



# SMPPA Newsletter

## January 2025

### Limericks from the Annual Dinner – 27 November 2024

There once was a great black-backed gull  
Who flew to Emsworth from Hull  
She nested on the Pond  
But a heron became fond  
So she swam through the sluice back to Hull  
**Trevor Davies' Table**

There was a young Heron called Helen  
Who was partial to birdseed and melon  
She once saw a goose  
Down by the sluice  
So opened the gate and fell-in  
**"The Queens Slippers" Table**



**The Estuary Men – who sang beautiful Sea Shanties at the Annual Dinner**  
including the SMPPA's very own Bill Keeble (2<sup>nd</sup> from right)

<b>Index:</b>	<b>Page</b>		<b>Page</b>
Dates for your Diary	8	Membership Update	5
Useful Contacts	8	Tidal Gates Chained Back	6
October Workparty	2	Summer Garden Party	7
Annual Dinner	4		

It seems a long time ago now, but we had another fabulous dinner at Emsworth Sailing Club on 27<sup>th</sup> November (see page 4). Thank you all for your very positive feedback – the food was delicious and the service superb, and the entertainment was well received, with people particularly enjoying the Sea Shanty singing by the Estuary Men.

We are continuing to chain back the tidal gates for longer periods over the winter period, so that the Pond becomes fully tidal for a week a month. Apart from being of help to the work done by Dave Gattrell at Peter Pond, we now know that this assists with fish spawning, particularly for trout who swim in from the sea and go upstream. This is at the request of Sarah Hughes, the Chalk Streams Resilience Officer for the Western

Sussex Rivers Trust (project funded by Chichester District Council for the River Ems Restoration Project - see page 6).

The autumn work party in October (see below) took place on a beautiful day, with more than 20 of you helping. We were also very lucky with the weather for the Summer Party in July (page 7) which was very well attended.

The next event is the **AGM which will be on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00pm**. We do hope you will join us.

***We are most grateful for the help of everyone mentioned in this newsletter, and to the support of all our members.***

With very best wishes to you all for a wonderful 2025.

*Jo Greenfield*

(and SMPPA Trustees)

chmn@smppa.org.uk - tel 01243 371134

56 King Street, Emsworth, PO10 7AZ



## Committee Members/Trustees

Jo Greenfield (KS), Simon Dwyer (SR), Simon Eveleigh (KS), Jim Hailstone (SR), Maire Park (HW), Christine Hows (co-opted – SR)  
where SR is Slipper Road, KS is King Street, HW is Harbour Way.

---

## October Workparty (Jim Hailstone)



***Relaxing after the workparty***

***Rob Turner stamping down the arisings in the hired skip***

We had a beautiful day for clearing the banks in October with over 20 volunteers, and a



wonderful array of refreshments afterwards, hosted by Susan & Fraser Dibden. Jim Hailstone and his team of Slipper Road helpers (Rob Turner, Fraser Dibden, Tim Hollins, Leigh Charlton, Keith Nicholls and Clive Johnson) had strimmed the banks in the run-up to the day, so the main job was to collect the arisings. This year a skip was brought in at short notice which considerably reduced the bagging and trailer process – needing one tip run only. Jonathan Stamper also bravely retrieved some larger items of miscellaneous rubbish from the Pond (see photos overleaf).

Thankyou to everyone who helped out on the day and in the days before.

We have decided that once a year for strimming is no longer sufficient as there has been a lot of growth due to higher amounts of rainfall in the last couple of years. It is proposed to go back to twice per year in July & October. A contractor proposal is to use a flail mulcher which will mean that there is no need for raking/bagging/removal. The Trustees have agreed to trial this for both July and October bank cuts, and review again at the end of the year. Although more expensive than the DIY approach we have used for many years, it will considerably reduce the physical work (and time) for the volunteers.

We will be monitoring the growth of hemlock, ragwort and cow parsley, and are hoping to quickly tackle them as they appear in the spring so that they do not take over the banks.

There is a workparty whatsapp group for regular helpers, and there are a wide variety of tasks that need doing by small specialist groups – **please get in touch if you would be interested in helping out and would like to join the whatsapp group.** Email [info@smppa.org.uk](mailto:info@smppa.org.uk) or call 01243 371134 for more details.

