

Update on Ponds and Ditches

It was sad to see the village ponds dry during this summer's drought. Lots of Surrey ponds suffered the same fate, but we did discuss with Waverley the land owner and other pond experts whether there were any emergency measures that might alleviate the situation. We were advised not to disturb the ponds during the summer when amphibians and other plant and animal life is most active. Interestingly, although the water had gone there were still froglets in the silt on top of the clay lining in the Duck Pond. Happily, water has now returned to both ponds.

We have used the summer to better understand the pipes and ditches that feed the Duck Pond so that work can be done to clear them and reduce the chances that future droughts will lead to the pond drying up and to monitor water levels in the Duck Pond more closely. The usually muddy footpath next to Mellow House that runs up to Woodhill Lane has also been investigated and found to have a blocked and possibly broken storm water pipe under it, which if cleared could improve the flow to the Duck Pond. We have consulted some local residents, plus a local water engineer, amphibian and plant experts and agreed on the clearance of ditches and some of the vegetation around both ponds. The ditches on Duck Pond common will be cleared this winter. The rotting upper layer of wood revetment along the Woodhill Lane side of the Duck Pond will be replaced over the winter to hold the bank in place. The Parish Council are awaiting contractor quotes for this work. This has been slower than we hoped with contractors blaming labour shortages.



There have been suggestions that silt should be removed from the Duck Pond. This will need to be done at some stage but is not urgent a layer of silt protects the clay lining from cracking in times of drought and will require permission from Waverley and probably Natural England. We hope to get that agreement in place in time for the next drought. It has also been suggested that the Duck Pond should be butyl lined. We have consulted experts and contractors about this. Their view is that it would be practically difficult, liable to tree root damage and very expensive so we do not intend to take that suggestion further.

If you have suggestions or concerns please contact SGEF through our website (www.shamleygreenenvironment.co.uk) or the Parish Clerk.

Shamley Green Environment Group