

Broughton Pocket Park Pond Regeneration Project

Some people may have noticed that work has taken place in the Pocket Park recently. This is Phase one of a longer term project to regenerate the pond area which has been neglected for many years.

There has been an ambition to create a better environment around the pond as far back as 1992 but a lack of resources to make a real and lasting difference meant that this was never realised. A team of volunteers looked after the Pocket Park for a number of years until around 2011, planting flowers, clearing scrub undergrowth, even getting their waders on and attempting to clear and dredge the pond but without specialist machinery and constant maintenance the space became overgrown and declined again.

In 2016 the Parish Council decided to embark on a programme of maintenance with a view to gradually bring the park back to a space that all could enjoy. A grounds maintenance contractor was brought in to regularly keep the paths clear of brambles and stinging nettles. They also check for any issues which might need addressing such as storm damage or diseased trees.

The pond regeneration was always going to be a major project requiring considerable funds and expert guidance. Grant funding has now been secured by the Parish Council which makes this project possible. The aim is to make the area more attractive for both residents and wildlife alike. Amphibians and insects which need ponds to survive are in decline because many ponds are disappearing, we hope this project will provide a space for frogs, toads, dragonflies and a host of other creatures to flourish which may, in turn attract a wider diversity of other wildlife.

The Parish Council is working closely with experts from the Wildlife Trust and Froglife who specialise in ponds and aquatic wildlife to achieve this ambition.



The perimeter of the pond had become congested with self-set trees which reduced the light levels around the pond and contributed to the amount of leaf litter falling into the water during Autumn. Working under the guidance of the wildlife experts the tree surgeons have thinned out the trees which were causing the problem.



Much of the cut material has been left on site to be used during Phase 2 to create additional wildlife habitat around the pond area. The additional light in the area will have the added benefit of allowing flowering plants to grow where previously only ivy would survive.

The pond has become heavily silted up resulting in very little open water being present other than during the winter months. This made it unattractive to amphibians and other insects which require water to breed. Phase Two will take place during the Summer when the water is at its lowest level. The pond will be dredged to remove much of the silt in order to increase the depth at the centre. The perimeter will be reshaped and the material removed during the dredging will be used to create additional habitat. This will require machinery to operate in the park for a few days, access will be via the adjacent field by kind permission of the tenant farmer.



A pontoon (or Dipping Platform) similar to this will be installed on the edge of the pond which will serve as an observation deck for those wishing to watch the wildlife which we hope will be attracted to the new-look pond. Children from Broughton Primary will also be able to use this facility as part of their Science curriculum.

Phase Three will be to plant up the perimeter with native aquatic plants to stabilise the banks and further improve the area with suitable planting to encourage further biodiversity. This will be done as soon as weather conditions allow but will probably take place in Spring 2022 to give the plants the best chance of success.

The funding for this project has for the most part come from a grant from Kettering Borough Council and money from Redrow Homes which was earmarked for the Pocket Park when the Cransley Hill estate was built.

We apologise for the disturbance this will cause in the short term but we believe the work will make the pond a greater asset and will increase the biodiversity in the Pocket Park.

We will also notify residents when phase two will commence.