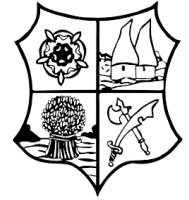


ALTON Town Council



1

29 January 2026

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the **FULL COUNCIL** on **Wednesday 4 February 2026 at 7.00pm** at Alton Assembly Rooms, High Street, Alton GU34 1BA, when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

Tom Horwood
Town Clerk

To: All Town Councillors

Councillor Matthew Bayliss
Councillor Chris Botten
Councillor Mark Boyce-Churn
Councillor Annette Eyre
Councillor Don Hammond
Councillor Graham Hill

Councillor Matthew Kellermann
Councillor Roger Lamb
Councillor Nick O'Brien
Councillor John Quincey
Councillor Barbara Tansey
Councillor Janice Treacher

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
(Councillors are responsible for declaring any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, they may not participate in any discussion of or vote on any matter in which they have a pecuniary interest. They must withdraw when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.)
3. Town Mayor's announcements
4. Written representations from the public – see report and correspondence to follow
(Authors of written representations are invited to ensure that they are with the Town Clerk by 12noon two days before the council meeting – i.e. by 12noon on Monday 2 February – to enable them to be circulated in good time.)
5. Questions and statements by the public
(In accordance with Standing Order 3e, members of the public may make representations in respect of the business on the agenda. They may give notice in advance up until just before the

start of the meeting. Verbal statements or questions may be up to 5 minutes long, within a total of 20 minutes allowed for public speaking which may be extended by the Chair.)

RECOMMENDATION: To note the questions and statements by the public.

6. Parish Poll on King's Pond – *see attached report*
7. King's Pond Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference and membership – *see attached report*
8. Minutes of King's Pond Task & Finish Group meeting, 15 December 2025 – *see attached minutes*

RECOMMENDATION: To note the minutes of the Task & Finish Group of 15 December 2025.

9. King's Pond Project Stage One Tender – *see attached report*
10. King's Pond egg oiling – *see attached report*
11. Exclusion of the press and public

(If required) RECOMMENDATION: To exclude the press and members of the public in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and to be clear, as per subsection 3A, where the public are excluded from a meeting of a relevant local government body under subsection (2), the body may also prevent any person from reporting on the meeting using methods (a) which can be used without that person's presence at the meeting, and (b) which enable persons not present at the meeting to see or hear the proceedings at the meeting as it takes place or later.

Confidential

12. There are no confidential matters.

Subject: **Parish Poll on King's Pond**

Report to: Full Council, 4 February 2026

Report of: Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To consider the results of the parish poll held on 21 January 2026.

2. Background

- 2.1 Six electors convened a parish meeting on the subject of King's Pond. The parish meeting, which was not a town council meeting, took place on 15 December 2025. Electors at that meeting, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, demanded a parish poll to be put to the electors of Alton parish. East Hampshire District Council's elections team was updated before and throughout the process and administered the poll. Polling day was 21 January 2026.
- 2.2 The results of the questions put to the parish meeting and those put to the parish poll are set out in this report. It is clear in law that a parish poll is consultative: "The object of a poll is to check that the opinion expressed by the parish meeting is that of the electors as a whole" (Lord Justice Russell 1965).¹ The town council must consider the results of the poll shortly afterwards.
- 2.3 The legislation around parish meetings and parish polls is not recent and, despite intentions, successive governments in this century have not updated it. Consequently, many of the usual attributes of a modern election – such as postal votes and long voting hours – were absent.
- 2.4 The following summarises the responsibilities in law of the different parties involved in parish meetings and polls:
- i. Six electors may convene a parish meeting. The parish meeting is responsible for setting the questions and demanding a poll if desired. If the Town Mayor is present at the meeting, she must chair it, but the parish meeting is a meeting of electors, not a meeting of the town council.²
 - ii. An elector can propose a question which, if seconded by another elector, must be put to the meeting. It must concern "parish affairs" (i.e. "have a direct impact

¹ Court of Appeal judgment in the case *Bennett v Chappell and Another* (1965) ("BvC").

² *Local Government Act 1972* ("LGA"): s9; schedule 12 s15(1d); sch 12 s17(1). On parish meetings and polls, the 1972 Act is very similar to its 1894 and 1933 predecessors.

on and relevance to the parish”³) and be capable of being answered by either Yes or No.⁴

- iii. Ten electors (or a third of electors present, whichever is less) may demand a parish poll before the end of the parish meeting. The parish meeting as a whole does not decide whether to call a poll.⁵
- iv. A parish poll can only be on the same question or questions that have already been put to the parish meeting. It cannot be changed or withdrawn after the demand is made.⁶
- v. The Chair of the meeting is responsible for notifying the District Council of the demand for a poll and for providing the questions and information to enable the Returning Officer to fulfil his responsibilities. The Chair is not empowered to veto a question or a poll demand.⁷
- vi. The District Council is responsible for appointing the Returning Officer.⁸
- vii. The Returning Officer is responsible (to the courts, not to the District Council) for running a lawful and efficient poll. The Returning Officer may disallow a question if it is not lawful. The poll must take place within 25 ‘days’ of the parish meeting (as defined in electoral law); in this case, the last day was 22 January 2026.⁹
- viii. The proposers of questions have certain legal rights, such as visiting polling stations and attending the count. The Town Council does not have these rights.¹⁰
- ix. Councils are not allowed to campaign on the questions or on the poll or try to influence how people will vote. Councillors may comment but not speak on behalf of the Council.¹¹
- x. The Town Council is responsible for paying the District Council’s “expenses” in running the poll and for considering the outcome of the poll.¹²
- xi. The poll cannot be binding.¹³

