FOOTPRINT ECOLOGY

A Management Plan for King's Pond, Alton, Hampshire.

John Underhill-Day & Chris Panter

FOOTPRINT ECOLOGY, FOREST OFFICE, BERE ROAD, WAREHAM, DORSET BH20 7PA
WWW.FOOTPRINT-ECOLOGY.CO.UK
01929 552444

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1. Site description and physical features

Location

1.1 King's Pond is located in the heart of Alton (Grid Ref SU723395) with access off Lower Turk Street and its extension which becomes Ashdell Road to the south-east. The site is bounded to the north-west by the Mid Hants Railway Line and to the north-east by developments fronting Paper Mill Lane. The site is c. 4.1 ha in extent.

Tenure

1.2 The site is owned by Alton Town Council who also own an old chalk pit to the south of Ashdell Road and the King's Pond Bungalows to the north, neither of which is included in this plan (see Map 1). There are three properties fronting Lower Turk Street which back onto the site and both they and the road may have surface water drains which discharge into King's Pond, although there do not appear to be any formal arrangements to do so.

Other rights

1.3 The access to King's Pond Bungalows is along a surfaced track to the north of King's Pond which is also the main northern access to the pond for visitors and is within the curtilage of the site. There are no public rights of way on the site.

Designations

1.4 King's Pond is not within the Town Centre Conservation Areas nor are there any nature conservation designations. It is however, one of the largest areas of amenity land in the Town

and has been designated in the Alton Neighbourhood Plan as a local green space where development will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.

Maps and aerial photographs

1.5 The area is covered by OS 1:25,000 (No 133) and 1:50,000 OS sheet 186

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Geology and topography

1.6 The bed rock is chalk from the Cretaceous period (zigzag or grey marly chalk with Holywell beds on valley sides), overlain with river alluvium between the pond and the railway[1]. King's Pond lies in the valley of the River Wey about 90m above sea level (asl). The ground rises steeply to the south up to the summit of Neatham Down at 152asl. To the north the town of Alton lies within the floodplain of the river mostly below 110m asl before rising more gently on to the chalk at 165m asl.

Hydrology

1.7 King's Pond is an artificial lake formed by the construction of a dam across the valley of the River Wey in the late 18th century. The river Wey therefore flows through the lake (on-line), entering through a culvert at the western end and exiting through a sluice under the dam at the eastern end. There are also springs on-site within the lake bed. The precise design of the exit sluice is unclear. There are also inputs from the adjoining road and from surface drains from the three houses to the south. Environment Agency gauging stations operate upstream at Wey Springs, at Banks car park and at the King's pond exit weir. The river Wey is a chalk stream with a source some 1.5km from King's Pond. As an on-line water-body the lake forms a natural silt trap for silt travelling down the river and this has resulted in the need to clean out the silt periodically to prevent the lake from silting up. Silt also accumulates from bank erosion caused by springs, the activities of wildfowl and natural erosion. The lake has twice been desilted in recent years and much of the silt deposited on an island in the lake or on the adjoining meadow.

Soils and vegetation

1.8 Soils are freely draining lime rich loamy soils[2] overlain with silt around the Pond, particularly at the western end. The natural climax vegetation[3] in this situation would be dominated by ash and field maple woodland, with associated oak, beech, lime and elm. All these associated species are present at very low densities, but the oak is the introduced Turkey oak and field maple is also scarce and has been replaced as the co-dominant by sycamore. Alders are found on wetter ground and the introduced horse chestnut has been planted on the road side. Although there are some large trees none of the trees growing on site appear to be veterans. A sparse understorey of native willows, holly, hazel, hawthorn and elder is evident together with introduced snowberry, cotoneaster ssp. and garden privet.

1.9 Much of the drier ground is covered with ivy but typical species of chalk woodland are present including ramsons, dog's mercury and wild arum. On the open grassland primrose, common knapweed and meadow buttercup can be seen, but this area of grassland is generally of limited

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[1] http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/mapViewers/home.html (See also White, H.J.O. 1910. The geology of the country around Alresford. Memoir of the Geological Survey.

[2] http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/

[3] Species lists of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, fish and invertebrates are included in Appendix 1. Most of these come from the Alton Natural History Society reports and could, with advantage, be updated.

botanical interest possibly in part due to the dumping of silt from a previous desilting of the Pond.

1.10 Apart from duckweed, no aquatic plants have been recorded from the pond, and within the limited emergent and edge vegetation typical species include yellow flag, water mint, comfrey and water figwort.

Fauna

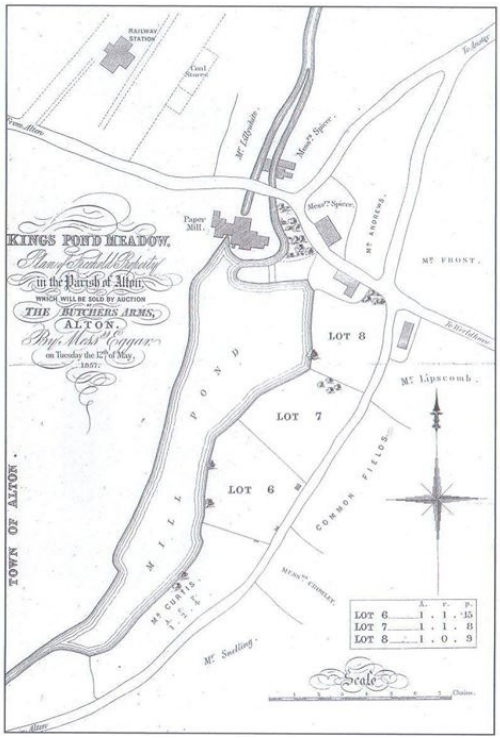
1.11 Water shrew has been recorded here together with four species of bat and hedgehog. Some 53 species of bird have been recorded including breeding by mallard, coot, moorhen, grey heron, Canada goose, and little grebe on and around the Pond, and a number of common woodland birds. Of the amphibians and reptiles, common frog and toad, grass snake and slow worm have been noted together with introduced terrapins.

1.12 There are a number of fish species in the Pond, including bottom feeding common and mirror carp, roach, pike, and the smaller bullhead in the pond, with stone loach, minnow and three-spined stickleback in the Wey by the culvert. Goldfish have also been recorded in the Pond.

1.13 No systematic surveys have been undertaken on the invertebrates, but a number of casual records are noted in the records of the Alton Natural History Society. Ashford's hairy snail, a species of local occurrence in Hampshire has been recorded.

History

1.14 It is probable that there was a corn mill close to the site of King's Pond from mediaeval times but the main impound of the river at this location was in the late 1700s by William King (hence the name), to power a paper mill.[4] A map from 1857 shows the Pond and several plots of land to the east which were apparently for sale. The pond was still called Mill pond at that time and was smaller than it is now, with a more complicated outlet round the mill.



1.15 Milling ceased in 1908 and the milling machinery sold in 1913. During World War I the building was used to house German prisoners of war. In 1919 the site was sold with the mill taken over by the Alton Battery company, and the land to the east of the pond was part of Ashdell House and park and was subsequently set up as a private clinic.

[4] The history of the Pond is taken from a note prepared by Dr June Chatfield dated October 2016. Photos in this section are derived from https://www.facebook.com/memoriesofAltonHampshire .

A picture of the paper mill across King's Pond taken in 1915

1.16 The Pond passed through a number of ownerships as a private amenity until it was bought by Alton Urban District Council together with the surrounding land in several different transactions during the 1960s and 1970s. Part of the clinic site was subsequently sold for development and three houses constructed, but the path and hedge adjacent to the pond were retained. The site is now owned by Alton Town Council. The paper mill site was redeveloped in 1989 as the Waterside Court flats.

Archaeology

1.17 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments on the site or archaeological features although the site has an interesting cultural history.

Public Access and use

1.18 The site has been open to the public since the 1970s as an informal open space. There are no public footpaths or bridleways but a tarmacked path system was installed in 1997 and runs around the pond. A detailed report by I. D. Watts on the state of the paths is included as Appendix 2. There is a tarmac car park for 20 cars (two disabled) off Ashdell road just before the junction with Paper Mill Lane, separated from the public highway by a hedge, and a small area of unofficial parking at the southern end with access from Lower Turk Street. The site is well used, but no visitor surveys have taken place and it is not known how many visits there are or the patterns of visitor use. Most visitors come to walk with or without dogs. Fishing in the pond is not allowed, and visitors are encouraged to limit their feeding of the wildfowl.

1.19 There is a single information sign at the main car park, six litter bins and several seats. The Town council have produced a King's Pond Trail leaflet which is available from the Town Hall.

