

## SPP Update – PC Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018

- 1. Water Quality:** Aeration is still working well, and the algal bloom situation has improved slightly. We will keep the aeration running until water levels recover. This will take a long time if we do not have a lot of rainfall over the autumn period. The PC may need to make contingency plans for Santa's boat trip if the water levels are still low in December. If the aeration device is ok to run in freezing conditions the PC could find it useful in preventing ice formation at the "launching end" of the pond.
- 2. Ducks:** when I was down at the pond last week I was thinking "at least the duck population has stayed relatively low" – one less problem to contend with. I only counted 7 males. However, a few days later the population had increased by 100%. Seven female ducks have miraculously appeared. I suspect that they have been released/dumped by someone as it seems a big coincidence that an all-female flock that exactly matches the number of males has flown in! If they are "dumped" or selectively released the person probably thinks it will help having every male paired but it just doubles the trouble in the breeding season as it's a free for all! We have a high female mortality rate these days with the male behaviour and Main St. getting busier with traffic. I fear the females have been consigned to a miserable time ahead. Needless to say, the population increase will just exacerbate the resource and nutrient problems. **The chair said he may mention this issue in the PC newsletter. I said I'd try and find information on the "legality" of dumping animals.**
- 3. Entrust:** have completed their desk audit and have confirmed that the SVA have complied with the requirements. No face to face audit is required.
- 4. Pond Maintenance Day:** we are trying to finalise a suitable date with volunteers. The dates suggested are from mid – late October.

### 5. Pond Walls:

**Mere Flats:** I understand from Michelle that Paul Kilvington has been in contact about the Mere Flats and Village Hall Wall. My understanding regarding the Mere Flats wall is that he agrees there has been frost damage, but he doesn't want to start repairing it again for now. He is going to arrange for the wall to be swept with a stiff brush to remove all the loose material and then see how things settle for a while. With this type of job, the weather conditions are crucial, so September or March are the best times as it can't be too hot, wet or freezing! We will just have to keep an eye on things and see how it "settles".

**Village Hall Wall:** I understand he has recommended two companies for the repair of the village hall wall. He has not offered any assessment expertise from ERYC as originally suggested though – this is disappointing. It's good that he's given the PC some recommendations as a starting point and I assume he wouldn't recommend them if he was not pleased with their work. I believe the company (Kemps?) who did the Mere Flats Wall are one of those mentioned and Calvert's in the village is the other one. He has seen Calvert's work somewhere else and been impressed with it. Paul Kilvington did stress that lime mortar had to be used when repairing the wall – other mortars were not suitable and should not be accepted if suggested.

In Pauls discussions with Michelle I believe he was focussing on mortar repair, but I do hope that the PC's brief will be for any appointed company to assess the structural integrity of the wall and that they will be appraised of the significant water loss issues that we are experiencing. It would not be cost effective to spend a lot of money replacing the mortar only to find that there is a bigger problem at a later date.

I've circulated just a few of the pictures to try and re-iterate the importance of this (attached) – the majority are of the back wall. I took the photos last week and I marked a piece of piping with the significant depths from the data we collected using the depth gauge in the storm we had in 2016. (I've attached the water loss graph we produced at the time as a reminder).

**These are just a few of the photos taken.** The first page shows the wall alongside Main St. (in places). It shows, as already noted that the water is eroding the bottom of the wall and this erosion extends quite a way. However, the bottom (blue) marker on the piping is the 20cm mark so the erosion is below the main "winter settlement" point suggesting this is not a key leakage point.

The remaining pages show areas of the back wall and show that the gaps between the landscaping boulders are at significant heights regarding the leakage data as are the pipes coming from the village hall. The latter (pipes) are running uphill from the pond though so it seems unlikely that we'd get loss through backflow here when water is rushing down from the roof?

Page 5 shows the slight "lean" on the tall stretch of wall at the base of which are the missing bricks. When you see the measurements against the photos on page 6 it looks significant. Whilst it does not prove that this is our leakage point it clarifies why we feel that the South Wall is a prime suspect. Water could be disappearing along the full length of the village hall when water levels rise – we don't know what the wall is like behind the landscaping.

Tree or shrub roots can be clearly seen running behind the bricks (page 6) which could have helped to push the bricks out. The final page shows some of the larger roots penetrating the pond bed. If this is happening elsewhere and in the landscaping it's possible that the water is being lost underground along root lines, through the landscaping and disappearing into a chalky lower layer etc. The main sewer runs alongside the pond so it's possible that water could be making its way there.

The Parish Council agreed to contact Kemp and Calverts for a quote to "assess" the wall. They felt that the photos on page 6 were particularly significant. Lee Sanderson asked if he could show the photos to the village hall committee as it was meeting the next day. I agreed.

I agreed to provide Michelle with a digital copy of the photos for the contractor's information. I have also attached the water level data. I said I'd be happy to meet up with the contractors if so desired.