2.5 The parish meeting was called on 27 November in accordance with the legislation and EHDC was notified. It took place on 15 December, was chaired by the Town Mayor, assisted by the Town Clerk, and carried out properly. Nine questions were put to the meeting and electors demanded that eight form the parish poll. (On the final question, to which the answer was an emphatic “Yes”, the Town Clerk agreed to take the matter forward and there was no demand for it to be added to the poll.) The Mayor notified East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) on 15 December and provided all

³ Audit Commission, *Technical directory – local government*, ‘10.15 Parish Polls on the Euro Treaty conducted by principal authorities’ (2008). See also Law Commission, *Electoral law interim report* (2016), para 14.49.

⁴ LGA: s9. Statutory Instrument, *The Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987* (“Rules”): appendix.

⁵ LGA: sch 12 s18(4). Before 1972, the requirement was five electors.

⁶ LGA: sch 12 s18(2) and s18(7). *BvC*.

⁷ *Rules*: s4.

⁸ *Rules*: s4(1).

⁹ *Representation of the People Act 1983*. *BvC*. *Rules*: s6; schedule s1.

¹⁰ *Rules*: schedule s14(b); schedule s26(2c).

¹¹ *Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011*.

¹² LGA: s150.

¹³ Legislation does not make a poll binding; therefore, it is not. Also, *BvC*.

the information required by law. EHDC acknowledged the notification on 16 December.

- 2.6 On 12 January 2026, the Returning Officer at EHDC issued his formal Notice of Poll, which set polling day as 21 January. He also notified ATC that, having taken legal advice, he had decided that two questions were not valid and explained his decision as below. ATC was not consulted on this matter and has taken no view on the poll or on the questions.

“Question 1. Should Alton Town Council tamper with water levels jeopardising tree health and wellbeing? Counsel has advised that I reject Question 1 on the grounds that it is devoid of practical meaning if the Town Council has no power regarding water levels.

“Question 3. Should Alton Town Council commit to following and implementing the results of any parish poll? Counsel has advised that I reject this question since it is not clear how a parish poll is defined and in addition it is unclear how the Alton Town Council could commit to follow the results of a poll if they do not know what the questions asked yet are (for some hypothetical future poll). The question is therefore devoid of practical application.”

- 2.7 The poll therefore proceeded with 6 questions on 21 January. The results are set out below.

3. **Main considerations**

- 3.1 The table below indicates how electors at the parish meeting and the poll voted on the questions put to them. The turnout for the poll was 1,029 out of 14,837 electors, or 6.9%.

	Question	Meeting		Poll	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Should Alton Town Council tamper with water levels jeopardising tree health and wellbeing?	8	33	N/A	N/A
2.	Do you believe that Alton Town Council is listening to residents concerning King’s Pond?	24	23	459	544
3.	Should Alton Town Council commit to following and implementing the results of any parish poll?	33	10	N/A	N/A
4.	Do you trust Alton Town Council to spend council taxpayers’ money wisely?	18	21	466	530
5.	Should Alton residents be consulted on any further spending on King’s Pond?	30	9	831	179
6.	Do you want to remove Don Hammond from any further King’s Pond focus groups?	24	21	417	513
7.	Do you want Alton Town Council to recommence Stage 1 so that the people can take an informed decision?	18	29	497	476

	Question	Meeting		Poll	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
8.	Should Alton Town Council stop investigating alternatives and instead proceed only with making plans and finding costs for the dredging of King's Pond at its current size and adding improvements such as silt traps?	30	18	602	412
9.	Should Alton Town Council approach South East Water (with immediate effect) regarding their offer of silt traps?	44	0	N/A	N/A

- 3.2 On the question of silt traps, the Town Clerk immediately approached SE Water, who advised as follows, confirming that there is no straightforward offer of silt traps for King's Pond *per se*:

"The proposed sediment reduction actions at the top of the catchment (Will Hall Farm area) is part of our regulated WINEP [Water Industry National Environment Programme] scheme for the 2025-2030 period, with an agreed funding pot from the Environment Agency for this work. As this is a regulated scheme – we need to have a clear audit trail to demonstrate how the budget is used in delivering this scheme elements. Our core commitment is to deliver the Scope of Works (Action Specification) required to meet our primary regulatory objective by 2030. While we are encouraged to work collaboratively with the community – and there is potential for co-funding (e.g., additional grant applications) to deliver the best possible outcomes – any 'value-add work' beyond our core scope would need to be carefully considered to ensure it demonstrates value for money and does not introduce risk and delays to achieving our regulatory requirements and timeframes by 2030."