Past Management

1.20 The pond was dredged in the late 1960s and much of the spoil dumped on the large island. A second dredging took place in Autumn 1996/spring 1997; a further dredging is now needed. Dredgings were dumped on the grass field and on the larger island the banks of which were reinforced with Nikospan membrane and stakes. Since then water levels have risen and the reinforcement is now under water and no longer protects the island banks except when water levels are low.

1.21 The grassed area is mown by Council staff and the arisings left on the surface. An area is left to grow tall and cut at the end of the summer. The rubbish and dog bins on site are also emptied by Alton Town Council staff.

1.22 The Friends of King's Pond maintain a website with information and photographs, and organise volunteer work parties to carry out litter clearance and management of the undergrowth around the pond, and recently, ivy has been cut back from a number of trees around the pond.

1.23 Canada geese arrived in about 1992 and have built up into a resident breeding population with up to seven nests each year on the larger island. Since 1999, (with the exception of 2016) their eggs have been oiled to prevent them hatching, but without encouraging the birds to relay which could happen if the eggs were simply removed.

2. A vision for King's Pond

2.1 King's Pond has been a public amenity site since the 1960s and is still valued by the local community for its landscape, peace and quiet, wildlife and sense of countryside in the town. Over the next 25 years, careful management by Alton Town Council will maintain the pond and its surrounds as a quiet and enjoyable place to visit, with abundant wildlife and minimal intrusion from the adjoining busy town. The paths, seats and other amenities will be safe and well maintained and the site will continue to be welcoming to less mobile and disabled visitors. There will be a thriving volunteer group carrying out maintenance work, educational initiatives and wildlife recording. The river Wey, where it flows through the King's Pond site, will have a good ecological and chemical status; the grassland will have an abundance of wild flowers and the woodland will have a range of native tree species and a healthy shrub layer with a diverse community of breeding birds and other wildlife.

3. Actions under each objective

Objective 1- Minimise the current adverse effects on King's Pond and the River Wey from silt disturbance and nutrient inputs (short term)

Rationale

3.1 The poor ecological status of Kings Pond, reflected in a lack of aquatic macrophytes and low invertebrate diversity, is partly due to the high nutrient status of the water and to turbidity caused by the constant disturbance of the bed silts. Sources of local nutrient inputs include wildfowl and fish faeces, food imported by the public to feed the wildfowl and washing of nutrients down from the adjoining grassland, properties and road. The silts are constantly disturbed by wildfowl and bottom scavenging fish and supplemented by bank erosion from wildfowl activity and wave action. Setting aside the larger scale works which might be required to deal with some of the longer-term problems inherent in the existing system (see Objective 2), there are some short-term measures which have been, or could be, adopted to improve water quality.

Actions

1. Carry out an analysis and survey to quantify the nutrient levels in King's Pond and to identify sources of point and diffuse nutrient pollution
2. Undertake a public educational campaign to explain the problems resulting from feeding the wildfowl and set aside restricted areas where feeding is allowed at King's Pond and install new signage asking the public not to feed the wildfowl outside these areas.
3. Continue to maintain ban on fishing in King's Pond
4. Continue the practice of oiling eggs of the introduced Canada Goose on site each year in association with a public education initiative
5. In association with adjoining owners and the Highway Authority locate and redirect all point drainage outlets from adjoining properties and the road away from the pond or into systems to remove nutrients
6. Install a drainage buffer between the meadow and the pond to catch surface water and reduce nutrients
7. Ask the public to report any dead fish at King's Pond. If dead fish are reported in any numbers, notify the Environment Agency, and if Koi Herpes Virus is found notify The Fish Health Inspectorate. As soon as can be arranged, carry out electrofishing in the pond to reduce the population of introduced bottom scavenging fish, and if these are of suitable size and in good health, offer them for sale to commercial freshwater fishing interests to offset costs
8. Carry out a survey of bank erosion and repair more serious erosion points using wood debris/chalk fill and other natural materials. Obtain a report on means of preventing further erosion of silt from the island into the Pond and institute action as soon as possible.
9. Water drainage from the three bungalows across the adjoining path causes Health & Safety problems during winter frosts. Refer the problem to the developer.

Objective 2- Improve the water quality and biological condition of King's Pond and in the River Wey (longer term)

Rationale

3.2 The River Wey chalk stream flows though Kings Pond. Chalk streams are an internationally scarce resource and the presence of the King's Pond can affect the character of the stream

both above and below the Pond. This has several consequences, particularly for the river downstream of the pond and for the pond itself. As the river enters the pond, water flow is slowed and silt is deposited in the pond. Water in the pond, with a large surface area, is warmed in summer. The presence of large numbers of waterfowl and introduced bottom scavenging fish result in increased nutrient levels, greater turbidity and a paucity of aquatic macrophytes and invertebrates. This warmed and nutrient rich water then exits the pond and flows back into the chalk stream, changing the ecology for a variable distance downstream from the constant low temperature and low nutrient levels associated with the chalk groundwater springs from which the river upstream is derived. Chalk streams have the majority of their flow made up of groundwater from a chalk aquifer. There are only some 200 chalk streams in the world and 85% of these are in the UK, making them a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat. Because chalks streams are groundwater fed, they generally have exceptional water quality which combined with their gravelly bed provides perfect conditions for a wide range of different species - plants, invertebrates, fish, etc. The presence of the pond within the river system with the impounding structure at the outlet constitutes a barrier to the native chalk stream fish moving upstream, and acts to prevent river gravels moving downstream and replenishing the gravel habitats. It also has consequences for the river upstream as the habitat becomes impounded (wide, no gradient, low flow) and water quality deteriorates (temp increases, nutrient levels increase). There are a range of remedial options for dealing with some or all of these problems with increasing degrees of complexity and levels of expense.

3.3 The six main options for dealing with long term silting up and associated nutrient inputs, starting with the most straightforward, can be summed as:

- The do-nothing option which would have no cost implications but would lead to the eventual silting up of the pond
- Continuing the current practice of removing silt from the pond every 20-30 years and depositing it, once dried, on the existing larger island, or taking it off-site
- Installing a silt trap at the upstream entry point of the river to King's Pond to reduce silt inputs and regularly removing the accumulated silt
- In association with the silt trap, separate the main flow of the river from the pond by taking this through a culvert to be laid at the appropriate level in the land adjoining the western edge of the pond and with a further structure at the outlet. This option would include retaining some river flow into the Pond and measures to reduce silt flowing back into the river from the Pond.
- Separating the river channel from the pond with a barrier (probably incorporating the existing island) with sluices to allow water controls into and out of King's Pond and with a reed bed above the Pond outlet to filter out silts and nutrients from the pond water before it flows back into the river
- Reprofiling the river entirely to remove the existing pond and create a new stretch of river with wetland habitat left to develop in the old pond bed
- Reprofiling the river but creating a series of wetland ponds and habitats in the old pond bed

Actions

3.4 Appoint a consultant with experience of river restoration to:

- Locate the original drawings of the impounding structure and report on the current design either from these drawings and/or from a physical inspection
- Ascertain what help in assessing and designing solutions to the problems of silting and nutrient inputs might be obtained from the Environment Agency and if possible, in association with EA
- Undertake a feasibility study of options 1-4 above and report on the practicalities, risks and costs of each option, together with a consideration of whether any options could be influenced or replaced by works on the Old Brewery Site.

3.5 To investigate with the Environment Agency the possible funding availability for the preferred options

3.6 To carry out a public consultation on the preferred options

3.7 If funding is available and a preferred option is agreed, to carry out the remedial project chosen subject to appropriate timing and to a suitable monitoring protocol.

3.8 As a matter of priority, change the existing grid on the weir to avoid wildfowl being caught up on the structure

Objective 3. To manage the woodland areas around King's Pond for their wildlife and landscape/amenity value.

Rationale

3.9 The woodland around King's Pond consists of mature and semi-mature trees, many of them planted, together with a limited understorey of native shrubs. The main tree species are ash, sycamore and various willow species, with a few alders on the side of the pond and a line of horse chestnuts along the roadside. On the main island the trees, which are mostly willow (Salix sp.) appear to be of natural origin. Semi-natural woodlands on the chalk in this situation will often be dominated by a combination of ash/field maple (Fraxinus excelsior/Acer campestre) with scattered oaks (Quercus sp.) and variable amounts of sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus), a species introduced to the UK in late mediaeval times. Horse chestnuts (Aesculus hippocastanum) are also an introduced species. Tree diseases, particularly Chalara Ash Dieback, a fungal disease, and horse chestnut canker, a bacterial disease, combined with attacks by the horse chestnut leaf miner moth could result in declines or extinction of both these species at King's Pond over the next one or two decades. A long-term plan is needed to replace these potential losses and to increase the species diversity of the woodlands here, using native species as well as

increasing the shrub layer to improve the biological value of the woodlands. All plantings should be of native species and preferably of local provenance.

