

Wintringham Millennium Pond Management Plan

Introduction

This plan has been initiated by Wintringham Parish Council, to ensure that the pond remains the attractive place as was created, and not allowed to decline due to lack of maintenance. Contributions have been received from Ben Jenkinson, Maurice Trousdale, Jennifer and Alistair Leefe, Peter Witty.

Objectives of the plan

The pond should be an area for villagers and village visitors of all ages to look at and relax by, should contain a variety of attractive natural flora to enjoy, and should encourage biodiversity of interest. This plan seeks to identify the best way to maintain the pond and its environs as a local community asset, to define a schedule for its ongoing maintenance, and to clarify responsibilities for undertaking such tasks by village volunteers.

Background

The pond was created as a New Millennium project by community volunteers within the village, on land owned by the Cholmley estate. It is fed solely from Wintringham Beck, and borders Wintringham Marsh Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Environment Agency had input to the original creation of the pond, but have not been involved since then. When the pond was originally planned, a Pond Management Plan was defined, and items relevant from the initial document which apply to its ongoing maintenance are as follows:

- No exotic plant species are to be introduced, given the proximity to the SSSI.
- The area around the pond is designed to be like a wildflower meadow, and is to rely on natural colonisation for the most part.
- The area should be low maintenance, managed little and often.
- Pesticides and fertilisers should not be used.
- The excessive build-up of blanketweed and algae is to be removed manually where practical, and with barley straw loosely filled in net bags to float in the pond at springtime.
- Single species plant domination is to be avoided.
- The pond should be monitored for sediment build-up. If this becomes excessive consideration should be given to a silt trap at the incoming supply.

Assets

- Bird hide
- Two benches
- Waste bin
- Wolds Way footbridge
- Vehicle ford
- Wildlife island
- Pond plants
- Signage
- Kingfisher perch
- Brushcutter

Uses of the Pond

Positioned on the public footpath to Rillington and Thorpe Bassett, and on the Wolds Way National Trail, the use of the pond is wholly recreational. Many people pass by on a daily basis, enjoying the peace and quiet of the location away from any highways.

Current Issues

In the past, several individuals have taken action in specific areas, and there is some ad hoc group activity, but there is no co-ordinated maintenance programme.

There is a major build up of algae in the pond during the summer, which looks unsightly, and stifles the growth of some existing flora. Water Lillies have recently been planted to attempt to help stem the growth of the algae.

Access to one bench is hard when the grass is long.

The track from the village can be muddy during wet periods and in winter

Wintringham Beck is overgrown with weed on the upstream side of the bridge

Some of the post and rail fencing on the south side of the bridge is in need of repair

Protected Areas

Wild orchids have become established on the south east and north east banks of the pond nearest the track, so grass cutting should not be undertaken in this area between April and July.

The pond bank beside the fence on the north west side is a haven for coots and moorhens, so this should not be cut back.

Ongoing Maintenance Programme

	Maintenance required	When	By
Trees	Prune to maintain shape	Annually as required, in late autumn	Village volunteers
Pond	Algae clearance	As required, twice a year, in July and September, and more frequently around the lilies if required. Add several barley straw nets to float in the pond each Spring, and monitor effectiveness over the first season.	Village volunteers Jennifer Leefe to maintain pond lillies
Benches/bin	Inspect/Repaint	Every two years or when necessary	Nick Waddington
Grass cutting	A full cut twice each year.	In late March and September. The September cut gives the best chance for meadow plants to flower and seed. The pond edge on the north-east side nearest the wood fence to be left uncut. A route to the top bench and waste bin can be cut more frequently to provide access	
Footbridge	Inspect, weed clearance	As required	NYCC Countryside volunteers
Wildlife island	Inspect, weed clearance	Annually, in September	Village volunteers

One-Off Actions Required

Parish councillors should refine this plan as required, and other interested parties in the village should be invited to contribute as well. The always thorny issue of responsibilities should be agreed and volunteers are required for each activity.

Buy a pair of waders for use by volunteers, as the only pair used at present are privately owned.

Clear overhanging vegetation from Wintringham Beck from the upstream side of the footbridge

Repair fencing on the south side of footbridge

Possible Future Developments

1. Install bird boxes
2. Install a second wildfowl island
3. Identify pond water flow solution
4. Reduce silt build-up

Management Plan Rollout

1. Publish draught plan to WPC and contributors
2. Seek volunteers for each activity
3. Publish approved plan on Parish Council online directory and implement actions