

Risk Assessment of Aldborough Wildlife Area and Pond on the Village Green



Aldborough and Thurgarton Parish Council

**ALDBOROUGH & THURGARTON PARISH COUNCIL
RISK ASSESSMENT WILDLIFE AREA & POND**

REVISION HISTORY

Revision:	Date:	Who:	Comments:
Version 1.0	26 th July 2022	Kevin Fisher	Initial Release
Version 2.0	02 nd July 2025	Ursula Juta Tina Hooker	Review

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Risk Assessment was conducted independently by Kevin Fisher (NEBOSH) on behalf of the Aldborough and Thurgarton Parish Council. The assessment was carried out on 26th July 2022, and it is recommended that an annual review is performed by the Parish Council to determine if there has been any material change in the usage, environment or legislation necessitating an update to the Risk Assessment. It is further recommended that a review is made in the event of any incidents or near-misses to ensure that the Risk Assessment remains 'fit for purpose'.

The assessment performed was to capture any specific risk associated with the wildlife area and pond and to identify if additional control measures are required to mitigate the risk to parishioners and visitors.

The pond within the wildlife area is relatively small and partially hidden. As a matter of priority, the Parish Council should consider the erection of permanent signage at the mown entrances to the wildlife area indicating the presence of a body of water and the need for adult supervision of children.

Where additional control measures are proposed, these are presented as recommendations for the consideration of the Parish Council in determining whether to implement them, reject them or if a programme of monitor and review is more appropriate.

REVIEW of ALDBOROUGH & THURGARTON RISK ASSESSMENT – 2ND JULY 2025 POND AND WILDLIFE AREA

The tracking of actions following the 2022 Risk Assessment appears to be out of sequence through the succession of Parish Clerks and the transfer of historic record from the old to new Website. This posting sets the sequence as it developed.

In Kevin Fisher's Risk Assessment in 2022 Aldborough & Thurgarton Parish Council adopted all the assessments recommendations with the exception of R4 and R5 which were challenged for the following reasons:

It was considered that a 'level marker' (R4) was more likely to attract attention and likely to encourage youngsters to go into the pond to move/remove such a marker. The pond has regulating in /out pipe so the depth never exceeds 2.5 foot.

The provision of a 'reach-pole' or 'throw-line' (R5) was also declined on the basis of the need to have specific training to enable safe use and also ongoing maintenance of such equipment. Without training injury would be more likely when using such equipment. In the unlikely event of a child making their way into the pond (through vegetation which does provide a barrier) an adult giving help to exit would be the safest and most appropriate way to deal with such a situation.

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The Wildlife Area Management Committee (WAMC) made recommendation that Kevin Fisher's Risk Assessment recommendations would be adopted with the exception of R4 and R5. Whilst undertaking the 2025 review of the Risk Assessment of the Pond, it became apparent that no minutes were available of the PC's agreement to adopt in line with the WAMC's recommendations. Therefore at the PC meeting 3rd November 2025 this omission was remedied and the Parish Council voted and agreed to adopt the WAMC's recommendation to adopt R1,R2,R3,R6 and not to adopt R4 and R5.

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SITE LOCATION

Aldborough is a small village in the civil parish of Aldborough and Thurgarton in the county of Norfolk and is situated about eight miles south of Cromer.

The wildlife area and pond are located on the eastern side of the village green, indicated below.




SITE USE

The wildlife area and pond are a 'man-made' community amenity that attracts residents and visitors on a regular basis although numbers are modest. A volunteer team maintains the area for the benefit of the local community and to attract and support various forms of wildlife.

SITE ASSESSMENT

<p>Environmental Factors Proximity to populated areas: schools; inns; retail/tourism; picnic area; play area; car park; roads; especially attractive features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centre of village location close to independent retail and low density residential properties• Seating is located within the wildlife area• Traffic highway encircles village green with low density vehicular traffic. Some vehicle parking spaces are available around the perimeter
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cricketer’s on the Green is located to the western side of the village green • A cricket pitch is located on the village green • No pedestrian footway around the village green. Mown areas leading to and through the wildlife area and pond 
<p>Behavioural Factors Category and volume of expected users: swimmers; anglers; walkers; drivers; specialist water users; general public; unaccompanied children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been no angling or swimming • Local people and visitors regularly enjoy the amenity of the village green, wildlife area and pond • The wildlife area and pond is maintained by a local Volunteer Team. Working activities are covered by Risk Assessments
<p>Ease of Access to Water Edge Open unrestricted access; type and nature of paths; natural obstacles; vegetation; existing barriers/fencing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is open unrestricted access to the pond edge • Flag irises, reeds and vegetation provides modest edge to water delineation around the perimeter and acts as a natural barrier to the water

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- There are 4 main access points into the wildlife and pond area with flat mown grass paths leading towards and around the pond





Type of Edge


Condition of edge: stable; unstable; nature of ground at edge; height above water; gradient of bank; features allowing or encouraging access to water

- The pond edges are somewhat hidden by the fringe vegetation
- The ground is stable and can be softer underfoot closer to water depending on the season and water level
- The pond edge is generally 3 to 6 inches above the water level
- Water level can be low during the summer months
- Apart from surrounding wildlife area vegetation there are no specific discouraging features to restrict access to water