Actions

1. Carry out a full inventory of the trees at King's Pond, including a health check
2. Identify areas of the existing woodlands where thinning of the existing trees will benefit the shrub layer and ground flora and reduce the risk of wind damage
3. Identify areas of the existing woodland where additional planting would provide a more continuous canopy cover.
4. Produce a thinning and planting programme for the next ten years including contingency measures against dieback of existing trees from disease
5. Vary new plantings with the long-term aim of replacing and reinforcing the existing plantings of sycamore with field maple but also including plantings of oak, (*Q. robur*) and scattered individuals of lime (*Tilia cordata*), birch (*Betula* sp.) and crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*). (Several species of willow are already present on-site and will regenerate naturally)
6. Reinforce the existing shrub understorey with plantings of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with smaller numbers of blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and wayfaring tree/guelder rose (*Viburnam* sp.).
7. Conduct appropriate management of ivy (*Hedera helix*). This will include some removal, but also retention of ivy, on mature trees for wildlife. Ground carpets of ivy are of less benefit and other native woodland ground flora could be encouraged by removal of ivy mats.
8. Maintain open views to and from King's Pond, and a clear path network when planning plantings and restrict very spiny species to site edges and smaller spaces to avoid dense thickets.
9. Retain selected dead wood on-site for the benefit of invertebrates.
10. Around the Pond itself, institute periodic coppicing of existing willows to maintain tree cover and allow trees and branches to overhang and lie in the water to provide nesting sites for aquatic birds.
11. Reinforce existing willow dominated belt around the Pond with Alders (Alnus glutinosus).
12. Consider instituting a bat box scheme and continue to provide bird boxes (including providing owl boxes) in the woods.

Objective 4. Manage the existing amenity grassland area primarily as a safe and pleasant environment for quiet recreation but take steps to improve its biodiversity and landscape character

Rationale

3.10 The existing areas of grassland are of low biodiversity value, and past management, including the dumping of Pond dredgings, make it unlikely that it could be restored to typical chalk grassland. It will continue to be used by walkers, dog walkers and by grazing wildfowl which will result in a continuation of high nutrient levels. It also abuts a busy road

from which it is not separated either physically or visually. However, as neutral grassland some steps could be taken to improve it floristically, by reducing nutrient levels and setting up an experimental area to establish the best means of diversifying the flora (e.g. broadcasting seed, direct drilling, direct planting etc.), and identifying the most promising species mix. Some areas should be left uncut (as happens now) until autumn to encourage tall grass invertebrates.

Actions

1. Continue to cut most of the grassland area on a regular basis but with removal and disposal of cut material.
2. Leave some areas (approx. 10%) uncut until early autumn (later cut, once plants have seeded, and material removed)
3. Establish a plot to carry out experimental trials to establish the best means and the most responsive species for diversifying the flowering plant community of the grasslands
4. Retain existing trees within grassland and protect against mower damage
5. Check all amenity trees annually for safety and take appropriate action
6. Continue to encourage dog walkers to pick up after their pets

Objective 5- Maintain the path network suitable for all users together with other site amenities

Rationale

3.11 The access provisions and public amenities of King's Pond need to be maintained to provide safe conditions and suitable amenities for visitors. The car park by the Railway bridge is small, dark, has poor access with inadequate sightlines and should be closed. A comprehensive report with recommendations has been prepared and parts of this could form the basis for a work programme (See Appendix 1-Watts Report).

Actions

1. Consider the future of the unofficial car park by the Railway Bridge for public parking following consideration on whether this area should accommodate a silt trap, but in any event, retain and provide parking places for disabled parking
2. If no silt trap is constructed (which would necessitate work to existing culvert), carry out repair to existing culvert in car park by railway bridge.
3. Prepare a 5-year footpath maintenance and improvement programme including consideration of a low boardwalk or other solution to raise the path above the roots on those parts of the western path seriously affected by tree roots.
4. Expedite an assessment of safety provision around the water body, particularly for children and institute any additional recommended safety measures
5. Ask Mid Hants Railway to carry out a safety inspection and institute any necessary works to the railway embankment and exclusion fence

6. Carry out assessment of seat provision and existing seating and action any recommendations
7. Encourage owners to keep dogs on leads on the circular path around the Pond, and review with the District Council whether there is a need for a Public Space Protection Order requirement for dogs to be kept on leads on parts of the path system where dogs and people, including children, may be close to the water
8. Maintain existing dog bin provision
9. Consider the provision of a bike rack by the car park

Objective 6- Maintain and improve signage and interpretation

Rationale

3.12 Public enjoyment of King's Pond which has an interesting history and an abundance of wildlife is enhanced by the provision of information about the site. This is given additional substance by adding current interest as the seasons change. Signage and information also serves to reinforce health and safety messages and do's and don'ts for protecting the enjoyment of visitors and the amenities of the site and its associated wildlife.

Actions

1. Maintain or replace/update existing information signs including the provision of information on the history of the site on the existing Council public information website. Continue to use imaginative means to persuade visitors to clean up after their dogs and to refrain from feeding the wildfowl
2. Update existing colour guide to King's Pond and make available through local outlets, inserts to newsletters, letter drops to new and existing residents etc.
3. Provide a nature trail guide and educational pack and make available to local schools, visiting groups etc.
4. Set up (or use existing) social media accounts (e.g. Facebook groups) to inform the public about the site, events, recruitment of volunteers etc.
5. Consider the use of beacons and interactive signage
6. Produce a half yearly newsletter on the management and wildlife of King's pond to be available on the Council's website and issue a press release.

Objective 7. Maintain liaison with statutory bodies and local community

Rationale

3.13 It is important to maintain close liaison with statutory bodies for health and safety reasons, to meet statutory responsibilities and to obtain advice and help. This is particularly important on a site with a large water body and a stretch of main river. Management of a publicly accessible site within a suburban environment is also largely dependent on the understanding and goodwill of the public and the local community

Actions

1. Liaise with local community, neighbours and user groups to maintain local contact and encourage local engagement
2. Liaise with the Environment Agency and the Wey Valley Catchment Partnership over works relating to the River Wey and the Pond where it passes through the site at King's Pond
3. Liaise with Town Council/Steering Group to plan, finance and carry out management, report urgent works, Health and Safety issues etc.
4. Maintain a record of incidents such as anti-social behaviour, vandalism etc. and liaise with the local police and emergency services as necessary
5. Maintain contact with local and County natural history groups and individual experts for management advice

Objective 8. Carry out a programme of survey and monitoring

Rationale

3.14 In order to assess the success or otherwise of measures to improve the site for people and wildlife it will be important to monitor the results. This can take the form of monitoring specific measures such as a survey of a bird or bat box scheme, casual records by volunteers such as monitoring wildfowl feeding by visitors, or professionally organised surveys, such as a visitor attitude survey, or a combination of professional and citizen inputs.

Actions

1. As finances allow, carry out a repeat visitor survey every 10 years
2. Set up a recording website where visitors can record their natural history sightings
3. Encourage surveys by outside experts or groups and store the results for reference
4. Encourage volunteer recorders for particular groups
5. Encourage volunteer recording of issues such as wildfowl feeding and picking up after dogs to record behaviours and test mitigation measures such as signage
6. Examine the need for use of special data software to hold collected information for the site

Objective 9. Carry out all statutory duties as site owner

Rationale

3.15 As site owners, the Town Council have statutory responsibilities which have to be met.

Actions

1. Carry out regular health and safety checks
2. Obtain all statutory consents and approvals necessary for carrying out management work

Objective10. Seek resources to carry out the prescriptions in the management plan

Rationale

3.16 While some of the prescriptions in this plan can be accomplished fairly simply at minimal cost, perhaps with the valuable help of volunteers, other work, specifically any major work to the River Wey or the water body of King's Pond, could cost huge amounts of money. Help with funding may well be necessary and the identification of potential funding bodies and subsequent approaches will need to be part of the management plan for the site.

Actions

1. Investigate possible sources of funding including statutory bodies, private charities, waste management companies, local organisations/companies etc.

4. Work Programme

Notes.

The tables below are a guide to the actions needed to implement the management plan. The timings are a guide only as it is recognised that many of the actions will be dependent on the availability of resources. Actions in the first, and to some extent, the second year are seen as priorities.
Many actions are shown for every year and are regular activities to maintain the site and keep it safe for visitors and most of these are already included in the existing management programme.
In some cases, a single action is included over two years where a period of preparation may be needed before the action is implemented.
Table 1 lists all the actions and the years or years in which they are programmed. \Table two describes only those actions which are not repeatable annually but are expected to be undertaken in a specific year or years.

