

CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 4 June 2024

Title: Lake & Country Park – Operational Update

Contact Officer: Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer

Background

The Town Council has an active Management Plan and is using it to guide and support the Council's aim to increase biodiversity across the Country Park and all its other holdings.

Current Situation

This is a list of the main actions carried out by the Green Spaces team.

- Liaising with the Allotment Association Rep to install the dual use shed – for volunteers and allotment users;
- Investigating the pros and cons of turning the lake into a fishery;
- Installing water pollution signage at the request of the Council;
- Attending a biodiversity course;
- Commissioning a Stone wort survey;
- Inducting and in-house training of the new Green Spaces operative – ongoing;
- Sign off on the entrance signs – anticipated installation 20 June;
- Installation of rubbing posts;
- Working with the 'Witney Shed' to mount x12 'look at nature' information boards;
- Training – intensive first aid course;
- Researching the need for lifebuoys in the meadow due to water levels;
- Reviewing Management plan;
- Siting of x3 owl boxes;
- X4 rubbing posts installed in Snipe Meadow;
- Management work on WW2 pill box on Mill Meadow;
- Installed a fishing sign at border of Nature area on the Lake;
- Soil sampling with Freshwater Habitats trust on Mill and Snipe Meadows (this work is funded by a £9,400 grant from the Freshwater Habitats Trust, supporting nature-based solutions for wetland creation and grassland restoration). The continuing work here is part of the Management Plan.
- Tidying coppice area on Mill Meadow;
- Removal of bramble on Curbridge Roundabout in preparation for September wildflower seeding;
- Willow work on dragonfly area on Mill Meadow (this was funded from a £2,000 county councillor priority fund grant, provided by Cllr D Enright);
- Mammal raft checks on Country Park.

Environmental impact

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

All the work carried out is aimed to have a positive effect on biodiversity.

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.

All risks both financial and practical are always considered when carrying out any work and only after confirmation the Council has the time, money, and resources to achieve the objective will it then be included in the Management Plan.

Financial implications

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- Always working within the agreed budgets available.

Recommendations

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

1. Councillors are invited to come and see for themselves the work and benefits achieved so far.