

Langley Hall Park Pond Restoration

In October 2020, a significant habitat improvement project got underway on the pond and associated feeder stream at Langley Hall Park Local Nature Reserve, Kineton Green.

Phase 1 of the project involved initial tree works around the margins and central island of the pond. On completion, the tree removals have opened the pond up and improved the availability of light for the establishment of more aquatic plants. The main restoration works involving de-silting the pond and enhancements to the stream feeding the pond will take place in early 2021 with grass seeding and planting taking place in spring.



Pond at Langley Hall Park prior to works

These works are taking place because the pond's ecosystem is dominated by organic deposits from trees around the margins and central island, such as leaves, which has resulted in siltation, shallowing of the pond, and poor water quality. Wildfowl waste and public feeding of these birds has added to this. Also high levels of shading, potential adverse impacts from pollutants from upstream, and poor operation of the partially blocked outlet contribute to the poor habitat conditions. An extensive feasibility study was carried out by consultants from AECOM between July and September 2020 to address these pressures which are detrimental to the ecology, recreation and aesthetics of the park.

Following input from Solihull Council's ecologists, tree officers, drainage officers and parks department a restoration design was chosen with consideration for the environmental benefit, capital cost, constructability and future maintenance. The final design includes the following elements:

- De-silting the entire pond to add depth, create more a open water habitat, improve water quality and conditions for emergent and submerged pond plants;
- Removal of some trees, general thinning of the canopy, and pruning overhanging branches to increase light to the pond and reduce organic inputs (also slowing future accumulation of sediment);
- Complete removal of trees from the central island to reduce organic waste while increasing light levels;
- Marginal planting areas around the perimeter of the pond to provide a new and more varied aquatic habitat, to improve oxygenation and water filtration, enhancing biodiversity;
- Feeder stream enhancements through re-profiling and re-naturalising the straightened channel and the installation of a pocket wetland to improve water quality, reduce sediment supply to the pond whilst also enhancing the biodiversity and amenity of the area; and
- Interpretation panels to educate members of the public about how to maintain good pond health / highlight biodiversity enhancements.



Pond works on completion, November 2020

Restoring the pond and feeder stream will, it is hoped, eventually lead to a more accessible and enjoyable local space for residents and visitors alike – whilst providing conditions to attract wildlife and improve water quality.

Part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund, Wildlife Ways is a £16.8 million programme which will open up and improve existing routes, allowing wildlife to flourish and helping people to walk and cycle across the borough. Langley Hall Park LNR Pond Restoration is funded through the Small Habitats element of Wildlife Ways and will ensure better conservation for over 0.25 hectares of habitat – an area equivalent to half a football pitch.