- 3.3 A meeting with SE Water is being arranged to discuss this further.

- 3.4 In August 2025, EHDC informed ATC that the cost of a parish poll was likely to be around £10,000, to be borne by ATC. EHDC has not yet advised ATC of the final cost, but on 28 January stated that it would be in the region of that estimate. The Town Clerk has asked for the final figure to be itemised. Legislation is clear that ATC foots the bill for the expenses incurred by EHDC in administering the poll.¹⁴

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Council is required by law to consider the results of the parish meeting and the parish poll. Therefore, recommendation 1 is to note the results. If councillors are minded to act as a result of their consideration, then recommendation 1 can be amended in the debate in the usual way.
- 4.2 The Council is required to pay for the expenses incurred by EHDC in administering the poll. The 28 January estimate from EHDC is around £10,000. This is an unbudgeted cost in the 2025/26 financial year. With the prospect of a by-election before the end of

¹⁴ LGA: s150.

the year, I am not recommending drawing from the Elections budget unless that by-election does not proceed. In any case, a sum will need to be drawn from General Reserves, within which there is sufficient to cover this cost for now. While there is no impact on council tax bills for 2026/27 as the Budget for the year has been set, councillors will be faced with a decision in the next financial year on whether to replenish the reserve. This could be from a reduction of other activities or council tax or a combination of both.

4.3 The Council is recommended:

- 1. To note the results of the parish meeting and of the parish poll;**
- 2. To approve that the cost of the parish poll (estimated at around £10,000) be met from General Reserves.**

Subject: **King's Pond Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference and membership**

Report to: Full Council, 4 February 2026

Report of: Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To review and approve the Terms of Reference for the King's Pond Task & Finish Group, and to confirm membership.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference were approved at the 9 April 2025 meeting (min 168). In view of the changes to the options under consideration and the procurement specification, it is timely to review them and to confirm the group's membership.

3. Main considerations

- 3.1 The Group has reviewed the Terms of Reference. Changes are indicated in the appendix.
- 3.2 Under the Terms of Reference, the Council approves the membership and the Chair. There is provision for up to four councillors to be members.

4. Recommendation

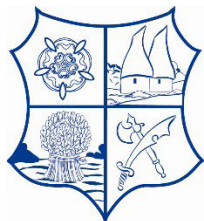
- 4.1 The Council is recommended:

a) To approve the revised Terms of Reference of the King's Pond Task and Finish Group.

b) To confirm the following non-councillor appointments to the Task and Finish Group: Catherine Ayres, Ryan Doran, Paul Ebbutt, Eric Phillips, Angela Owens and Tim Pinchen.

c) To confirm the following councillor appointments to the Task and Finish Group: Cllr Don Hammond and Cllr John Quincey.

d) To confirm Cllr Don Hammond as Chair of the Task and Finish Group.



KING'S POND TASK & FINISH GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

This Terms of Reference (ToR) document is for the **King's Pond Task & Finish Group: Stage 1** and sets out the objectives of the Group and defines the group's purpose, structure, the scope of its activities and the limitations on its authority.

[January 2026: additions underlined, significant deletions struck through.]

1. The objectives of the Group are:

- a) To conduct ~~a~~ technical and financial assessments of both the Dredging option and the Pond & River option
- b) To provide the outcome of the technical and financial assessments of the Dredging and Pond & River options to go to Full Council
- c) To investigate the sources of silt and pollution entering the pond and possible mitigation
- d) To make recommendations to Council for ~~so that it can go to~~ public consultation and oversee that consultation before a decision is taken ~~to proceed further~~ by Council on which of the two options to progress, at which point the Group ceases unless the Council provides a new mandate

2. Purpose

The role of the Group is to prepare and Implement an Action Plan to progress the King's Pond Project through Stage 1, up to and including public consultation.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- The key function of the group is to investigate appropriate resources, make enquiries, analyse quotations and proposals and to make recommendations to Full Council as regards actions, appointment of consultants and expenditure.
- The group will ensure that regular progress reports and information updates are maintained on the ATC website.
- The group will establish a Community & Stakeholder Focus Group and call regular meetings.
- Scope of Stage 1:
 - Identify, Investigate and make enquiries of suitable consultants for the management, design and costing of the project. Select and ~~appoint~~ recommend consultants for appointment by the Town Clerk or Council as appropriate.
 - Complete Pre-application consultations with the planning authority and the Environment Agency.
 - Carry out Ecological surveys and environmental impact assessments as required by the planning authority and the Environment Agency.
 - Complete the Engineering and Landscape Design and Specification of the scheme options nominated by Full Council to sufficient detail for costing and for clear presentation to residents.
 - Public consultation.
 - Report to Council for a decision to proceed to Stage 2.
 - Report to Council on the investigations into the sources of the silt and pollution entering the pond and possible mitigation strategies.

