



MINUTES OF THE KING'S POND TASK & FINISH (OPERATIONAL) GROUP

MONDAY, 28TH APRIL 2025

Present: Councillor Don Hammond (DH)
Councillor Peter Wadman (PW)
Pat Harris – Town Clerk (PH)
Natalie Beckell – Events & Marketing Lead Officer (NB)
Catherine Ayres – Resident representative (CA)
Paul Ebbutt – Resident representative (PE)
Angela Owens – Resident representative (AO)
Tim Pinchen – Residents representative (TP)
Eric Phillips – Resident representative (EP)
John Quincey – Resident representative (JQ)

1. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Ryan Doran
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 25th March were proposed by JQ and seconded by EP and were thus approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
3. **Review of Actions:**
Action 2 – Produce critical timeline for work programme and funding streams – PH and DH will continue to work to produce the timeline for funding purposes.
Action 3 – Investigate where similar projects have been undertaken – TP offered to take this forward as he has previous experience having been chair of the Watercress & Winterbournes Project to enhance the headwaters of the Rivers Test & Itchen.
4. **Matters Arising and any further updates:**
 - PEA & Wintering Birds survey previously circulated to all members of the group comments:
 - JQ queried 1.6 draining of KP to achieve river solution – first this term had been used. He advised that Anthony Furnival had full costing on dredging option for the pond – he would ask if this could be circulated to the group. **Action: JQ to enquire whether information could be made available to the group.**
 - Nesting Bird survey – DH confirmed currently in progress as per details previously provided
 - CA stated that the people of Alton will want to know the impact on wildlife. What will happen if river and pond option rather than dredging + option. There would be a “shift”. However, route being followed is to design first then an environmental impact would be undertaken. This is required as part of the planning process
 - TP stated that the dredging and draining – not necessarily the final solution in getting rid of the silt. Other solutions such as “flushing” could be an option.

Kew Gardens was devoid of water when they undertook work. PE added that St. James Park they did half of it first. DH added that in Alton 27/28 years ago, they dredged areas at a time – floating bund with a curtain round it – an area-by-area approach. There are ways and means as dredging has gone through numerous iterations over time. Kings Pond is also not “lined” it is natural bedrock so risk of damage is minimised. The Group committed to look at both options and possible solutions at which time an ecological impact assessment will be undertaken. The design process is an iterative process.

- JQ suggested in respect of points 6.4/6.8 & 6.12 timing could be a problem as it states further surveys September/October. DH stressed that Stage 1 is Design, Stage 2 is Contractor and Stage 3 Maintenance.
- DH talked through the organisations that have been approached for Stage 1 and responses received from some. The closing date for response is 9th May. Stage 1 will be where we are getting to the point of alternative schemes, plus and minus of each and costs. At this time, we (the group) will be at a stage to let the public know where we are. Yes, we do know some costs i.e. we know volume of silt but we do not as yet know the cost of whether we must remove it all from site, can use some for building up banks etc as we do not know which option we are to follow.
- Questions raised as to what needs to happen regarding unintended run off into the pond. DH believes there will need to be a separate brief for this as legals may be required.
- TP advised that it was his opinion that a lot of the chemical analysis suggests it is from trees and vegetation on site and that the heavy metal content (zinc and lead) is probably historic giving the sites history.
- Suggested that perhaps water sampling at Flood Meadows should be compared with that of Kings Pond, although it is recognised that Tanhouse Lane was a hive of industrial activity in the past.
- CA advised that she had spoken with CALA who had installed the latest technology in constructing silt traps through the developed site. **Action: CA to seek information from CALA on their construction and circulate to the group.**

