

CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 28 March 2023

Title: Management of Watercourse - Snipe Meadow

Contact Officer: Park Ranger - Carl Whitehead

Background

I had a meeting on 26th January 2023 with the Environment Agency on Snipe Meadow to discuss several options.

1. The willows collapsing into the Windrush along Snipe Meadow in both the West and East tributaries.
2. The consequences of the Windrush “overtopping” and discharging into the lake
3. The process that would need to be followed and fiscal cost to carry out works to prevent the “overtopping” by bank re-enforcement and/or creation of a “bund” to raise the watercourse “edge”
4. General path works around the lake.

Current Situation

1. We have several willows collapsing/growing within the watercourse in both tributaries.
2. We have had this year, 3 breaches of the Windrush causing water to flow into the lake (Queen Emma’s Dyke did not overtop this year)
3. We are looking to what work can be carried out and the costs associated with that work.
4. As part of the general management and to re-instate water scoured areas of the lake path

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

The work, should it be needed and goes ahead, will allow a better flow of water across our land and open up the banks for increased edge vegetation to flourish and the improvements to the path will allow safer usage by all users of the site.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- There would be a substantial cost to carrying out bank works (see attached notes).
- The tree works would prevent blockages and reduce bank erosion by fast moving water “scouring” when the watercourse is blocked.
- The path work if not maintained would create a “unstable” surface underfoot and thereby creating a “trip hazard”.

Financial implications

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- See statement from EA.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Any tree works to be carried out by the Ranger, the works team and if need our preferred tree contractor Town & Country Trees
2. No bank work to be carried out without exploring the full costs beforehand
3. Re-instate and strengthen the pathway around the lake using binding ballast.
4. Have the water in the lake tested to clarify its status.