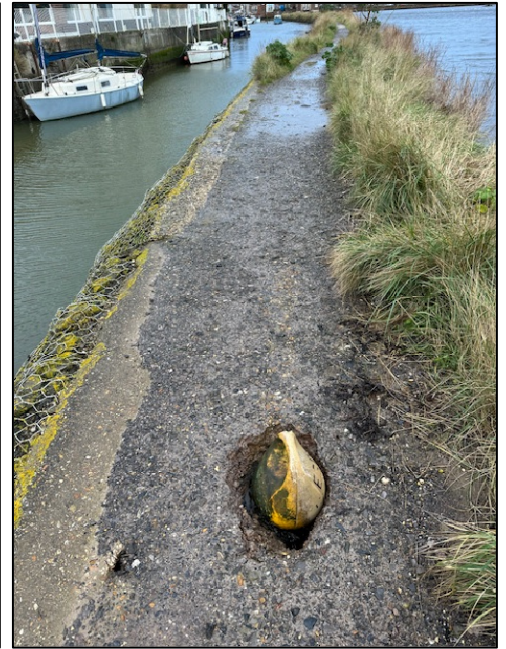


*More than 20 of you joined us for the October work party*





***A selection of the rubbish removed  
from the Pond by Jonathan Stamper***



***Yellow buoy showing "sink hole"  
that appeared on the west bank footpath  
(filled promptly by Jim Hailstone & Leigh Charlton)***

---

## **SMPPA Annual Dinner (words by Maire Park)**

After the success of last years Annual Dinner, tickets for this year's event sold out within a week! 74 of you joined us for the dinner on Wednesday 27th November at the Emsworth Sailing Club and it was a feast of good food, good company and fun!

David Richards kindly said Grace before the meal, and then after the meal Jo updated everyone on "Pond matters" before we were entertained by the Estuary Men, a local group of four, singing sea shanties. They captivated the room with songs about the sea, each one telling a different story. The explanations of the songs gave us a historical context for them and meant the stories were accessible. A far cry from a raucous singalong of "what shall we do with the drunken sailor"!

Each table had some tasks over dinner. They had to write a poem or limerick that related to the pond and contained at least one of the following words: pond, sluice, gull and heron. The results were amazing with witty use of the words (almost all included more than one) and all were very funny. The applause levels were so hard to judge that we had no outright winner, but a couple of the favourites are published on the first page.

This year, we put the quiz questions on the table. There were photographic questions about the pond: what you can and can't do, and everybody was challenged to give as many boat names as possible. No team named all 30 boat names visible from SMPPA property, but everybody who walks around the pond will notice the boats and their names in the future. The winning team won the inflatable seagull.

The "guess the weight of the hamper" competition was won by Janet Nunn who guessed almost exactly the actual weight of 4.05kg and won the hamper full of festive goodies.

And finally, we held the Raffle. We had loads of prizes divided into goodie bags and this year, as well as Máire's heavy duty bags, we had two additional bags donated by the Emsworth Museum to ensure the goodies made it home intact. So people had an increased chance of winning! We had many generous donations of prizes from our members, thank you. This year, we are particularly grateful for the support of local businesses, given that we were knocking on their doors just after the budget when they were facing all kinds of challenges.

**The following local businesses donated raffle prizes:**

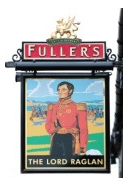
*36 on the Quay - £50 voucher*  
*Crew Hair Salon - hair care products*  
*Darbar Indian Restaurant - £25 voucher*  
*Driftwood Café - £20 voucher*  
*Emsworth Heating - 4 vouchers for boiler services*  
*Fat Olives - voucher for bottle of wine*  
*Felix Tabitha - framed picture*  
*Emsworth Delicatessen - £10 voucher*  
*Emsworth Home Hardware - mug*  
*Lord Raglan - £20 voucher*  
*Naked Pantry - voucher for £10*  
*Nicolinos - £20 voucher*  
*TT Nail & Spa - voucher for £15*  
*Vin Wines - voucher for wine tasting for 6*

36 On The Quay



Royal Darbar

Local homehardware



The evening ended on a high note, with Christmas wishes and thank yous. Thank you to all who supported the Annual Dinner and particularly to: Simon Eveleigh for organising the guess the weight of the hamper, Betty Smith for distributing the prize bags, and the efficient raffle team who sold and folded all the tickets you bought: Marion & David Rice, Claire Starling & Simon Dwyer, Jane Kidd, and Christine Hows.

