

## Background.

The site is a former fish pond adapted in the nineteenth century to act as a reservoir for Bliss Mill but now largely dry. The area is included in a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which includes the nearby Castle Mound, primarily as an example of a medieval fishpond. Inclusion within the Ancient Monument places a restriction on work that can be carried out without the approval of Historic England. The site was purchased by the Town Council just after World War II and is maintained by them as a natural open space. Please note there is some uncertainty over the boundary of the site next to the Common Brook.

## Green Gym Involvement.

Chipping Norton Green Gym have been involved in the maintenance of Pool Meadow since its inception over 10 years ago. Prior to this, our predecessors "Woodchip" (Woodstock and Chipping Norton Green Gym), carried out work in the Meadow. Our work to date has included:

Improvements to the paths and entrance to the site from Clay/ Church Lane.

Controlling invasive vegetation, in particular, Himalayan Balsam, Laurel, Blackthorn, Bramble, Sycamore, ornamental non-native shrubs and more latterly Giant Horsetail.

Clearing paths of overgrowing vegetation.

Reopening a path on the south-east side of the former Pond, greatly enhancing the site for walkers.

Planting native bulbs.

## Objectives.

To enhance the landscape quality and biodiversity of the site and improving public access and enjoyment of the space as directed by the Town Council.

## Future Work.

The work to Pool Meadow needs to be coordinated with the work being undertaken by the Town Council to improve the site. Future work will include:

Control of invasive species. A particular target will be the control of Horsetail through scything at least twice a year.

Planting native herbaceous plants and bulbs. There is an opportunity to reintroduce wetland plants as the Horsetail is cleared and small pools/wetlands are created. Some of this planting may need to be funded by the Green Gym.

Clearing paths removing invading scrub and laurel.

Assist in creating wetland areas and small pools.

There maybe other tasks for the Green Gym identified as part of the Town Council's improvement programme.

Any work should avoid excavation unless a Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent is first obtained.

Bonfires are to be avoided but exceptionally may take place with Town Council approval.

## Programme.

Between 6 to 8 visits will be required throughout the year. The tasks outlined above will require visits in winter/autumn (clearing scrub and planting bulbs), spring (scything horsetail and planting herbaceous plants), and summer (creating pools/wetland areas removing Himalayan Balsam and with a second scythe of Horsetail). Path clearance will take place all year round.