



Have you renewed your FSW Membership for 2024

- Our Membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st. and it would be very helpful to us if you could pay your 2024 subs as soon as possible. Many thanks to those of you who have already done so and to those of you who have standing orders - we really value this as it certainly makes our life much easier. Please pay by SO or bank transfer to: Friends of Selsdon Wood at Barclays Bank, Croydon Branch, Account No. 80883832, Sort Code 20-24-61.

Winter Walks

– A couple of years ago the paths were so bad that we decided to abandon guided walks in the winter months as the paths were too muddy and slippery. However, this winter has been remarkably mild and dry, so the paths are far less muddy than they usually are at this time of year. If you fancy a walk, you would still be well advised to wear boots but you will not need to do too much cleaning up afterwards. There are information sheets about the Red and Green Walking Routes on the website and a version of the guides may be accessed on your smartphone using the QR codes attached to the numbered wooden posts.

As last year, the mild winter has produced many early signs of spring. Bluebell shoots are peeping through the leaf litter and many other plants are throwing up new leaves. Two flowers have already been spotted – the tiny white flowers of Bittercress and the distinctive flower of Wild Strawberry. If you spot any more, please let us know.

Carving of Wood Sculptures Project 2024

At the November meeting of the Committee of FSW it was proposed that we should commission some interesting wood sculptures around the wood and Croydon Council have agreed to this.

On 17th January at 2pm we met at the car park with Alasdair from Essex Chainsaw Carving essexchainsaw@gmail.com to take him for a walk to look at a number of possible sites that we had identified. He could see potential in five of them - those in Farleigh Border, Smith Grove, Leafy Grove, Courtwood Grove and at the junction of The Wend and Leafy Grove. The last of these has the tallest stumps and was Alasdair's preferred option.

He has quoted for work on 3 of the stumps and these options will be discussed at the next Committee Meeting on 5th February. Examples of Alasdair's work can be seen at <https://essexchainsawcarvings.com> and photographs of the possible sites can be seen on the Projects page of our website <https://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk/projects.php>.

Work Sessions in January 2024

This month, work mainly consisted of clearing branches and trees that had fallen in the high winds. On 7th January the main task was to clear a large tree with three major trunks that had fallen across Broom Path. Work began by removing problems caused to other nearby trees by the fall before tackling the main task. Gradually sections were sawn off the fallen trunks and rolled to the side until the path was cleared. In the meantime, several people took tools and cleared material in the eastern part of Broom Path and in the top part of Greenhill Way.

Gales in the night of 1st January brought down more trees. A major one in Addington Border was cleared by one of the team and when the group met again on 28th January, they tackled a major fall in the cut through from the southern corner of David's Crook to Greenhill Way. Photograph right shows the team at work and overleaf are "before" and "after" pictures of 3 of these major falls.



Some of the clearance work carried out by the FSW Volunteers in January 2024

		
<p>Team preparing to clear a fall in Broom Path</p>	<p>Fall in Addington Border near the Yew Tree Way Gate on 22nd January</p>	<p>Major fall in the cut-through from the southern corner of David's Crook to Greenhill Way</p>
		
<p>Broom Path cleared by the team on the 7th January Work Session</p>	<p>Addington Border fall cleared by a member of the team on 24th January</p>	<p>Cut-through fall cleared by the team on the 28th January Work Session</p>