And, of course, to Jo and Máire for arranging the event. This is the main fundraising event of the year for the SMPPA and we raised a fantastic total of £1,118 to help maintain the pond over the coming year.

A very big thank you to Ollie and his staff at the Emsworth Sailing Club. Their delicious food and efficient service was the cornerstone for such an enjoyable evening. Now, we can look forward to next year's Annual Dinner - see you all then!

## Membership Update

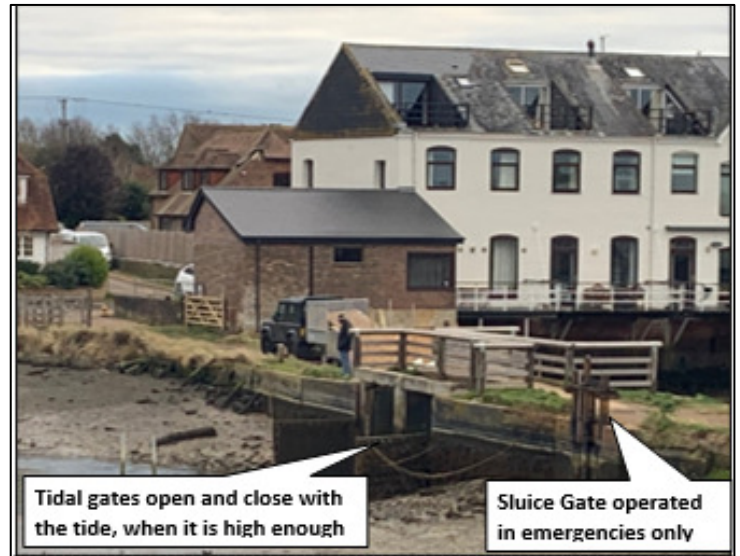
We just wanted to thank you for updating your standing orders after the recent membership fee increase (the first for 20 years), and for many of you for paying early!

Sadly some key SMPPA members have passed away in the past year, including Brendan Gibb-Gray, Lesley Harris, Mark Davis & Clive Nickolds; they are much missed. Membership numbers remain stable at around 133, but new members are very welcome.



## Tidal Gates chained back - the Chalk Stream Resilience Project

You may have noticed that we have recently been chaining the gates back for longer periods over the winter months. Historically, the main reasons for chaining them back were to enable us to carry out work around our own Pond, and also at Peter Pond to the north, where Dave Gattrell spends most weekends clearing and managing the vegetation. Chaining back the gates so that the pond becomes tidal (particularly when there are high river flows) helps clear silt, particularly from Peter Pond.



*The tidal gates chained open*



*Brown Trout / Sea Trout*

However, we have recently been asked to leave the gates open for longer during the winter, in order to encourage the fish (primarily trout) to spawn upstream; these fish spawn from November to February. This request comes from the Western Sussex Rivers Trust (Chalk Stream Resilience Project Officer Sarah Hughes). This project is working to restore 3 precious and globally unique chalk rivers - the Ems, Hambrook and Lavant. Slipper Mill Pond is a vital part of the River Ems Wildlife Corridor which runs from Hermitage to Westbourne.

### The Chalk Stream Resilience project

<https://wsrt.org.uk/about/our-projects/chalk-stream-resilience>

is focused on improving water quality, making the streams more resilient to high and low flows, and enabling habitats and species to thrive.

One of the planned actions is to install fish and eel passes around the barriers on the River Ems so that they can more easily swim upstream to spawn.



*River Ems in summer*



By having the tidal gates open for longer, there is much more time and opportunity for the fish, particularly trout and eels, to swim from the sea into the Pond, and from there make their way up the River Ems to spawn. Research carried out elsewhere by a company called FishTek found that one gate kept open for just 25 minutes longer resulted in a ten-fold increase in the number of elvers moving upstream through a tidal gate.

