

# **Friends of Horsehay Pool and Environs**

## **Update Report for Dawley Hamlets Parish Council AGM April 2025**

### **Local Nature Reserve Designation**

The Friends Group were delighted when the Designation of the LNR was formally ratified and look forward to working with all local agencies on making improvements to this beautiful area .

As previously reported one of the issues of concern to the FOHPE was the limited boundary of the LNR and whether this could sustain the wildlife and biodiversity required. The FOHPE were advised that revisions to the proposed boundary were not possible at this stage, but a way forward might be to designate some of the land owned by TWC and in the immediate vicinity of the Pools, as Green Guarantee sites. The way to achieve this would be through Local Borough Councillors. Indeed, the Horsehay Playing Field and Brandlee area have recently been signed as Green Guarantee sites.

Accordingly, correspondence was sent last September to all local Borough Councillors making a request for this. To date no reply has been received.

### **Reed Planting at North end of Pool**

Last year reeds were planted at the North end of the Pool. The work was commissioned and paid for by TWC. Unfortunately, the water levels in the Pool have remained exceptionally high throughout the year and the young plants were unable to survive. This is extremely disappointing as reeds will have a major beneficial impact on the Pool.

Discussions have taken place with TWC about a possible way forward, and it has been agreed to trial the use of floating reed beds in this area. TWC have agreed to fund this and it is planned that these will be planted in April/ May 2025, which is excellent news.

### **Gateway Scheme (Opposite the Codfather)**

This is the main Gateway to the LNR and the Pool and conveys to everyone the “ambience” of the area. At the moment it is an eyesore, unkept, covered in brambles and lacking in any habitable vegetation.

Several site meetings have taken place with officers from TWC and DHPC about improving the area. There have been delays in view of the proximity to the dam wall and the challenges this could pose. After consultation with the Environment Agency it has now been agreed that a revised scheme can go ahead. A contractor has been engaged to clear the site and this work is expected to take place in May 2025. The bill for this work is being paid by the FOHPE through the Veolia Grant and monies from their own fund raising.

However, further monies will be needed for the purchase and planting of suitable plants and also the purchase of soil and barrier at waters edge that will be needed for the planting base. A pledge for funding from Local Councillors, £500 each with match funding from DHPC, £1000 was made last year but was not utilised before the end of the financial year in view of the delays in gaining agreement for the work to begin.

Therefore, it is hoped that the same pledge can be agreed for this year so that the scheme can at last be completed.

## **Fishing Pegs**

The FOHPE have since their formation raised concerns about the condition and health and safety of the Fishing Pegs around Horsehay Pool. After many years of discussion with TWC and TAA it has now been agreed by all parties that 10 pegs will be replaced or repaired with funding provided by TWC and TAA .

This is excellent news, the current pegs are extremely poor and their improvement will enhance the environment no end.

## **Crocus Extravaganza**

Some 15000 crocus corms were planted last October with volunteers from FOHPE and the local community. It was a mammoth task but we were rewarded with some lovely displays last month and the insects benefited from some early nectar.

A huge Thank you to DHPC for their help with funding this project.

There have been some problems with the utilities digging up the area alongside the bowling green and the area near to the Foresters Inn. Most bulbs survived but the displays in these areas suffered and the area near to the Foresters will need replanting if funds permit.

## **Scarecrow Festival**

The FOHPE hosted a third Scarecrow Festival in September. The weather was appalling, but despite this there were plenty of visitors and a magnificent 23 Scarecrows.

In view of the weather there was a significant drop in the monies raised by the event.

Angela Porteous

Secretary FOHPE