Table1. Schedule of habitat and related management at King's Pond 2018-2022

Year	18	19	20	21	22
Objective 1					
Take water samples and analyse nutrient levels in Kings Pond	√				
Install new signage and put in place education campaign to discourage feeding wildfowl	√				
Continue ban on fishing in King's Pond	√	√	√	√	√
Continue Canada Geese egg oiling and educate and inform public	√	√	√	√	√
Liaise with Highway Authority and adjoining owners to divert road and other drains	√	√			
Install a drainage buffer in meadow to catch nutrients		√			
Ask public to report any dead fish and notify EA	√	√	√	√	√
Seek advice from EA on removing bottom feeding fish, including requirements for licences and H&S and obtain estimate	√				

Year	18	19	20	21	22
Carry out fish removal if funds available		√	√		
Carry out survey of bank erosion and repair banks	√	√			
Obtain report on means of preventing further silt slippage from island into pond	√				
Take remedial action in accordance with report		√			
Refer drainage problems at three bungalows to developer	√				
Objective 2					
Appoint a suitable consultant to advise on condition and functioning of current impounding structure	√				
In association with EA and a suitable consultant if required examine the options for removing silt from King's Pond and preventing further silt inputs and availability of funding	√	√			
Consult on preferred option for silt removal and prevention			√		
If funding available carry out remedial work on silting and prevention				√	
Remove and replace existing grid on outlet	√				
Objective 3					
Carry out tree inventory of trees and shrubs at King's Pond, identify diseased or unhealthy trees or groups of trees which require felling, replanting, thinning (to improve shrub layer), shrub planting, or additional planting and produce programme of work	√				
Carry out programme of felling, thinning and planting		√	√	√	√
Manage ivy but leave a proportion of trees ivy covered		√			
Retain dead wood on site in locations to discourage removal		√	√	√	√
Institute coppice programme of waterside willows	√				√
Plant additional alders around pond		√			
Review bird box scheme and install bat boxes		√		√	
Carry out H&S inspection of all trees on site and follow recommendations for any necessary actions	√	√	√	√	√
Objective 4					
Regularly cut c. 80% of grassland protect trees and remove cuttings	√	√	√	√	√
Carry out a single late cut of 10% of grassland	√	√	√	√	√
Leave c. 5% of grass (as alternating strip within 10%) uncut as a nutrient buffer to the Pond	√	√	√	√	√
Establish an experimental wild flower plot		√			
Encourage dog walkers to pick up and review effectiveness	√	√	√	√	√
Objective 5					
Review future of unofficial car park and close or repair				√	
Prepare a footpath maintenance/improvement programme	√				
Implement footpath programme	√	√	√	√	√
Review safety provision and implement recommendations	√				
Ask Mid-Hants Railway to review safety provision on line adjoining Pond	√				
Review seat provision and action any recommendations		√	√		
Encourage owners to keep dogs on leads on circular path and review effectiveness and any need for further measures	√	√	√	√	√
Maintain dog bins	√	√	√	√	√
Review demand for bike rack in car park			√		
Objective 6					

Year	18	19	20	21	22
Maintain/improve/replace/add to existing signage	√	√	√	√	√
Update existing colour guide to Pond and enlarge circulation		√	√		
Obtain input from local schools and produce educational material for schools, visiting groups etc.		√			
Produce and make available a half yearly newsletter on the Pond	√	√	√	√	√
Objective 7					
Liaise with local community, user and other groups and statutory bodies over management of King's Pond	√	√	√	√	√
Liaise with Town Council and Steering Group over management programme and finance	√	√	√	√	√
Liaise with emergency services and keep a record of incidents at the site	√	√	√	√	√
Maintain contacts with other experts and groups for advice on aspects of management	√	√	√	√	√
Objective 8					
Carry out a visitor surveys every ten years if finances allow					√
Set up recording website		√			
Encourage outside experts/volunteers to carry out surveys/monitoring	√	√	√	√	√
Review the need for dedicated software to hold site records			√		
Objective 9					
Obtain all necessary statutory consents and approvals for management work	√	√	√	√	√
Objective 10					
Investigate sources of funding for management work, surveys and monitoring	√	√	√	√	√

Table 2 Actions by year excluding annually repeated actions

Year	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**
Objective 1					
Take water samples and analyse nutrient levels in Kings Pond	√				
Install new signage and put in place education campaign to discourage feeding wildfowl	√				
Liaise with Highway Authority and adjoining owners to divert road and other drains	√	√			
Install a drainage buffer in meadow to catch nutrients		√			
Seek advice from EA on removing bottom feeding fish, including requirements for licences and H&S and obtain estimate	√				
Carry out fish removal if funds available		√	√		
Carry out survey of bank erosion and repair banks	√	√			
Obtain report on means of preventing further silt slippage from island into pond	√				
Take remedial action in accordance with report		√			
Refer drainage problems at three bungalows to developer	√				
Objective 2					

Appoint a suitable consultant to advise on condition and functioning of current impounding structure	√				
In association with EA and a suitable consultant if required examine the options for removing silt from King's Pond and preventing further silt inputs and availability of funding	√	√			
Consult on preferred option for silt removal and prevention			√		
If funding available carry out remedial work on silting and prevention				√	
Remove and replace existing grid on outlet	√				
Objective 3					
Carry out tree inventory of trees and shrubs at King's Pond, identify diseased or unhealthy trees or groups of trees which require felling, replanting, thinning (to improve shrub layer), shrub planting, or additional planting and produce programme of work	√				
Carry out programme of felling, thinning and planting		√	√	√	√
Manage ivy but leave a proportion of trees ivy covered		√			
Retain dead wood on site in locations to discourage removal		√	√	√	√
Institute coppice programme of waterside willows	√				√
Plant additional alders around pond		√			
Review bird box scheme and install bat boxes		√		√	
Objective 4					
Establish an experimental wild flower plot		√			
Objective 5					
Review future of unofficial car park and close or repair				√	
Prepare a footpath maintenance/improvement programme	√				
Review safety provision and implement recommendations	√				
Ask Mid-Hants Railway to review safety provision on line adjoining Pond	√				
Review seat provision and action any recommendations		√	√		
Review demand for bike rack in car park			√		
Objective 6					
Update existing colour guide to Pond and enlarge circulation		√	√		
Obtain input from local schools and produce educational material for schools, visiting groups etc.		√			
Objective 8					
Carry out a visitor surveys every ten years if finances allow					√
Set up recording website		√			
Review the need for dedicated software to hold site records			√		

Appendix 1.

Vascular plants King's Pond, Alton 2017

Acer campestre	Field Maple
Acer pseudoplatanus	Sycamore
Aegopodium podagraria	Ground Elder
Aesculus hippocastanum	Horse Chestnut
Alliaria petiolata	Garlic Mustard/ Jack-by-the-hedge
Allium ursinum	Ramsons
Alnus glutinosa	Alder
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow Parsley
Arum maculatum	Wild Arum
Bellis perennis	Common Lawn Daisy
Cardamine flexuosa	Wavy-leaved Bittercress
Cardamine pratensis	Cuckoo Flower
Carex pendula	Pendulous Sedge
Centaurea nigra	Common Knapweed
Cirsium arvense	Creeping Thistle
Cirsium vulgare	Common Spear Thistle
Corylus avellana	Hazel
Cotoneaster	Garden Cotoneasta
Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn
Dactylus glomerata	Cock's-foot Grass
Dryopteris filix-mas	Male Fern
Equisetum	Horsetail
Fagus sylvatica	Beech
Ficaria verna	Lesser Celandine

Filipendula ulmaria	Meadowsweet
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash
Galium aparine	Goosegrass/Cleavers
Geranium molle	Dove-foot Crane's-bill
Geranium robertianum	Herb Robert
Geum urbanum	Wood Avens / Herb Bennett
Hedera helix	Ivy
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire Fog
Hyacinthoides hispanica	Garden Bluebell
Ilex aquifolium	Holly
Iris pseudacorus	Yellow Flag
Lemna minuta	Least Duckweed
Ligustrum ovalifolium	Garden Privet
Mentha aquatica	Water Mint
Mercurialis perennis	Dog's Mercury
Narcissus	Garden Daffodils
Oenanthe crocata	Hemlock Water Dropwort
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort Plantain
Plantago major	Greater Plantain
Primula veris	Cowslip
Primula vulgaris	Primrose
Primula x digenea	False Oxlip
Prunus	Cherry
Quercus cerris	Turkey Oak
Ranunculus acris	Meadow Buttercup
Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup
Ribes	Currant
Ribes uva-crispa	Gooseberry
Rosa cf canina	Rose
Rubus idaeus	Raspberry