4. Delegated Authority

The group has no delegated authority to commit to expenditure or to issue instructions. The procedures for management and control of expenditure are per the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

5. Membership

Membership of the Task & Finish Group will comprise:

- Up to four Town Councillors – to be appointed by Full Council – one of whom will be appointed by Full Council to act as Chair to the group
- Individual residents or representatives of local organisations that the Task & Finish Group consider can make a useful contribution – appointments subject to ratification by Full Council
- The Town Clerk (or appointed officer in his absence)
- The Group may invite consultees, contractors or other local stakeholders to attend the meetings as required.

Membership of the Community & Stakeholder Focus Group will include:

- Town Council Officers, Town Councillors, Pond Users, representatives of local organisations such as ACAN, Alton Society, Ashdell Residents Association, Watercress Line, Schools, Voluntary Groups, Surrey Wildlife Trust, King's Pond Preservation Society and any other community groups as agreed by the Task & Finish Group.

6. Target Timetable

- Establish Task & Finish Group and Community & Stakeholder Focus Group – **March 2025**
- Appointment of key consultants – **May 2025**
- Completion of Stage 1 Design, Consultations and Costings – ~~August / September 2025~~ **August 2026**
- Public Consultation – ~~Late 2025 / Early 2026~~

7. Meetings

The Task & Finish Group will be responsible for organising its own meetings. ~~For guidance, these are likely to be every two weeks.~~

8. Reporting:

The Task & Finish Group must submit to Full Council its minutes once approved ~~a written progress report in advance of each Full Council Meeting~~ and at least one of the councillor members of the Group must attend to answer questions.

9. Administrative support:

- Notification of meetings
- Notes of meetings
- Maintaining a database of consultants and contacts
- Document control - information and records.
- Sending out enquiries, receiving the tender responses and fee proposals and collating for consideration by the group.
- Communications support – press/media releases, maintaining information on the ATC website.
- Responding to questions or comments from residents either directly or indirectly by

referring to other group members and co-ordinating communications.

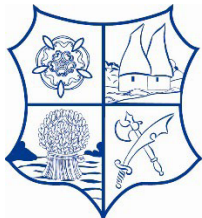
10. Dispute resolution:

If there is a dispute within the group any councillor member of the group can require that it be brought to Full Council for resolution.

11. Decision recording:

- The group will record minutes of its meetings.
- All decisions on allocation of funds and appointments of consultants will be recorded in the minutes of the relevant Full Council Meetings.

V6: January 2026



MINUTES OF THE KING'S POND TASK & FINISH GROUP

Monday 15th December 2025

Present: Councillor Don Hammond - Chair (DH)
 Councillor John Quincey (JQ)
 Tom Horwood – Town Clerk (TH)
 Hayley Carter - Deputy Town Clerk (HC)
 Natalie Beckell (NB) – Alton Town Council
 Cathy Ayres – Resident representative (CA)
 Paul Ebbutt – Resident representative (PE)
 Angie Owens - Resident representative (AO)
 Eric Phillips – Residents representative (EP)

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Tim Pinchen - Resident representative (TP)

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

DH proposed that the amended minutes of the 20th November 2025 meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by CA and everyone voted in favour.

3. **Additional Item**

JQ said the Terms of Reference for the Task & Finish Group do not reflect the scope of works sufficiently well. He said he has no objection to Councillor Hammond being the chair but it has not been ratified by Full Council. He also noted that, while the council had appointed him as a member of the group, it was before he became a councillor.

He added that there was insufficient definition of the project in the Terms of Reference, saying there needs to be more in there about the silt traps and dealing with pollution at the pond.

He went on to say that the tender document does not refer to dealing with pollution.

DH said the terms of reference are quite broad because they could not be sure what would come out of the investigations or what would come out of Stage One. He added that it has never been implied that there would be a pure chalk stream. The Council has only ever said a continuation of the river – the best possible river

we can achieve and the best possible pond we can achieve. No option is a perfect option – there is always going to be some silting and some pollution. TH said that what is set out in the Terms of Reference is that the focus of the T&FG is Stage One. It is the ITT that we need to spend time on, because it needs to capture everything you want to then take to public consultation and the Council.

JQ then asked why are we not dealing with the pollution.

DH replied because dealing with the pollution upstream is outside the scope of the project and outside the control of the council. It is not possible for ATC to control the water coming into the pond from elsewhere.

He added that the condition of the river was probably at its best in the 1950s, when industrial use of the river had ceased, the population of the town was low and there was much less traffic

He emphasised that the pollution and silt problems would be the same for both options, so they do not need to be defined at this stage.

CA asked whether there is a definitive report showing where the silt is coming from.

DH said that TP has done a lot of work on it and they believe there are around 8 points where water comes into the river / pond. That has been shown already at the Community and Stakeholder Group meetings.

The problem is the same whether you go for Option B or Option C – it cannot be dealt with at this time. We can only deal with the property that ATC owns. Once we have done that, we can start to work with the relevant agencies to deal with these things.

Swales and balancing ponds, as described by Dr June Chatfield, are included in both initial designs – options 4a and 3c.

DH reminded the group that the previous Town Clerk did investigate the ownership of the weir and chamber but both the Environment Agency and Waterside Court denied ownership. It has only come to light through subsequent investigations.

