

Hawkley Parish Council

The Ponds in Hawkley

Background

1. There are three ponds in the parish, one at each of Jolly Robins, Lower Green and Uplands (together, the “Ponds”). The ponds historically were not well maintained. In 2005, HPC accepted stewardship of the ponds it did not already own - namely Uplands and Jolly Robins. As the steward of the Ponds, HPC now oversees all three ponds for the benefit of the community.
2. HPC administers the maintenance and general upkeep of the surrounding areas having regard to safety of residents, visitors, volunteers, and any contractors commissioned by HPC to work in and around the pond areas.
3. HPC aims to appoint local 'Voluntary Pond Managers' to care for each pond and coordinate with a designated Parish Councillor.

Objective

4. HPC maintains the areas surrounding the ponds as pleasant, green spaces for the casual and occasional enjoyment of individual residents and visitors alike.
5. Our objective is to maintain and preserve the ponds and the surrounding areas for the local wildlife that reside there, including water quality as much as the surrounding environment. Biodiversity is of significant importance, and the preservation and proper maintenance of the area is key to ensuring it is a safe and nurturing environment for all wildlife flora and fauna in and around the pond.

Safety

6. While HPC's stewardship has regard to the welfare of residents and others who visit the ponds, all such visitors who have primary responsibility for their own safety and should exercise common sense when visiting the Ponds as they should any body of water.
7. The Ponds are not suitable for paddling, bathing nor other water-based activities and all and any such activities are prohibited. The HPC accepts no liability for any ‘foolishness’ or ‘japes’ in or adjacent to the ponds that lead to accidents and injuries.
8. Children should not be left unaccompanied at any time. The responsible adult in charge must always maintain the safety of children and any vulnerable adults.

Events at the Ponds – Third Party Led

9. The ponds and surrounding areas are not suitable for public gatherings. Any such activity is discouraged and conducted solely at the instigators’ and participants’ own risk.

Events at the Ponds – Parish Council Led

10. Any Parish Council led activity that takes place in or around the ponds and pond areas (e.g. maintenance, work parties etc.) will be the subject of a formal risk assessment which will consider any control measures will be required to mitigate any identified risks.

11. Adequate instruction and information will be given to all those involved in planned activities in the pond environs, and this should include instruction as to the risks of water, pond/pond area and wildlife, together with the hygiene implications and the needs of working safely outdoors.

Maintenance General Upkeep of the Pond Area

12. The ponds and surrounding areas will be regularly visited and reviewed. Minor repairs will be carried out by the relevant pond manager or by HPC employed contractors with the requisite skills. All major work will be referred to the Council for scrutiny and decision (including costs) in accordance with HPC's Standing Orders.

13. If other maintenance arises, (such as blockages, fly-tipping objects etc.), appropriate action will be taken to remove/ fix/ tidy as appropriate with aid from other agencies if required.

14. HPC will take steps to help the ponds work effectively by
 - Monitoring silt levels and seeking to ensure that the grips and culverts which the manage the flow of water into and out of the ponds are maintained
 - Maintaining the flora in and around the ponds.
 - Overseeing an active pond dredging plan with an expectation of large excavation works on a 10-year cycle. The next major works would be expected in 2034.

15. HPC has conducted and will keep current a risk assessment for visitors to the ponds and maintains Public Liability Insurance for any work or activities in or around the pond.

Hawley Parish Council. February 2026

Next Review: October 2027