Rubus fruticosus agg.	Bramble
Rumex	Dock/Sorrel
Rumex obtusifolius	Broad-leaved Dock
Salix capraea	Goat Willow/Sallow
Salix cinerea	Grey Willow
Salix fragilis.	Crack Willow
Sambucus niger	Elder
Scrophularia auriculata	Water Figwort
Sorbus aria	Whitebeam
Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan
Symphoricarpos racemosus	Snowberry
Symphytum	Comfrey
Taraxacum officinale	Dandelion
Tilia x	Lime
Trifolium repens	White Clover
Ulmus procera	Common Elm
Urtica dioica	Stinging Nettle
Veronica filiformis	Slender Speedwell
Veronica hederifolia	Ivy-leaved Speedwell
Viola odorata	Scented Violet
	Bamboo

KING'S POND ANIMALS		2016-7	Previous records
MAMMALS			
	Rat	Edge of pond eating bird food 2017	
	Mink		
	Grey squirrel	2017	
	Water Shrew		
	Common Shrew	11.7.2010 ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Daubenton's Bat		Regular
	Pipistrelle Bat	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	

	[Serotine Bat]		Planning surveys Ashdell Road
	Brown Long-eared Bat		Planning surveys Ashdell Road
	Badger		1980s road casualty Ashdell Road
	Fox		Common to 1990s, less due to devt
	Brown Hare		Once seen along Ashdell Road 1980s
	Hedgehog	ANHS 2012	Occasional in Ashdell Road gardens & RTA
BIRDS * breeding			
	Mandarin	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Mallard *	28.12.2010 88 SM ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Pochard	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Coot *		
	Gadwall	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Moorhen *		
	Kingfisher	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Grey Heron, *	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Tufted Duck	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Little Egret	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Cormorant	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Canada Goose *	ANHS Ann Rep 2010	
	Peregrine	ANHS Ann Rep 2011	
	Greylag Goose	ANHS Ann Rep	
	Barnacle Goose	ANHS Ann Rep	
	Egyptian Goose	ANHS Ann Rep	
	Mute Swan	ANHS Ann Rep 2010, 2011	
	Indian Goose		
	Water Rail	ANHS Ann Rep 2011	
	Common Sandpiper		
	Wood Pigeon *		
	Rook		Once common, replaced by crows
	Carrion Crow	2017 on grass	
	Jackdaw		

	Magpie	
	Robin *	Regular
	Missel Thrush	
	Song Thrush	
	Redwing	
	Blackbird *	Regular
	Chiffchaff	Regular in summer
	Willow Warbler	
	Blackcap	
	Wren	Regular
	Goldcrest	
	Dunnock	Regular on path
	House Sparrow	2017 now common in cypress hedge & on path
	Chaffinch	
	Greenfinch	
	Long-tailed Tit	
	Great Tit	
	Marsh/Willow Tit	1980s
	Coal Tit	Ashdell Road gardens
	BlueTit	Regular
	Starling	Not common as it once was on the grass
	Swift	Regular summer visitor over pond
	Swallow	2017 but less regular than in 1980s
	House Martin	Summer visitor in decline, passage birds
	Tawny Owl	In the ash dell trees
	Little Grebe / Dabchick	ANHS Ann Rep 2010, Numbers have varied
REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS		
	Common Frog	Little breeding success in the pond/gardens instead
	Slow-worm	Ashdell Road gardens
	Grass Snake	1980s in pond

	Common Toad	
FISH		
	[Brown Trout]	Pond once stocked with these
	Common Carp	
	Mirror Carp	
	Goldfish	
	Roach etc.	
	Bullhead	
	Stone Loach	In River Wey by culvert
	Three=spined Stickleback	In River Wey by culvert
	Minnow	In River Wey by culvert
	[Pike]	Report of someone fishing
INSECTS		
Volucella zonaria	Hornet Hoverfly	ANHS
Propylea 14-punctata	Fourteen spot Ladybird	ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Rhagonycha fulva	Red Soldier Beetle	ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Oulema melanopus	Cereal Leaf Beetle	ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Cassida viridis	Green Tortoise Beetle	ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Bibio marci	St Mark's Fly	ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Harmonia axyrida	Harlequin Ladybird	ANHS Ann Rep 2011, 2013 (mass 28.9.2013)
Cocinella 7-punctata	Seven-spot Ladybird	ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Colletes hederae	Ivy Bee	First in England 2001, on Alton 2010 ANHS Ann Rep 2011
Bombus pascuorum	Common Carder Bee	2017 on horse chestnut flowers
Cimbex connatus	Wasp Sawfly Mimic	ANHS 2013
Elasmucha grisea	Parent Bug	ANHS 2014
Volucella pellucens	Pied Hoverfly	ANHS 2015
Bombus vestalis	Cuckoo Bumblebee	ANHS 2016 Ashdell Road
Nephrotoma flavipes	Cranefly	ANHS 2016 Ashdell Road

	Plume Moths	ANHS 2016 on Hedge Bindweed
Bombus hypnorum	Tree Bumblebee	Hampshire 2001, Alton 2010 (ANHS Ann Rep. 2010]
Mimas tiliae	Lime Hawk Moth	ANHS 2014
SNAILS, SLUGS & MUSSELS		
Cornu aspersum	Common Garden Snail	2017
Cepaea hortensis	White-lipped Snail	
Hygromia cinctella	Girdled Snail	Since 2006in Alton, Ashdell Road to present ANHS 2012
Limacus maculatus	Green Slug	Ashdell Road, new to Hants North ANHS 20112
Testacella scutulum	Shelled Slug	ANHS 2000, 2005, 2009, 2012
Limacus maculatus	Green Irish Slug	2014 wall by car park at night
PLANT GALLS		
Andricus grossulariae	Black Currant Gall on oak	ANHS 2013 (new)
Taphrina alni	Pocket Plum	ANHS 2013

Appendix 2

Here follows a report by I. D. Watts, 17th March 2015. "Kings Pond – My suggestions for improvements" (Report for the attention of Matthew Bayliss, Open Spaces Committee member)

While this report is not part of the management plan, and is solely the views of I.D. Watts, it should be considered as a the most comprehensive description available of the facilities on the sites to form the starting point for addressing some of the issues regarding accessibility on the site.

Introduction.

This report is a result of a conversation I had with the Alton town clerk at the beginning of March 2015 about a report I had created with reference to Flood Meadows. The result of the conversation was that I offered to create a similar report on Kings Pond.

On that day I presented the town clerk with a report (including photos and a marked up plan) of my thoughts on enhancements that could be made in Flood Meadows. The report was triggered by the Alton Town Council (ATC) request to complete a proforma with individuals opinions on what they would like to see happen to Flood Meadows in the future. My many suggestions have come from my working experience and living close by since 1979, and more so, the time I have spend walking our Patterdale terrier in flood meadows.

Kings Pond.

This report has the same constituent parts as the Flood Meadows report, (report, photos and plan) but is aimed primarily at highlighting the maintenance issues as I see them.
I worked for the HCC roads & bridges department for some 12 years on the following types of work, roads, footpaths & retaining walls and 10 of these years building and maintaining bridges mainly over water throughout the county. The following 12 years were spent inspecting and reporting on structures for London Underground and the following 20 years (with LUL) recording civil assets for maintenance and recording these on a database and Cad & in later years a GIS. The work for LUL was carried out to comply with written standards, procedures and work instructions to ensure conformity.
My hope is that this report will give the ATC management a basic knowledge of the issues at Kings Pond so they are able to incorporate these into the ongoing yearly maintenance they carry out. In addition, this may well assist in getting funding for the more expensive exercises that will be required in the coming years to keep Kings Pond looking its best for everyone including the local wildlife.

The Report.

The photographs at Kings pond were taken on a walk around the pond starting at the Ashdell Road / Paper Mill Lane car park. From the car park the walk was towards Lower Turk Street and around the pond back alongside the railway back to the starting point. The second section being the footpath alongside Ashdell Road from the Paper Mill Lane end towards Lower Turk Street.
Photos were taken of any subject as I went along and these are recorded in this order in the electronic format on the CD. These same photos are used in the photo pages report but numbered

to correspond with notation in the written report and on the plan. The electronic file number however is recorded in the order that I walked around the area.

The report is formatted by subject heading so the photographs are still used in the same order but only those photographs that are related to the paragraph heading are included in that section of the report and the photo pages. The other photos taken will be in the section to which they belong and those not used are on the CD with a brief description on the log pages.

Numbering of footpaths.

I have numbered the footpaths for ease of referencing. These are shown on the plan but also on a separate sheet that is easy to see the numbers without all the other information added as is the case on the plan.