JQ reiterated that we should put more in the tender. He said that CALA had included 4 silt traps on the former brewery site and we do not yet know what impact they will have. He added that we should add silt traps at the other entry points to the pond into the ITT.

DH said that the pollution will be the same for either option, so is not critical to the decision to be taken. It is important for the future health of the pond and the river, but not for deciding between the pond and the pond/river options.

ACTION: Circulate the ITT and Terms of Reference to all members of the T&FG for comment and to take the Terms of Reference and committee membership to a future Full Council meeting.

4. **Feedback from Full Council on 10th December**

Resolution was to continue with options B and C – dredging of the pond and retaining a pond but with a river alongside it. In addition to this it was resolved to start a sinking fund, which was included in the budget.

DH said that TH had prepared a paper which reopened the debate on which options we should go for. Some people did not like the reintroduction of options. He said that he had proposed to continue with option B (dredge and improve, formerly 2a) and the reintroduced option C (pond and river, the former 3c replacing 4a) and that is what was carried.

The Stage One Tender had already been discussed. DH raised public consultation and the possibility of an artist's impression of option C so we can then ask the public if they want us to continue investigating it as part of the Stage One work prior to the Council taking a decision between the two options, to supplement option B which is what visitors already experience.

AO asked whether that would include the ecology as that is really important to people.

JQ asked whether any of the ecology reports are time limited. DH responded that they are not time limited, provided that we get on with the project.

PE asked whether there is any point going out to consultation without the costs.

DH said that a year ago when we had the two options from the Water Environment report we went out and did presentations and public engagement. He asked if it is time to redo that, with better drawings, asking whether people still want them to investigate both options and making sure they are aware that this time it will cost money to do. He said people know what the pond looks like, but they do not know what a pond and river option would look like.

CA said they would definitely benefit from better pictures.

PE said these need to include more detail of the biodiversity / ecological benefits.

DH said there can be more discussions on the ecology, and indeed there should be open discussions on that. He said it would give a better idea to the public of what it is and how much getting to the end of Stage One would cost.

AO said it is important the public are shown a better picture of the pond and river option.

DH said if we can do more public engagement similar to what we did a year ago we can pull more ecology into that. He added we need to get a better idea on what public sentiment is before the Council have to make another decision on spending. The presentations / engagement sessions should be spread around both geographically and on different days / times so that people are not excluded.

This way, when it goes to Council to make a decision on the results of the ITT, we would have more up-to-date information on how the public feel.

Once the work has been done following the ITT, you would then have a proper public consultation with costs.

TH noted that, if the parish meeting decides to run a parish poll, the council will be constrained on what it can communicate beforehand as it must not try to influence how people may vote and should try to avoid the appearance of doing so.

5. **Review of Actions**

- Programme – no change at present
- EA – no change
- Ecology – all reports are now on the website
- Tree Works – Council agreed to go ahead
- Waterside Court & The Dam – Feedback from WC was given at the Full Council meeting on 10th December.
- Thames Water – awaiting further responses
- Lasham Drain – nothing further to report
- HCC Highways – TH has put in an FOI request

6. **Collation & Storage of Information**

NB said everyone should have had an invitation to Drop Box. There is no need to pay for an account. She said she would resend the invitation.

7. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 19th January 2026: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square 11:00am – 12:30pm

Monday 9th February: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square 11:00am – 12:30pm

Subject: **King's Pond Project Stage One Tender**

Report to: Full Council, 4 February 2026

Report of: Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To resolve a dispute that has arisen within the Task & Finish Group.

2. Background

- 2.1 The 10 December 2025 Full Council meeting resolved (min 84), “to take forward Stage One of the King’s Pond project on the basis of Options B [Dredging plus improve pond margins and paths] and C [Pond and river: dredge and improve pond margins and paths, create stream] and to authorise the Town Clerk to make the necessary changes to the Invitation to Tender [ITT] and recommence the tendering process, including the panel assessment agreed by the 6 August Council meeting”. The ITT had originally been compiled for the first attempt at procurement in summer 2025 that had to be abandoned due new information coming to light that affected one of the two options at that time.
- 2.2 The revised ITT has been discussed at the King’s Pond Task & Finish Group. However, a dispute has arisen within the group concerning aspects of it. Section 10 of the Terms of Reference for the King’s Pond Task & Finish Group states: “If there is a dispute within the group any councillor member of the group can require that it be brought to Full Council for resolution.” Councillor Quincey has raised such a dispute for resolution by the Council.

3. Main considerations

- 3.1 In summary, the dispute concerns whether the ITT and therefore the work commissioned should include dealing with all sources of pollution: i.e. whether understanding this and its costs is critical to Stage One of the project. If this were to include areas of incoming water that are outside of Alton Town Council’s ownership, the Town Council would need to consider how far it can influence this. While it could commission engineering designs as part of this Stage One procurement, it would not have the powers to implement them on property owned by others, and it may be able to influence and negotiate with those owners. It is uncertain whether ATC funds could be applied to resolution outside of ATC property as the council must apply its funding to matters that are within its powers and competence; depending on any designs created and future negotiation, advice might be required on how to proceed.

