



FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD July Newsletter 2020

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GOOD NEWS!

WORKING PARTIES RESTART

With the agreement of the Council, we have decided to re-start working parties in a small way, working in groups of 4 people, all safely distancing from each other and the public, and avoiding sharing tools. Our next working party is at 10.30 on 28 June, meeting at the Lodge. If you would like to volunteer, please text Lucy Roots on 07740 993647. Don't just turn up or regrettably you may be turned away. Please wear gloves and do not volunteer if you have symptoms of the virus or if you or anyone in your household is shielding or particularly vulnerable.

There will be an additional working party on 12 July in view of the backlog of work and another on 26 July.



Past working group sessions



Photo Alison Watson

TREE SPECIES IN THE WOOD - ASH

There are 15 types of Ash tree in the UK. They are a genus of flowering plants in the olive and lilac family. In Queen's Wood we have the common or English Ash, *Fraxinus Excelsior*, which is dioecious, meaning that individual trees contain either male or female parts but not both.



Rowan berries



easily. A fine example can be seen near the Lodge café on the right hand side of the entrance to the garden.

In the past we have removed ash seedlings and cut back young saplings as they would tend to take over the woods and dominate and compete for space with the new oaks and



Ash tree suffering from Ash dieback Photo Stephen Middleton

Recent research has shown that many trees are resistant and that seems to be the case in Queen's Wood. This is encouraging news. In future we will continue to remove ash seedlings where they would cause problems overwhelming other new growth. Rowan trees fortunately do not seem to be affected.

DESIRE PATHS

We have many of these paths in Queen's Wood and they are simply small paths created by people wandering off the main paths to explore the wood- often with dogs or children. A recent article in the Observer newspaper said that the term was first used in 1958 by a French

philosopher Gaston Bachelard 'lignes de desir' and often used by the English writer Robert Macfarlane.

A lovely name and a lovely idea but sadly for the wood they can lead to problems as they vastly increase the areas of trampling and soil erosion and expose tree roots to damage, shortening their life. The combination of heavy rain in February /March and then the recent dry weather, together with the increased footfall during lockdown, have worsened this problem. More, and wider, paths are developing.



Dead hedging blocking desire path

If you find that certain paths are blocked off or narrowed when we restart working groups please try to understand the reason. Getting the balance right in an urban ancient woodland is not easy but it would be sad to lose some of the rich flora, such as wood anemones, for which the wood is famous.

SURVEY OF USE OF PUBLIC GREEN SPACE

The University of Westminster has launched a study to understand how people use, experience and feel about public green space in London during the COVID-19 pandemic, and what impact this has on their health and wellbeing. If you would like to take part, complete the survey link: <http://tiny.cc/public-green-spaces>