Photograph Logs.

I have attached two tables that log all the photos. There are 116 photos, of these only 80 have been used in the report. All the 116 photos are on the CD. Photograph logs are provided ordered either by:-

1. By their photo reference number as used on the photo pages of the report.
2. By their file reference number as located in digital format on the CD.

Plan

The Plan of Kings Pond.

Outline of properties, roads, footpaths, river and pond areas are based on tracings from prints from the internet source noted on the plans.

Attachments:

Report (10 pages)

Plan (A4) Numbering of the footpaths. (1 page)

Photograph Log (3 pages) Ordered by the report number.

Photograph Log (3 pages) Ordered by the file reference number.

Photographs. (40 pages).

Plan (2 x A3) side by side.

CD - Full photo set (116) and electronic word files, and pdf plan.

Contents.

1. *Car parks.*
2. Road to car park and Kings Pond Bungalows.
3. Pond Footpaths. (Divided into six areas)
4. Ashdell Road / Lower Turk Street footpaths. (Divided into four sections A to D).
5. Grassed areas (mown grass).
6. Grassed areas (long grass).
7. Trees on the islands.
8. Trees / shrubs surrounding the pond.
9. Areas of felling and clearing.
10. Adjacent hedges.
11. Safety.
12. Signage.
13. Litter and dog waste bins.
14. Wild flowers.
15. Seating.
16. Lighting.
17. Culvert.
18. Railway.
19. Use of Kings Pond facility (ideas).
20. Maintenance manual.

Kings Pond

1. **Car Parks.** There are two car parks that serve Kings Pond. Car park (A) in Ashdell Road adjacent to Paper Mill lane and car park (B) in Lower Turk Street adjacent to the railway bridge.
    a. **Car Park (A).** Parking is provided for 20 cars two of which are for disabled vehicles. The car park has a waste bin and an information sign.
        i. The white lines delineating the parking spaces have now worn away and the disabled markings are mostly worn away. 18 x 4.5m long lines and the two disabled marking need to be renewed. See photo 1.
        ii. The perimeter of the car park has a kerb all round. There is an accumulation of debris / leaves etc. to varying degrees all around the kerbing and adjacent to the drain in one corner. See photo 2 & 3.
    b. **Car Park (B).** Less parking seems to take place here. The area is dark caused by the surrounding trees. The car park has a waste bin and also a specific dog waste bin.
        i. The length of the car park, from Lower Turk Street to the culvert headwall. There is a large diameter surface water drain installed under the car park. Since its construction the surface bitmac has either sunk or eroded and is in need of reinstatement. Three areas are deep enough to be wet muddy areas. See photo 4 & 5.
        ii. One of the concrete bollards adjacent to the road has now been broken at road level but it still carries out its function. There is a huge pile of leaves covering half the path width. See Photo 6.
        iii. The perimeter has an accumulation of soil & leaves etc. covering the kerb edging on all sides. This should be cleared back exposing the edging. See photo 6, 7 & 8.
        iv. There are no marked car parking spaces in this car park.

2. **Road to car park and Kings Pond Bungalows.**
    a. General view from the bungalow. See photo 9.
    b. In the adjacent corner there is a small area of waste ground with tyre tracks and puddles of water. May be used by refuse lorry as a turning space. See photo 10.
    c. There is a section of kerb edging showing on the pond side, this could be a trip hazard, I suggest this area behind the edging is topped up with soil, level with the edging top, to prevent this possibility. See photo 11. The material collected from the path clearance could be put here.
    d. The area of road from the seat to the grassed area has a build-up of leaves and debris on both sides of the road. Also there are weeds growing under the hedge that should be removed or kept cut back as they will encroach on the road if allowed to grow. See photo 12, 13 & 14.
    e. During rain water runs down the side of the entrance road and it has cut a channel through the grass to enable the flow to go down the adjacent footpath and empty into the pond. There is now a 200mm deep channel cut into the grass and several edgings have tipped over and require repair. See photo 15.
        i. A long-term solution (to 2e) will be needed to stop this erosion re-occurring, e.g. gulley and pipe to a soakaway or the pond.

3. **Pond Footpaths**. I have divided up the footpath into six portions that represent sections that can be seen in one length. These areas are noted on the attached A4 plan. All the footpaths are negotiable on foot and with prams but the ride would be a bit bumpy in places. Footpath area 1 being in the best condition at the present time.
    a. **Footpath area 1.**
        i. General view photo 16.
        ii. The side, of the footpath from the road, is cracking and breaking up along the lower edge. This would appear to be due to no footpath edging to provide support. Water also flows down this edge during rain from the road. See photo 17.
        iii. An area of the path adjacent to the water access point 1 is eroding away due to water flow from the road during rain. This will need to be repaired to prevent further erosion. Size 2000 x 450 x 100mm deep. See photo 18.
        iv. At the bottom of the water access point No. 1 the former holes along the water edge have been filled with earth from the recently dug new seat footing. This is OK as a temporary measure but will need a more permanent repair. See photo 19 – 22.
        v. The water access point No. 2 has a timber board fixed at the bottom adjacent to the water. A seat is located at mid-point and in front of the seat several small areas of surfacing need repairing. A new seat footing has been constructed alongside the footpath. A lifebelt is also fitted nearby and a new bin has been now been fitted. See photo 23 & 24.
        vi. There are no safety railings at either of the water access points. At point A the water depth is 350mm on the apron then 650mm. At point B the water depth is 1000mm.
        vii. At both points a safety railing is advisable and could be of a removable type to allow maintenance access to the pond. Fixings similar to a rotary clothes line (post and socket) but bolted through allowing easy removal.
    b. **Footpath area 2.**
        i. General view photos 25 & 26.
        ii. There would appear to be no footpath edging to provide support to the footpath sides which would benefit from being swept on occasions.
        iii. The footpath surface has humps and bumps throughout with areas of the old footpath repairs being particularly uneven. See photos 25 & 26.
    c. **Footpath area 3.**
        i. General views photo 27, 30 & 31.
        ii. A dirt path has been created across the vegetation area to meet up with the pond footpath in the Crowley Drive area. See photo 28. This is adjacent to the surfaced path. See photo 29.
        iii. There is no support to the footpath edging and areas of the edge are breaking up. See Photo 30 – 32.
        iv. The footpath surface has humps and bumps throughout with some areas of the footpath repairs being particularly uneven.
    d. Footpath area 4.
        i. General view photos 33 & 34.
        ii. Around the culvert headwall there are areas of mud where people stand to look at the river. It would be better for this area to be surfaced (bitmac). See photo 33.

iii. There is no support to the footpath edging and areas of the edge are breaking up. See Photo 33 – 35.
iv. The footpath surface has humps and bumps throughout with areas of the footpath repairs being particularly uneven.

e. Footpath area 5.
   i. General view photo 36 – 38.
   ii. There is no support to the footpath edging and areas of the edge are breaking up. Tree roots are causing damage to the path by causing it to break up and also cause unevenness due to the ever growing roots. See Photo 36.
   iii. Photo 38 shows the maintenance area where tree debris is stored.

f. Footpath area 6.
   i. General view photo 39 & 40.
   ii. There is no support to the footpath edging and areas of the edge are breaking up. See Photo 39.
   iii. Vehicles accessing the maintenance area are turning the grass to mud. If the maintenance area is retained a wider surfaced road / footpath would be better. See photo 40.

4. **Ashdell Road / Lower Turk Street footpaths.** This footpath can be divided into four sections for ease of identification.

a. Section A. (Paper Mill Lane to the car park entrance).
   i. The footpath has a hedge on one side with a build-up of debris and leaves along its length, the grass has encroached on both sides onto the footpath. Adjacent to the car park entrance the trench surface in the path is breaking up. Leaves and debris and encroaching grass should be removed and the trench re-instated. See photo 41 & 42.

b. Section B. (Car park entrance to the 1st property toward the bridge).
   i. This section of the footpath has mown grass on both sides. The footpath section nearest to the car park entrance is much narrower than the remainder. The encroaching grass needs to be cut back and the tree suckers removed so the path can be widened at the car park end. Both sides suffer from grass encroachment to some 200 – 300 mm wide each side making the footpath too narrow. See photo 43 – 45.

c. Section C. (1st property to the 3rd property).
   i. This section of footpath is very uneven and has two sewer covers set at odd angles, the cover to the manhole nearest the bridge is raised by approx. 20mm and the surrounding area shows signs of foul water having come from the manhole and to have run down the footpath and seeped away into the undergrowth. See photo 46 - 48.

d. Section D. (3rd property to the Lower Turk Street car park).
   i. This section of footpath has a moss covering particularly at the edges. This is causing the breakup of the surfacing at the edges. The end nearest section 3, a short length has small potholes and is rough to walk on. A small section has a

trench across the path that has sunk and needs re-instatement (opposite Cowley Drive). See photos 49 & 50.