- 3.2 Councillors Quincey and Hammond describe the key points of disagreement for the Council to resolve in the attached appendices. The current draft ITT is also appended for reference.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Council is recommended:

To consider the dispute escalated from the Task and Finish Group by Councillor Quincey.

- 4.2 To enable the procurement to proceed, an amendment will need to be made to the recommendation by adding words that will reflect the outcome of the debate, such as, “and to exclude/include investigation and mitigation of the sources of pollution within the King’s Pond Stage One Invitation to Tender”.

Appendices

- Draft Invitation to Tender
- Commentary by Cllr John Quincey
- Commentary by Cllr Don Hammond

Name of Applicant:

This document must be completed and returned in the published format.
Failure to comply with this instruction may result in your submission
being rejected.

1 General Information

1.1 Procurement Procedure

King's Pond, Alton

Invitation for Fee Proposals for Stage One Design

Introduction

As a summary of the current position of this project we have attached the following documents:

- “King's Pond – The Next Steps in Deciding the Way Forward”(updated January 2026),
- Weir Removal Feasibility Study 23109-HMD-RP-01/C01
- Dwg 23109-EWK-SK-01/C01 Feasibility Study Layout Option 2a
- Dwg 23109-EWK-SK-03/C01 Feasibility Study Layout Option 3c
- Initial Ecology Design Notes 27th November 2025
- Kings Pond Geological & Hydrological Notes January 2026

All other information, including past reports, topological and hydrographic surveys and ecological survey information, can be found on the Alton Town Council (ATC) website: <https://www.alton.gov.uk/kings-pond-project>. Survey drawings can be issued in DWG format upon request.

Since the feasibility study drawings were prepared, four factors affecting the Stage One design have been identified:

- Option 3a assumed that the river would use the outflow from the weir chamber. Subsequent surveys have shown that a lower outflow level could be achieved if the weir chamber is removed and the pipework re-laid up to the boundary of ATC property.
 - There is a recommendation from the ecologists that the large island should be retained as a breeding refuge for wildfowl and herons.
 - There are at least 8 drainage points in to the River Wey upstream of the pond that appear to have no silt traps or pollution control. Design development of Option 2a
-

should give serious consideration to trapping and management of silt at the entry point; Design development of 3c must demonstrate that the river channel will be kept free of silt deposits

- The Council is mindful of the changes projected in local climate by the Met Office with longer periods of summer drought and shorter periods of intense winter rain. The Council wishes to understand whether this will change the pattern of silt deposition and any design of a silt trap at the entrance to Kings Pond

In January 2025, Alton Town Council (ATC) resolved to take forward proposals for both possible options and bring them to a decision point. At present the project is seen as progressing in three stages:

Stage One – To public consultation and decision

- Pre-application consultation on both options with the planning authority and the Environment Agency.
- Engineering and landscape design and specification of both options to sufficient detail for costing and for presentation to residents. (RIBA Stage 2)
- Ecological strategies for both options to create/improve habitats and improve biodiversity to sufficient detail for costing and presentation to residents
- Flood Risk Assessment for the River & Pond option only
- Public consultation & selection of the preferred option.

Stage Two – Design, Approvals, Appointment of a contractor

- Applications for approvals and permits for the selected option including Flood Risk Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Landscape and engineering design and specification progressed to construction detail
- Preparation of Tender Documents
- Tendering and selection of a contractor.
- Sourcing funds

Stage Three – Works on site

Roles and Stage One Deliverables

Design and budget costing of both options to RIBA Stage Two – Concept Design

Roles/Elements	Stage One Deliverables
Project Management	Management of Stage One to fulfil all deliverables to the point of Public Consultation.
Principal Designer	Pre- Construction Health & Safety Plan
Planning	Pre-application Consultations with the planning authority and the EA

Engineering Design	Design and specification of the two proposals to sufficient detail for costing and for public presentation. (RIBA Stage 2) For 2a this includes trapping and management of silt at the inflow For 3c this includes the civil engineering work for removal of the weir chamber and alteration of the downstream pipework to the site boundary. A commentary on the likely effects of climate change on the two options. Estimation of siltation rates. Calculation of the volume of water retained in the pond for both options.
Ecology	Review surveys and preliminary proposals made by ecologists appointed by ATC in Stage One. Input to the design team to create appropriate habitats, detailing and planting.
Landscape Architecture	Landscape treatment of the whole site for both options in conjunction with the Engineering Design. Presentation drawings for public consultation.
Costing	Budget Costings $\pm$ 20% Identification of Risks

Stage One information is to be presented in full detail in a format that will provide a sound basis for decision making and for proceeding with Stage 2

Invitation

Alton Town Council invites companies with appropriate experience to submit fee proposals for Stage One.

For ease of analysis and evaluation fee proposals are to be broken down into the elements in the table above

All applicants with a valid application will be asked to present to a panel on [DATE]. Applicants will be contacted on [DATE] to arrange times so please do keep the day or

evening free. If there is any problem with this date, please do let us know as early in the process as possible so we can try to make alternative arrangements.

