

Kingfisher Pond Ecological report improvement work completed by Greenbelt in Feb 25

Greenbelt have undertaken some management actions within the Kingfisher Pond to protect and where possible enhance the pond after an Ecologist had reviewed the area. The work was agreed with the primary landowner and South Cambridgeshire District Council to deliver the outlined improvement work. This is funded by the Escrow account and will not be recharged back to the Northstowe residents.

Summary of the work undertaken listed here -

1. Remove all Alder and reedmace from the former open water sections of Kingfisher Pond i.e. from all former water holding areas. This included removal of the Alder roots and the reedmace rhizomes right up to the edges of the pond where possible.

In order to avoid significant disturbance to the pond habitat and its wildlife as well as to avoid excessive disturbance of sediment, this work was undertaken in February 25 for the first year in a 3 year period during the winter period. Approximately one third of the area of Alder and one third of the area of Reedmace should be removed each year. The removal started from the central part of the pond and work towards the banks in order to increase the area of open water early in the management programme and secure biodiversity benefits as soon as possible.

Ultimately, it is desirable to retain some small, limited areas of reedmace within the pond habitat through annual maintenance work. Similarly, some natural growth of the Alder in the edges of the pond can add biodiversity benefit due to the physical diversity of the aquatic habitat created by its root structure.

2. Improved the sunlight penetration into the aquatic habitat and pond margins by opening up parts of the tree belt around the southern bank by selective thinning of overhanging trees and any shrubs and trees causing excessive shade. This was achieved by coppicing suitable trees.

The monitoring of regrowth and of the effect of thinning on aquatic and marginal habitats will be ongoing thereafter. Retained the dead wood in the canopy as valuable habitat for a range of wildlife including bats which may roost in suitable hollows and crevices.

3. Installed a water level depth gauge within the Kingfisher pond to enable regular recording of the water level by Longstanton Environmental and Groundwater Group (LEGG) and Greenbelt during each of their visits. This will enable seasonal fluctuations and the long term trend in water level to be measured and assessed over time, the water gauge location is visible from the viewing platform.