6. Consents & Permissions:

- DH confirmed that various consents will be required from the Environment Agency, and he will seek further information as to exactly what these are and advise. DH had previously confirmed that planning permission will be required for whichever option is eventually approved. He also stated that the pre-planning advises sought from EHDC had been less than helpful. PH added that this had had to be paid for as well!
Action: DH will explore with the EA exactly which consents are required for Kings Pond.
- DH confirmed that the PEA Winter survey – will be used to produce a supplementary survey for the spring and summer nesting report. **Action: DH was asked to enquire of Ecology Partnership for regular updates rather than waiting for the final report which he agreed would be useful.**
- Impact on wildlife will be crucial and needs to be part of what should be presented to the public when options are presented – all agreed this to be the case.
- DH drew the group back to what its brief is in terms of what are the objectives of this Task & Finish Group: The dredging option was agreed by Full Council 2 years ago so

this option must be fully scoped as has the Pond and River Option which the Council subsequently agreed must be look at as well. The first stage of which is the Expressions of Interest that has been published, and responses are due by Friday 9th May. The evaluation of those responses will be undertaken and brought back to this group for final consideration and recommendation to go to Full Council to proceed.

7. **Financial:** The group noted the financial spreadsheet tabled and noted the monies which had already been expensed.
8. **Agree date and content of meeting with the Community Task & Finish Group:**
The first meeting of this group is to be arranged for Wednesday, 2nd July in the Town Hall at 6.00 p.m. when this group will be brought up to date with progress.
9. **Agree date for next meeting of the Task & Finish Technical Group:**
The next meeting will be on Thursday, 22nd May at 9.30 a.m. in the Town Hall.

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ACTIONS FOR THE TASK & FINISH GROUP - OPEN

Meeting held on 25th March 2025			
No.	Action	Who	Update
2	Produce critical timeline for work program and funding streams	PH	PH & DH to continue to progress
3	Investigate where similar projects have been undertaken i.e. Anton Lakes, Andover (speak with June Chatfield)	TP	TP will be taking this forward and will provide an update at the next meeting.
Meeting held on 28th April 2025			
No.	Action	Who	Update
9	JQ to approach Anthony Furnival to ask for a copy of the quote he obtained for a dredging + option for KP several years ago.	JQ	JQ advised that the Minutes should state that Anthony Furnival had “estimates” and that he would not be able to obtain a copy of a quote.
10	CA to seek information from CALA on the silt traps throughout the development on their construction and circulate to the group	CA	
11	DH will explore with the EA exactly which consents are required for Kings Pond.	DH	

12	DH was asked to enquire of Ecology Partnership for regular updates rather than waiting for the final report which he agreed would be useful.	DH	
13	Evaluation of responses to Expressions of Interest Stage 1	DH/PH/PW	Preliminary responses to be evaluated and report prepared to be circulated to this group for final recommendation to Full Council

ACTIONS FOR THE TASK & FINISH GROUP – **CLOSED**

No.	Detail	Action	Update
Meeting held on 25th March 2025			
1	Send JQ minutes of the SE Water meeting (Brad Evans)	PH	Minutes sent 25/3/25. Action Closed
4	Draft letter for Expression of Interest and produce list of intended recipients	DH	Circulated brief to members of T&F by PH. Action Closed
5	Issue Expression of Interest letters to (a) project managers (b) potential design & build contractors)	PH	Issued 7/4/25 with responses requested by Friday 9 th May (due to bank holidays). Action Closed
6	Contact to be established with angling clubs who manage large lakes	PW	Regarding the action required to seek out any advice from local angling groups I had a very large enterprise in mind but have now discovered that they have sold off all the lakes to smaller clubs. My other choice was the local group known as Reading & District Angling Association (RDAA), a large club with responsibility for many ponds and lakes. I have had a recommendation back; Nick Haycock (nick_haycock@me.com). He is online as a Director at Haycock Environmental Consultants Ltd. Describes himself as a senior hydrologist and project manager specialising in lake, river and wetland creation with over 25 years' experience. Action Closed.
7.	Contact to be established with Nick Haycock (plus recommendation from Tim Pinchen: Aquascience & Cain Bioengineering. Contact established & Expression of Interest issued	DH	Information sent to Nick Haycock, Aquascience & Cain Bioengineering.
8	Terms of Reference to be tabled at Full Council	PH/DH	Adopted by Full Council 9 th April 2025. Action Closed