1.2 Procurement Timetable

The Authority proposes the following timetable for the award of the Contract:

Procurement Stage	Dates
Publication of advertisement	
Clarification questions to be submitted by	
Clarification responses to be issued by	
Bid Deadline	
Evaluation	
Presentations to Panel	
Further evaluation	
Intention to award	
Contract start	

The Council reserves the right to change the above timetable and Applicants will be notified accordingly if there is a change.

1.3 Council Representatives

Authorised Representative contact details:	Procurement Representative contact details:
Tom Horwood -Town Clerk Town Hall, Market Square, Alton, Hampshire GU34 1HD townclerk@alton.gov.uk 01420 83986	Hayley Carter, Deputy Clerk Town Hall, Market Square, Alton, Hampshire GU34 1HD admin@alton.gov.uk 01420 83986

1.4 Contract Period

It is intended that the works be completed by [DATE]. Please indicate if you have a preferred alternative timetable.

1.5 Insurance Levels

1.5.1 Employer's Liability Insurance

The Council's minimum requirement for Employer's Liability Insurance is £10 million

1.5.2 Professional Indemnity Insurance

The Council's minimum requirement for Professional Indemnity Insurance is £2 million.

1.5.3 Public Liability Insurance

The Council's minimum requirement for Public Liability Insurance is £10 million

2 Selection Questionnaire

2. Background Information

Please see the Town Council's website for further information –
<https://www.alton.gov.uk/kings-pond-project>

Added Value

The Applicant will be expected to suggest any added value that their offer might be able to bring to the Council. Applicants are expected to build any such offers into their submissions regardless of whether specific questions are asked along these lines or not.

Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that the Council has declared a climate emergency and is therefore keen to ensure the supply chain reduces carbon emissions wherever possible and where such savings can be made, they are evidenced. e.g. locally sourced construction materials, recycling of waste matter generated etc..

3 Selection Questionnaire

Notes for completion

1. "Council" means the public sector contracting body, that is seeking to invite suitable suppliers to participate in this procurement process.
2. "You"/ "Your" or "Supplier" means the body completing these questions **i.e. the legal entity seeking to be invited to the next stage of the process and responsible for the information provided.** The 'Supplier' is intended to cover any economic operator as defined by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and could be a registered company; charitable organisation; Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE); Special Purpose Vehicle; or other form of entity.
3. This Selection Questionnaire has been designed to assess the suitability of a Supplier to deliver the Authority's contract requirement(s). If you are successful at this stage of the procurement process, you will be selected for the subsequent award stage of the process.
4. Please ensure that all questions are completed in full, and in the format requested. Failure to do so may result in your submission being disqualified. If the question does not apply to you, please state clearly 'N/A'.
5. Should you need to provide additional Appendices in response to the questions, these should be numbered clearly and listed as part of your declaration. A template for providing additional information is provided at the end of this document.
6. Please return a completed version of this document in accordance with the Submission requirements.

Verification of Information Provided

7. Whilst reserving the right to request information at any time throughout the procurement process, the Council may enable the Supplier to self-certify that there are no mandatory/discretionary grounds for excluding their organisation. When requesting evidence that the supplier can meet the specified requirements (such as the questions in section 7 of this Selection Questionnaire relating to Technical and Professional Ability) the Council may only obtain such evidence after the final tender evaluation decision i.e. from the winning Supplier only.

Sub-contracting arrangements

8. The contractor shall not without the Council's written consent sub-contract the whole or any parts of the works. Such consent shall not be unreasonably delayed or withheld but the contractor shall remain wholly responsible for carrying out and completing the works in all respects. Any sub-contractor's employment under a sub-contract shall terminate immediately upon the termination for any reason of the contractor's employment under this contract. The Council will never be liable for any payment which should properly have been paid from the contractor to the sub-contractor

Variations

9. Any inconsistency in or between the contract documents, locations plans and schedules of work shall be corrected and any such correction which results in addition, omission or other change shall be treated as a variation.

The Town Council may, without invalidating this contract, issue instructions requiring addition to, or omission from, or other change in the schedule of works or the order or period in which the works are to be carried out. The Council and the contractor shall endeavour to agree a price prior to the contractor carrying out the instruction. Failing any agreement to do so, any instruction issued shall be valued by the Town Council on a fair and reasonable basis using any relevant prices in the priced schedule of works and the valuation shall include any direct loss and/or expense incurred by the contractor due to the regular progress of the works being affected by compliance with the instruction.

If following receipt of an instruction from the Council, the contractor does not comply, the Council may employ and pay another person to execute any work whatsoever which may be necessary to give effect to that instruction. The contractor shall be liable for all additional costs incurred by the Council in connection with such employment and an appropriate deduction shall be made from the contract sum.

Confidentiality

10. When providing details of contracts in answering section 6 of this Selection Questionnaire (Technical and Professional Ability), the Supplier agrees to waive any contractual or other confidentiality rights and obligations associated with these contracts.

11. The Council reserves the right to contact the named customer contact in section 6 regarding the contracts included in section 6. The named customer contact does not owe the

Council any duty of care or have any legal liability, except for any deceitful or maliciously false statements of fact.

