

**Slipper Mill Pond Preservation
Association**

Registered Charity: 277744

Web site: www.smpa.org.uk

September 2008 - Newsletter

Chairman's Introduction

It was with great sadness that I joined in the decision to cancel the Pond Beach Party. The forecasts were insistent that thundershowers were likely and the damp start to the morning had well eroded confidence. I feel the decision was vindicated by the cloudburst late in the afternoon concluding a very overcast and unpleasant feeling day. Hopefully we will have the party in better weather next year. Our thanks go to the organisers who had worked so hard to prepare for the non-event.



I draw your attention to the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting which is being distributed with this Newsletter. You will see there are two vacancies on the Committee and we would welcome willing volunteers to help in the running and administration of the Association.

*Nick Madina
Chairman*

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Wildlife Report:

The pond has had a successful summer. Coots and ducks have proliferated and the swans have three robust cygnets. The number of cormorant that can be seen testifies to the number of fish. Grey Mullet are in profusion and cormorant have been seen trying to swallow eels - a most complicated exercise! Terns have been seen over the pond on two occasions in the recent past - a further testament to quantity and quality of the fish.

The reeds we planted along the West bank are growing vigorously and those on the East seem to be taking over completely! The banks have had a splendid show of wild flowers and in the last weeks two new species have been seen.

East Bank Management Review

As noted in the Wildlife Report the reeds have been spreading and do, in some places, cause a nuisance. They and the straggling brambles in particular are starting to overhang Slipper Road. Whilst cutting them back is an immediate solution we have already found that chopping the reeds encourages them to grow even bigger. The Committee has appreciated this problem and plans to undertake a detailed study of the best way to look after the bank whilst maintaining its pleasantly wild aspect. If any one has any suggestions please send them to Gavin Millar for consideration.

Slipper Road Resurfacing

The first phase was completed on 2nd. September and all the road users and residents were most appreciative that the potholes had been dealt with. Phase 2 will address the identified areas of weak surface and address any snags found in Phase 1.

Hermitage Housing

The SUDS drainage pond has still not been enlarged and we do not have any further news about it.

Slipper Caravan Park - New Fence

A retrospective Planning Application (08/03334/DOM) was submitted on 7th August 2008, and the Committee has commented on it noting

that the new wall seems out of character in comparison to the original fence and that it seems to have intruded onto the road.

Slipper Caravan Park - Commercial Vehicles

The Committee queried the parking and received the following response from Chichester District Council (Ref: SB/08/00092/contrv - 9.7.08):

“No breach of planning control has been found, as Council records show that the site has deemed Planning Permission for the siting of caravans by Mrs Matthews and her family. This is in connection with the use of the land as a travelling showman’s site. Therefore, as the vehicles currently being parked on the land belong to her nephew, who is a travelling showman, on this basis no further action can be taken under the Council’s planning powers and the case has been closed.”

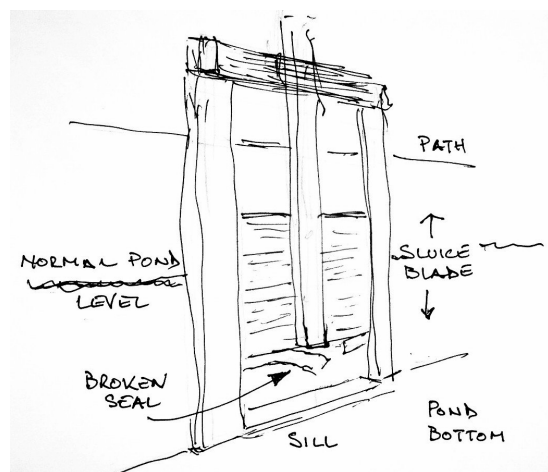
West Bank - Outside Face

At long last we have had a positive quote from a contractor which we have discussed with a potential funder. In anticipation of a successful outcome we are now making formal contact with Chichester Harbour Conservancy, the Environment Agency, West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council and Natural England with a view to having appropriate Planning Approval in place for works to start next Autumn.

Sluice Gate

You may have noticed that we have had problems this summer with the sluice gate leaking. Inspection revealed that the seal at the foot of the sluice blade had worked loose, and that a proper repair could not be carried out until the Autumn as we did not want to drain the pond and affect all the breeding fish and birds.

Fortunately during the early part of the summer the flows in ‘our’ branch of the River Ems were sufficient to keep the pond full, but latterly the somewhat drier weather has reduced flows and for some of August the rate of leak was greater



than the supply, which resulted in Peter Pond and parts of Slipper Pond drying.

Members carried out emergency repairs and we are now waiting for the Autumn when we will drain the pond completely and address the defective seal.

Annual General Meeting

Please do come and join us at the Annual General Meeting. We are including the Agenda along with this Newsletter and your views are always welcomed.

Dates for your Diary

Arundel Wetlands Centre Visit

1.30pm on Sunday 5th October 2008 - all meet at in the car park of the centre.

If you would like to join us, please telephone Betty Smith or Sarah Titley on or before Friday 20th September.

Annual General Meeting

8.00pm on Friday, 17th October, 2008 at the Emsworth Day Centre, South Street, Emsworth

Annual Dinner

7.30 for 8.00pm on Friday, 14th November, 2008 at the Brookfield Hotel, Havant Road, Emsworth,. Tickets at £19.00 each will be available from Betty Smith and Sarah Titley, who will also welcome any donations for the Raffle.

Contacts

General:	Nick Madina	01243 377749
Social	Betty Smith	01243 371576
Events	Sarah Titley	01243 379947
Wildlife:	Gavin Millar	01243 377071
	The Downland Surgery	01243 377141
	RSPCA	01329 667541
Environment Agency	Mention the local rangers in any calls – Paul Reynolds & Trevor Page	0800 80 70 60
	Pollution	0845 988 1188