

Subject:

Abbey Rd pond item for Sept 7th Communities Cttee

ITEM 6.1.3

Request to carry out pond work at Abbey Rd mid-late Sept.

Background

We have been monitoring water levels, plant and wildlife in the pond area at Abbey Rd since September 2020.

Water levels vary depending on rainfall, but the pond dries out in early Spring only to return in October. So the pond does not hold water for long enough to allow amphibians such as frogs and newts to complete their life cycle before the water dries up. The invasive Goat Willow that has grown in the pond area was thought to be adding to the problem by drawing water up through its roots. So in late summer 2020 Council contractors cut some of this Goat Willow from a part of the pond area and treated the stumps to prevent regrowth.

The effect of removing the Goat Willow was dramatic. Not only was there an open area of water in the winter for the first time for many years, but there was an abundance of plant growth taking advantage of the improved light levels, including Purple Loosestrife and Water Mint.

The Abbey Rd Conservation Volunteers then dug a small trench in this area in Autumn 2020 to see if water could be held here for longer. It did indeed extend the longevity of the pond by several weeks in the Spring. It has also collected water several times during this summer during heavy rainfall.

Request for works to be carried out.

Given the success of the clearing and the test trench, we now propose that we scrape a larger part of that cleared area to deepen the pond by 12-18".

See attached diagram. The blue hatched area is the extent of the winter pond. The solid blue area is the area proposed for deepening.



Local contractor Joe Lean (PileTech) has generously agreed to do the work for free. I met him on site recently and discussed the proposal. With your approval we will schedule the work for a Saturday morning in mid-late September. Joe has all necessary insurances.

I will arrange for a few ARCVs to be present to keep members of the public away from the work while it is taking place. We will close the path around the back of the site with signs/tape. The spoil that is removed will be used to form a bank around the pond area..

Roger Brown