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<p>The Water Temperature; underwater gradient from edge; max depth of water; currents; clarity; underwater obstacles or traps; tide; features, e.g. weir, lock; blue green algae</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water temperature is typical of a small sized pond. • Edges are generally shallow with a low gradient. • The maximum depth of water is thought to be less than 1m (3' 3") • Inlet and outlet flow pipes are located in the pond • There are no currents and the clarity of water is typical of a small pond
<p>Existing Rescue Equipment, Signs etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no rescue equipment • No warning signs are displayed • A welcome sign to the wildlife area is posted at various entrance points

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Known Accident History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known or corroborated incidents
Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The risk is under-written and a copy of the insurance is held on file by the Parish Council
Risk Level (see matrix)	<p>Risk Rating 8 - Moderate Risk</p> <p>Probability of accident – Unlikely based on known accident history but may occur Severity of outcome – Fatality</p>

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Likelihood	5	4	3	2	1
1	5	4	3	2	1
2	10	8	6	4	2
3	15	12	9	6	3
4	20	16	12	8	4
5	25	20	15	10	5
	5	4	3	2	1
	Consequence				

Likelihood

Certain	5
Probable	4
Likely to Occur	3
May Occur	2
Unlikely	1

Consequence

Multiple Fatality	5
Fatality	4
Major Injury	3
Minor Injury (treatment)	2
Minor Injury (no treatment)	1

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Risk Rating = Likelihood x Consequence

RISKS AND ACTIONS

RISK LEVEL	ACTION AND TIMESCALE
Trivial	No action required.
Tolerable	No additional controls are required. Consideration may be given to a more effective solution or improvement.
Moderate	Efforts should be made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures should be implemented within a defined time period. Where the moderate risk is associated with harmful/serious consequences further assessment may be necessary to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the need for improved control measures.
Substantial	The activity should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Considerable resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves activity already in progress, urgent action should be taken.
Intolerable	Activity should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced. If it is not possible to reduce risk even with unlimited resources, activity has to remain prohibited.

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RISK ASSESSMENT

Hazard/Risk	Who is at Risk	Degree of Risk			ACTIONS TO CONSIDER TO CONTROL THE RISK	Residual Risk		
		L	C	R		L	C	R
Drowning	General Public Volunteer Team	2	4	8	<p>Where possible keep pond edges clearly visible by maintaining regularly mown rides.</p> <p>Maintain an 'egress' for accessing and exiting the pond.</p> <p>The depth should be kept as shallow as possible whilst still maintaining the main function as a wildlife area.</p> <p>Keep the pond regularly maintained to ensure that the perimeter does not become overly obscured and that the area around the pond does not deteriorate.</p> <p>Maintain appropriate information signage.</p> <p>Volunteer Team to conduct their own RA to mitigate any risk for all work performed</p>	1	4	4

Slips, trips and falls	General Public Volunteer Team	2	2	4	Slip and tripping hazards to be minimised and/or eliminated from the surrounding area. Volunteer Team to conduct their own RA to mitigate this risk for all work performed	1	2	2
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Water borne diseases	General Public Volunteer Team	2	2	4	No additional control measures to be applied Volunteer Team to conduct their own RA to mitigate this risk for all work performed	2	2	4
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SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Striking a balance between the duty of care of the Parish Council, the risk of an accident to persons using a community amenity and the continued support of the Volunteer Team, is vital to the success of this habitat.

Any open body of water presents a potential risk, primarily from drowning, and although it would be possible to fully mitigate the risk with a locked mesh cover, barrier fencing and excessive signage this would have a significant adverse impact on the area.

The author considers that recommendation R1 should be implemented as a matter of priority. The subsequent recommendations are for the consideration of the Parish Council to either implement, reject, or monitor as deemed appropriate.

R1 – Install permanent signage at the entrances to the wildlife area that harmonises with the habitat and indicates the presence of a pond and the need for adult supervision of children.

R2 - To discourage/prevent persons approaching and accidentally entering or falling into the pond it is recommended that the existing natural barrier of wetland flora and fauna should be maintained and not removed. However, consideration should be made for a small area to be left clear to allow egress from the pond should someone accidentally fall in.

It is considered unlikely that young children (toddlers) will enter the pond unsupervised. Older children (5 -12) might venture into the pond and therefore a natural boundary as detailed above would likely discourage them getting too close to the water. Younger children feeding waterfowl or wildlife are likely to be supervised.

R3 – The pond edges are generally undefined, it is recommended that, where possible, a clearer delineation between the pond edge and wetland flora is established.

R4 – Install a level marker at the deepest point in the pond to indicate maximum water level.

R5 - Should a person fall into the pond, after negotiating the perimeter wetland shrubs, although relatively shallow, the depth of the water and vegetation could prove difficult for a child to extricate themselves from. Consideration should be made for the provision of a 'reach-pole' or 'throw-line'.

R6 – Volunteer Team to produce Risk Assessments for any work conducted on and around the wildlife area and pond.

