses, local authorities, schools and communities – to plant and care for their Tiny Forests.

Creation of a new Tiny Forest would require identification of suitable land, plus funds to establish it. The only Tiny Forest local to Woodside Park is at Mutton Brook (just off the North Circular, close to Kinloss) which was planted last year.

We have registered our interest in getting involved with the Tiny Forest initiative on the EarthWatch website, and will be informed if any volunteering opportunities arise in the future.

Trees for Cities

<https://treesforcities.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/treesforcities>

This UK charity works nationally and internationally to improve lives by planting trees in cities, working alongside local communities.

The Trees for Cities website lists upcoming volunteer planting days but there are no events currently listed (possibly because the best time for tree planting is October to April). We have registered our interest in getting involved in any future volunteer planting days and will be informed if any opportunities arise in the future.

Friends of Finchley Way Open Space

<https://www.fofwos.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/FoFWOS>

This charity works with Barnet Council to maintain and enhance this small green space in West Finchley.

We have received a response from the Chair, Suzanne King, explaining that Finchley Way is a small site, some of which is left to nature and some maintained by Barnet Council. As such they currently have enough volunteers for the small amount of work to be done over the summer. Their next need for volunteers will be in the autumn when they will be planting bulbs. Volunteering days in 2023 are the second and last Sundays of the month, so that will be 10 & 24 September and 8 & 29 October (some of those dates coincide with New Year Yamim Tovim).

Thames 21

<https://www.thames21.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/Thames21>

This charity works with communities across Greater London to improve rivers, canals, ponds and lakes for people and wildlife.

The website lists a number of upcoming river clean ups this year, none of which are local to WPS. However, two local groups, Friends of the Welsh Harp and the Pymmes Brookers (see entries above) are accredited by Thames 21 as River Action Groups, which means they are covered by Thames21's Public Liability Insurance and have completed its Leading Action for Healthy Rivers training.