



COBHAM MILL PRESERVATION TRUST

NEWSLETTER - CHRISTMAS 2024

Dear Cobham Millers,

2024 has been a year of considerable change to the Trust and to the running of the Mill. Before I give you a round-up of this year's activity I'd like to apologise for the spring newsletter not being sent electronically as usual, it is however available on the website, [click here](#)

I have taken over as Chairman of Cobham Mill Preservation Trust from Richard Ward. Richard and his wife Patricia have been fundamental to the successful running of the Mill for many years but have now retired as Trustees. In September, the volunteers held a garden party to thank them and to wish them well. Rick Anstis has now joined as a new trustee.

We now have a Cobham Mill Facebook page with lots of information, stories and photos. [Click here](#) or search **Cobham Mill** to find us, and do please "follow" Cobham Mill on Facebook.

Our open days are widely advertised each month through social media, community newsletters and local magazines. This means we now reach thousands of people and this has resulted in significantly increased visitor numbers. Because of this, we now show the video presentation outside so more people can see the Mill working, and inside many more can hear a most fascinating talk from our guides – we now often have queues to get in!

We have two new and very smart octagonal 8-seater picnic benches, one of which has wheelchair access, which were donated by the M25/A3 contractors Carmichael and Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage. A huge thanks for their support.

Our sales and afternoon teas continue to be popular, with souvenirs to purchase and tasty treats to enjoy. We still take cash payments but can now also take payments and donations electronically.

In September, a group of volunteers gave the Mill a huge clean-up both inside and out. We filled a skip, cleaned, polished, disinfected and painted, leaving the Mill looking very presentable. We found sufficient hardwood for one of our volunteers to make two new benches alongside the river.

We have also updated our Health and Safety Risk Assessment, prepared a Fire Safety Risk Assessment and associated procedures, all to ensure the safe operation of the Mill for both our volunteers and the public.

Maintenance is always ongoing with a building and machinery which is hundreds of years old. We have quite a list of repairs to perform. A significant problem is that the Mill does not run as smoothly as it once did, the cause of which is still under investigation. We have almost run out of new paddle boards to replace those which are rotten, so new oak boards need to be ordered in time for next season. The mill race (the water channel between the mill and the road) is almost blocked with branches and vegetation and now needs to be cleared for the mill to run – this will be a big challenge for us as it is a significant undertaking.

As always we do need more volunteers to help keep the Mill running. We are particularly in need of anyone with mechanical engineering knowledge. So if you or your friends are available to volunteer in

any way, please just let me know by email to info@cobhammill.org.uk . Sponsorship from individual Millers is most welcome, either from yourselves or your employers/charities, this could perhaps be through donations or 'volunteer days', for example a working party to undertake clearing and landscaping, or even attacking the Mill Race as mentioned above.

The Environment Agency own the building and our lease has expired so the trustees are currently in the process of renewing it for a further 20 years.

The Environment Agency is undertaking major repairs to the bridges and sluice gates, hopefully this work will be complete by the time we reopen in April. We have a smart new fence alongside the river and next year they plan maintenance to the building structure itself.

Looking forward to 2025, our Open Days are the second Sunday of each month, April to October and we hope to continue providing a great visitor experience to all those who visit.

On behalf of the Trustees and Volunteers, we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

William Forrest,

Chairman, Cobham Mill Preservation Trust

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