If you would be interested in helping with any aspect of the SMPPA – eg be our wildlife representative, assist with specialist work parties, help with newsletters, events, the website, or the Broomfield Schools Photographic Competition, please get in touch – email [info@smppa.org.uk](mailto:info@smppa.org.uk) or phone 01243 371134.

---

## Summer Garden Party (words by Maire Park)

The day was bright and sunny, the bunting was waving in the breeze and the SMPPA membership turned out in force to enjoy the summer party. The 28th July was a Sunday to remember. Delicious food, abundant drinks and cheerful company made this a perfect opportunity to meet new people and catch up with old friends.

We are, again, particularly grateful to Simon Dwyer and Claire Starling for providing us with such a beautiful venue. Come along to the 2025 summer party!

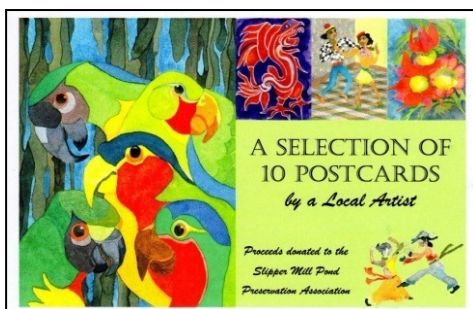


*Around 50 of you joined us for the Summer Garden Party on a beautiful July day*

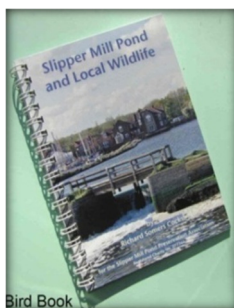
## Useful Contacts (also available on our website)

<b>Enquiries/Chair</b>	Jo Greenfield	01243 371134	chmn@smppa.org.uk
<b>Membership</b>	Christine Hows	membership@smppa.org.uk	
<b>Social</b>	Maire Park	events@smppa.org.uk	
<b>Police</b> Emergency 999 Disturbances 101	Call 101 to report antisocial behaviour – the more calls, the more likely the police will respond. Online reporting is at <a href="http://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/">www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/</a> - select “antisocial behaviour”. Hampshire Police have the same online reporting – see <a href="http://www.hampshire.police.uk">www.hampshire.police.uk</a> .		
<b>Wildlife</b>	Downland Surgery - 01243 377141 RSPCA - 01239 667541 Our Rural Crime Officer is Colin Booker (PCSO / Wildlife Crime Officer, Chichester and Arun Areas). Call 101.		
<b>Pollution</b>	Call Southern Water on 0330 303 0368 or email <a href="mailto:pollution@southernwater.co.uk">pollution@southernwater.co.uk</a>		
<b>Diesel Spillages</b>	Call 999 or 112 and ask for the coastguard as they have 24 hour coverage for this kind of incident.		
<b>Environment Agency</b>	All incidents 0800 807 060 Flood line 0345 988 1188		
<b>Fishing Policy</b>	Updated information and signage clarifying our Fishing Rules are on the Slipper Mill notice board and around the Pond.		

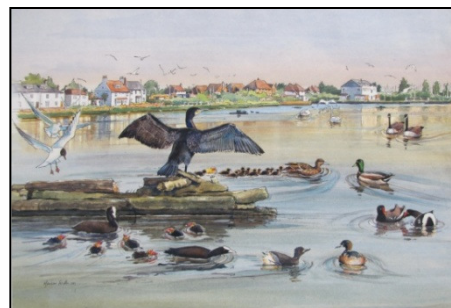
## Publications – Available to purchase – please contact Jo Greenfield (see above)



*Postcards - £5 for a pack of 10  
by a local artist*



*Bird & Butterfly  
Book - £5*



*Notelets - £4 for 6 (incl envelopes)  
by local artist Marian Forster*

<b>Dates for Your Diary</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>Thursday 13 March 2025</b>	<b>AGM – 7.00pm for 7.15pm</b>
<b>July - date tbc</b>	<b>Summer Garden Party – Slipper House</b>
<b>October - date tbc</b>	<b>Work Party</b>
<b>November - date tbc</b>	<b>Annual Dinner – Emsworth Sailing Club</b>