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Norton Pond to get a new lease of life



Posted by Elizabeth Towler on Tuesday 06 Dec, 2016 - 15:52

Works are now underway to transform Norton Pond, designed to improve the aesthetics of the area and to enhance the habitat for local wildlife.

The area will be familiar to local walkers as the gateway to the Greenway which passes through the Grange, Standalone Farm and links Letchworth to Arlesey and Hitchin.

With the pond tending to dry out every summer and in-turn the area becoming less attractive to wildlife, we have commissioned Maydencroft Limited - specialists in landscape restoration and land management - to restore and enhance the pond for wildlife populations.

An Exciting Find

We were thrilled when ecological site surveys carried out over the summer confirmed that Norton Pond is a breeding ground for the great crested newt and, as the newt is a European Protected Species, the pond is now a European Protected Site. A previous survey had also concluded that the pond is likely to be of archaeological importance, so it really is rather special!

To restore the health and vitality of the pond and ensure its longevity, the work will reduce the levels of silt and manage the flora and fauna, re-establishing native aquatic plants.

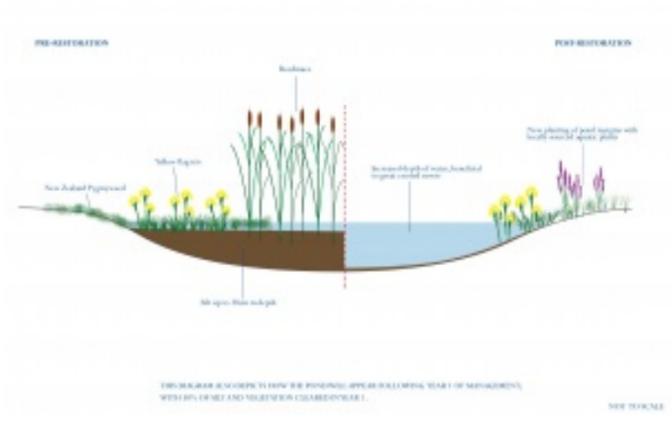
A Careful Process

Due to the pond's protected status, the restoration work must take place over two winters when the newts will have moved from the pond, ensuring their habitat remains intact for summer breeding. The team from Maydencroft will carry out the work overseen by an Ecologist and Archaeological Consultant.

Once the work has been completed in early 2018, the pond will be further enhanced with new planting of locally sourced native aquatic plants on its banks. These will provide a rich egg-laying habitat for the great crested newt and provide a food source for invertebrates and other species.

During these works, access to areas of the pond will be restricted at certain times to ensure we can complete these works as soon as possible.

We are very excited to see the transformation of the area and hopefully this will provide both a scenic area for people to enjoy, but also a home for the wildlife to flourish and grow.



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