

The Prinnels

Swindon

Wiltshire

SN56ND

23.10.18

Dear Parish Council Members,

Re: Prinnels Wildlife Pond

I am a resident of Grandison Close and have been since 1992 I was the first home buyer in the cul de sac and remember quite well the surrounding areas being open farmland, prior to it becoming surrounded by housing.

Since that time there has been a wild life pond directly opposite my property and I have watched it over the years become a haven for wildlife in central West Swindon. It has flourished and developed over the years without minimal intervention and maintenance and this has been the case for at least 12 years or so, when some maintenance was carried out.

The pond itself is at least over a 100 years old and forms a critical collection point for water run-off from the adjacent open fields as this part of Swindon is prone to water logging in the winter and spring seasons.

As I have mentioned the pond was made safe a number of years ago, it's a large pond and it had no perimeter fence. It was cleared of brambles and debris and a fence installed and for a number of years it was in a very healthy state and was the focal point of all our wild life here in the Prinnels.

To date the pond sustains a rich diversity of animals such as deer, fox, snakes, barn owl, various birds and especially important the great crested newt. Which is in abundance in late spring. This is a bit of an open secret as they only appear at night and can be seen crossing the roads and foot paths to get to the pond for mating.

We did have a large warren of rabbits many years ago but unfortunately a camp of travellers killed the entire warren by blocking it up and setting fire to it.

So the eco system is not entirely in balance as it should be. The abundance of such diverse wildlife is attributed to not only the pond but by being located so close to the rear entrance of Lydiard Park and all that it has to offer.

In short this area is special and needs to be kept this way.

Today I am appealing for help with some help with the pond as it needs some urgent maintenance and spring cleaning around its perimeter and surrounds.

The pond in short is a victim of its own success. It is under threat from overgrown bushes and trees, self-planted willows, a notoriously thirsty tree which have self-seeded in the pond, bull rushes overgrown, fly tipping from neighbours who`s back gardens look over the pond. Seating areas hidden from view from years of overgrowth. Fencing needs repair. Pond Weeds need to be cleared. In all it needs our help.

We used to have birds come to winter on the pond but this has stopped due to them not being able to land. The water is no longer visible, although it is there it is being obscured by overgrowth. The pond itself is deep and large and it fills every winter and never runs dry.

I am appealing to the council members of the ward to step in and help with this fantastic natural asset.

It needs help, it needs experts to oversee the maintenance of it, and it needs funds to revive and make it thrive once again.

I know that the Wiltshire wildlife trust has such experts on hand and that they take on wildlife ponds specifically to maintain for future generations to enjoy and learn from.

I am enclosing some photos of the pond and hope that you will see beyond the mess and view it as a future asset to West Swindon for all to enjoy.

I hopefully await your reply.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Jane Willcox