5. **Grassed areas (mown).**
   a. The mown area of grass is not level but has a series of small rises in ground level. The area is also frequented by wildlife resting and feeding. See photo51.

6. **Grassed areas (long grass).**
   a. A large long grass area is located alongside the footpath sections 1 & 2. There is also a smaller roundish area within this large mown area at the Lower Turk Street end. These areas have been cut short in the previous few months.

7. **Trees on the islands.**
   a. I include in this area the 'C' shaped area adjacent to the culvert headwall as this is very similar in nature to the large island. See photos
      i. Small island, there are only trees growing here, the land is submerged. See photo 52.
      ii. Large Island. This area is heavily wooded with tall and spindly trees. Those at the water edge are leaning or falling into the water around the whole island. See photo 55, 58, 60, 63, 64 & 65.
      iii. The river section between the reversed 'C' shaped section and the main island is now effectively blocked by fallen or leaning trees. See photos 55, 57 & 58. More are shown on the accompanying CD.
      iv. The 'C' shaped area has fallen trees andd area of the pond now completely silted up. See photo 56.
      v. I would like to see most of the trees on the main island perimeter, and some on the d 'C' shaped area, felled and removed leaving no trace (no stumps left showing). This will open up the river and allow more light to get in.
      vi. Clearing the perimeter trees in these areas will allow navigation by small boats around this area for maintenance tasks and also pleasure craft, on occasions, subject to council organisation and control.

8. **Trees / shrubs surrounding the pond**.
   a. Throughout the whole length of the pond perimeter there is evidence of trees having fallen onto the bank or lying in the water. Many of these being covered in ivy, so much so the tree beneath cannot be seen. Many trees at the Lower Turk Street end are tall and spindly and covered in ivy making the area dark. See photo 31. (In the footpath section).
   b. There are numerous areas around the pond where trees are leaning over the water or have fallen in. See photos 53, 57, 59 – 66. There are too many to include in the report, there are more on the CD.
   c. I suggest a tree survey is carried out and a plan is produced to fell vulnerable trees particularly those fallen or falling into the water to get light into the area and to facilitate ingoing tree maintenance.
   d. Carry out replanting where required.

9. **Areas of felling and clearing.**

a. There are areas where felling and shrub clearance has been carried out. See photo 67 – 71. In footpath area 2 adjacent to some cleared areas there is a pile of chalk that looks out of place – photo 69.

10. **Adjacent hedges**.
    a. There is a hedge that is overgrown and about 1.8m wide alongside the grassed area in front of the car park A. This should be cut back. See photo 72.

11. Safety.
    a. The most important safety risk would be to toddlers and / or prams being able to run down the water access slopes. Apart from a timber along one, there is nothing stopping a pram rolling into the water, or a toddler falling into the water. I recommend a removable safety barrier at both access points.
    b. The footpaths all suffer from roots underneath them and most areas are in need of some form of resurfacing to the whole surface or just the edges in places to regain a good walking surface.

12. **Signage**. There are three information signs at Kings Pond.
    a. The parking sign at the car park entrance.
    b. There is one information sign adjacent to car park A. (At Paper Mill Lane end).
    c. There is another sign (plaque) lent against the tree nearest the car park A waste bin. The Alton Society - John Ambrose award. This needs to be fitted on a suitable post. See photo 73.

13. **Litter and dog waste bins**.
    a. I have found that Kings Pond has very little litter around the local authority paths, there is some evidence of plastic bags blown into the surrounding trees on the pond side. I only noticed about three areas of dog poo that had not been picked up.
    b. Litter and dog waste bins are provided around the site. Three being dog poo specific. Six waste bins are also provided.

14. **Wild flowers**. At this time, I saw no wild flowers, in flower, but am aware from previous visits that there is a considerable area at the bridge end of (white star shaped flowers, growing now (March) and should flower by next month).

15. **Seating.** There are several seats installed around the pond, with an extra seat base having been installed in preparation for another at the river access point 2. The seat in front of Waterside Court does not have a good view as five trees are now growing in front of it. There is a seat base provided opposite the main island and the ‘C’ shaped area at the Lower Turk street end. The view here is blocked by trees. See photo 58.

16. **Lighting**. There is no lighting around the pond. The nearest lighting is the lamp standards along Ashdell Road / Lower Turk Street. These lamps would illuminate the mown grassed area to some extent.

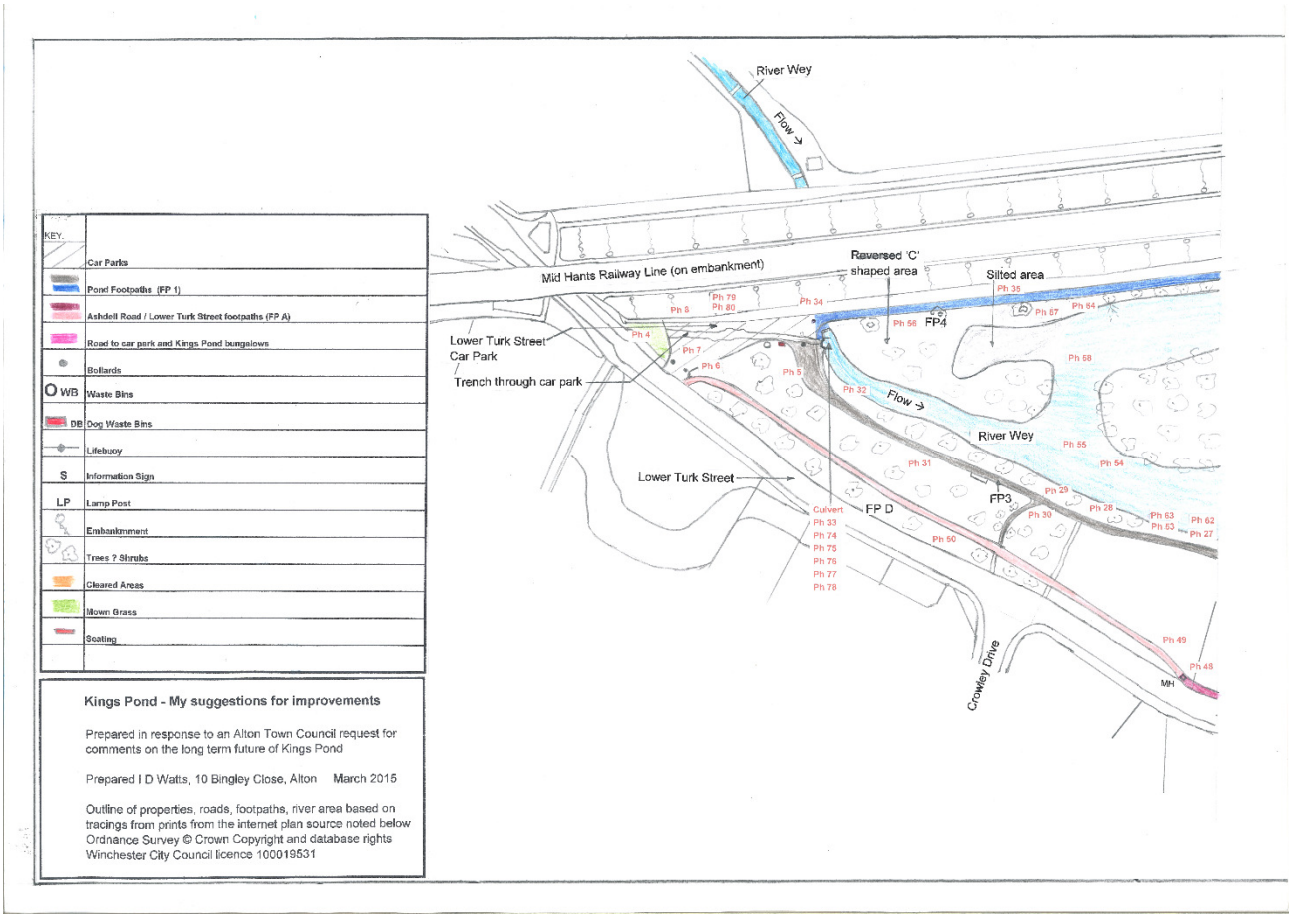
17. **The Culvert**. This carries the River Wey under the Mid Hants Railway (Watercress Line) embankment from the Coors brewery in Lower Turk Street. See photos 74 & 75.

a. Whose maintenance responsibility is this? MHR Watercress Line? Maintenance will need to be carried out by the owner / maintainer.
    i. If it has been inspected, does Alton Town Council have a copy of the latest Inspection report?
b. The culvert headwall, (when viewed from the path) has a small area of open jointing (20mm) to the wall (right hand end) and all the coping bricks are moss covered with some shallow joints and two missing bricks at the left-hand end. See photo 74.
c. The wing wall now fails to do its job as the river course has changed to some extent and erosion is now taking place behind the wall. Two small trees are growing behind the wall and must be removed. See photo 75 - 77.
    i. Ideally the wing wall should be carefully removed so as not to damage the culvert walls and arch rings. A new wing wall needs to be constructed more in line with the current bank and filled behind. A handrail extension may also be required.
d. A new brick headwall has been added to in the past to incorporate a surface water drain. Only the original (old) construction should be classed as part of the culvert.
    i. Council drainage headwall. The concrete section of wall (ivy covered) below the mesh railing has some undermining and a small length of the adjacent bank is being eroded away. This needs remedial work to prevent any further erosion. See photo 78.

18. **Railway Fencing adjacent to Kings Pond**. (Mid Hants Railway, Watercress Line responsibility). Alongside of car park 2 (Ashdell Road near the bridge). A section of railway fencing is suffering from leaning and broken posts. See photo 79 & 80. The remaining fence has isolated concrete posts that have now broken up.
    a. For most of its length the embankment has not been touched for years and trees and branches have now fallen on the embankment.
    b. There is a small amount of litter (cans etc.) on the embankment alongside the path.
    c. I note that an area of embankment has been cleared from the station to a point the Lower Turk Street side of the Kings Pond bungalows. This may be an ongoing operation.
19. **Use of Kings Pond.**
    a. The main ongoing use of Kings Pond will be for the wildlife.
    b. Many visitors have been seen during my visits including walkers (young and old), dog walkers, mothers with prams and children, the car park often has students in the lunch break.
    c. The pond could have other uses. Radio controlled model boats / yachts to give youths to elderly a water based pastime. The use of a small rubber dingy would also need to be allowed, for recovery purposes, when needed.
    d. A possible future use could be an event with the use of boats (canoes / rubber dinghies) under strictly controlled conditions. Timing should avoid nesting times. If the trees that overhang the water were cleared it would give access to a circular route around the large island. Would it be possible to set a navigation course around the pond using buoys?

20. **Maintenance Manual.**

a. I believe the creation of a maintenance manual would be a good starting point in ensuring all the differing maintenance activities are logged and programmed so they are carried out at the required intervals.
b. The maintenance interval would be determined on the nature of the task, some could be daily (litter), monthly (grass cutting etc.), others could be programmed for each year or a year or more in the future (part of the footpaths repaired).
c. Maintenance work should also incorporate feed-back to identify further work to be done in the future. This should then be added to the ongoing maintenance plan.
d. The maintenance plan and the asset condition will identify where funding is needed in the future. This will help in sourcing the funds in the future as it will be based on sound knowledge of your assets.
e. The manual should also include a specification on how some jobs should be carried out. E.g. Footpath repair. To include fitting edge boards to the repaired area, over time it will all get done. Specification to also include materials, fixtures and fittings, method of repair etc.
f. The numbered sections of footpath I have identified may help in future location of maintenance activities to the footpaths and adjacent areas.
g. To include: -
    i. Plan(s) of the areas.
    ii. Maintenance requirements listed for all areas of the Kings Pond site.
    iii. List of items / materials used for seating, paths etc, material specification, maintenance routine, methods and suppliers to facilitate maintenance and repairs to the original specification.
    iv. Areas requiring specific maintenance identified and specified.
    v. Planned maintenance schedule created, agreed and funded.


KEY:
Car Parks
Pond Footpaths (FP 1)
Ashdell Road / Lower Turk Street footpaths (FP A)
Road to car park and Kings Pond bungalows
Bollards
WB Waste Bins
DB Dog Waste Bins
Lifebuoy
S Information Sign
LP Lamp Post
Embankment
Trees ? Shrubs
Cleared Areas
Mown Grass
Seating
Kings Pond - My suggestions for improvements
Prepared in response to an Alton Town Council request for comments on the long term future of Kings Pond
Prepared I D Watts, 10 Bingley Close, Alton March 2015
Outline of properties, roads, footpaths, river area based on tracings from prints from the internet plan source noted below
Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright and database rights
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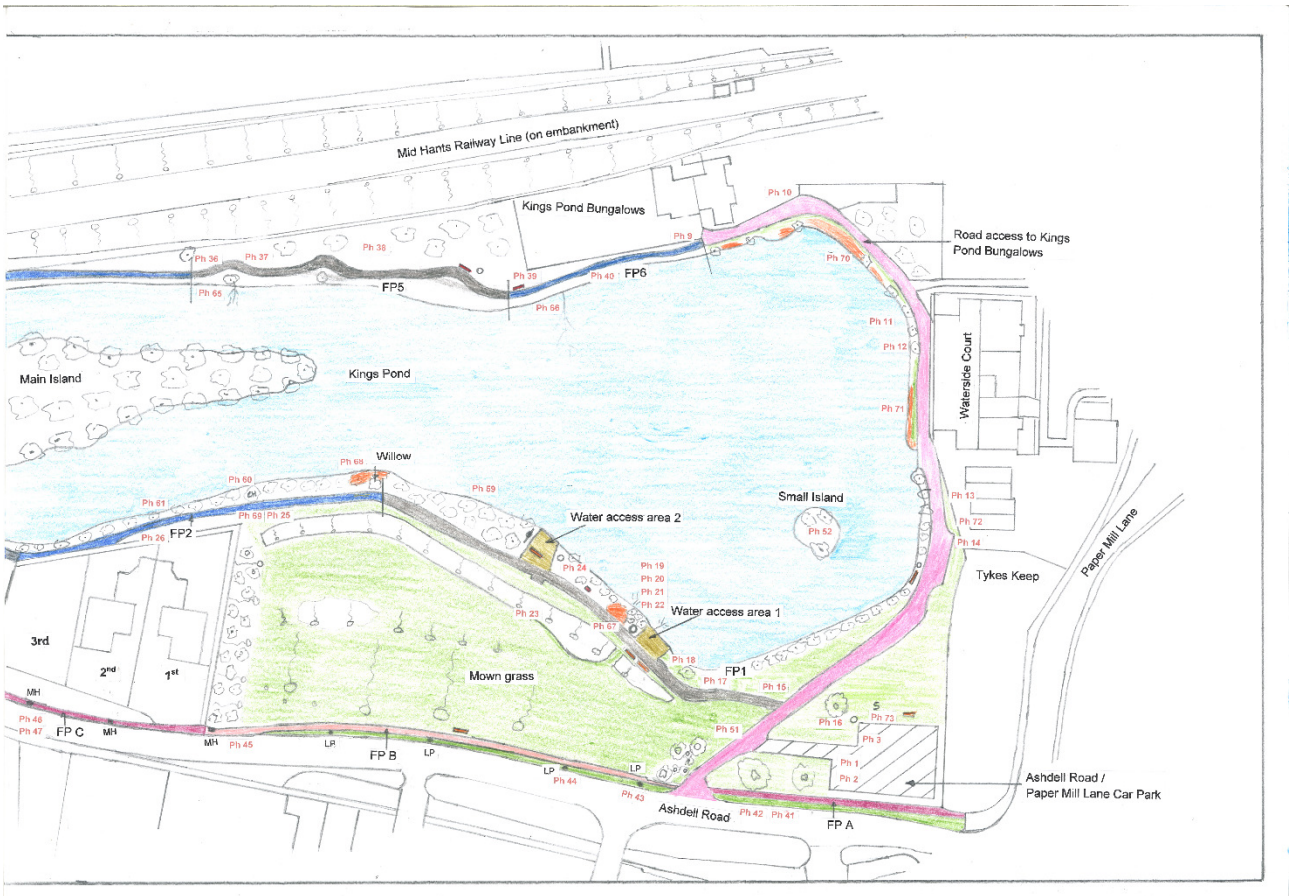
River Wey
Flow
Mid Hants Railway Line (on embankment)
Reversed 'C' shaped area
Silted area
Lower Turk Street Car Park
Trench through car park
FP4
FP3
FP D
Culvert
Lower Turk Street
Crowley Drive
MH


Mid Hants Railway Line (on embankment)
Kings Pond Bungalows
Road access to Kings Pond Bungalows
FP5
FP6
Main Island
Kings Pond
Waterside Court
Willow
Small Island
Water access area 2
Water access area 1
FP2
FP1
3rd
2nd
1st
Mown grass
Tykes Keep
Paper Mill Lane
FP C
FP B
FP A
Ashdell Road
Ashdell Road / Paper Mill Lane Car Park
MH
LP