12. The Council confirms that it will keep confidential and will not disclose to any third parties any information obtained from a named customer contact, other than to the Cabinet Office and/or contracting authorities defined by the Public Contract Regulations.

1. Supplier Information		
1.1 Supplier Details	Answer	
Full name of the Supplier completing the Selection Questionnaire		
Registered company address		
Registered company number		
Date of Incorporation		
Registered VAT number		
Name of parent company (if applicable)		
Please mark 'X' in the relevant box to indicate your trading status	i. a public limited company	
	ii. a limited company	
	iii. a limited liability partnership	
	iv. other partnership	
	v. sole trader	
	vi. other (please specify)	
1.2 Contact Details		
Supplier contact details for enquiries about this Selection Questionnaire		
Name		
Postal address		
Country		

Phone	
Mobile	
E-mail	
2. Professional Ability	
Relevant experience and contract examples	
Please provide details of any contracts awarded for your business and trading history. Please note we reserve the right to contact anyone listed to discuss their experience using your company.	
Declaration	
I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted to these questions are correct. I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation's suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement, and I am signing on behalf Of (Insert name of supplier). I understand that the Council may reject my submission if there is a failure to answer all relevant questions fully or if I provide false/misleading information. I have provided a full list of any Appendices used to provide additional information in response to questions. I also declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the Authority's requirement.	
SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETED BY	
Name	
Role in organisation	
Date	

4 Award

4.1 Award Criteria

The following criteria and weightings will be applied in the evaluation of the questions asked of Applicants within this section 4 Award.

Evaluation Criteria Breakdown	Means of Evaluation
Price	50%
Experience of similar infrastructure and engineering projects	20%
Experience working with local authorities	5%
Demonstration of sustainable practices and regard to impact on climate change	10%
Presentation to Panel	15%

4.2 Scoring Guidelines

The questions asked of Applicants within this section 4 Award shall be scored using the marking system described within this section. Applicants should refer to the Council's minimum requirements to ensure that they meet or exceed the minimum requirements wherever possible.

Applicants should be aware that the responses provided to the questions will be evaluated in such a way that the highest scores will be awarded to Applicants who show innovation, creativity, further relevant details and information that could potentially enhance the Applicant's proposal. It should be noted that to achieve the highest scores available the Applicant must not only meet but exceed the Council's minimum requirements, where these are stated.

All scored question shall be evaluated in accordance with the guidelines below:

Score 0	No response	No response
Score 1	Extremely Weak	Very poor proposal/response; does not cover the associated requirements, major deficiencies in thinking or detail, significant detail missing, unrealistic or impossible to implement and manage
Score 2	Weak	Poor or mediocre proposal/response, only partially covers the requirements, deficiencies in thinking or detail apparent, difficult or problematic to implement and manage
Score 3	Fair / Average	Proposal/response partially satisfies the requirements, with small deficiencies apparent, needs some work to fully understand it
Score 4	Good	Satisfactory proposal/response, would work to deliver the Council's requirements to the satisfactory level
Score 5	Strong	Robust proposal/response, exceeds minimum requirements, including a level of detail or evidence of original thinking which adds value to the bid and provides a great deal of detail

5 Project Costs

5.1 Project Costings

Applicants are required to give their bid price on the table below **and provide all supporting documentation required to substantiate or in support of your price**

Item Number	Description	Price (£)
1	Project Management	
2	Principal designer	
3	Planning	
4	Engineering design	
5	Ecology	
6	Landscape architecture	
7	Costing	
	Total of the prices (excluding VAT)	

6 Certificates

6.1 Conditions of Tender

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL	
CONDITIONS OF TENDER	
Reference number and Title of Contract: Shall be as per the Reference Number and Title of Contract as detailed on page one (1) of this Volume Two (2) Applicant's Offer	
1.	Tenders are invited for the supply of the goods or services specified or described in the invitation. Tenders with conditions of contract duly completed should be marked with the title of the Contract and returned electronically to: townclerk@alton.gov.uk . Tenders must be returned no later than the specified time and date. Tenders received after the time stated or not properly completed will be disregarded. Facsimile copies will not be accepted.
2.	The Contract shall be subject to the specified terms and Conditions of Contract. Offers by Applicants made subject to additional or alternative conditions may not be considered and may be rejected on the

	grounds of such conditions alone. No alteration must be made to the printed conditions or schedules. Any Tenders bearing such alterations will not be considered.	
3.	The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any Tender, and reserves the right to accept a Tender either in whole or in part, for such item or items specified in the Invitation to Tender, and for such place or places of delivery as it thinks fit, each item and establishment being for this purpose considered as Tendered for separately.	
4.	To ALTON TOWN COUNCIL I/We the undersigned DO HEREBY UNDERTAKE on the acceptance by the Council of my/our Tender either in whole or in part, to supply (<i>or perform the services</i>), on such terms and conditions and in accordance with such specifications (<i>if any</i>), as are contained or incorporated in the Invitation to Tender. I/We agree and declare that the acceptance of this Tender by letter on behalf of the Council, whether for the whole or part of the items included therein, will constitute a Contract for the supply of such items, I/We agree to enter into a further agreement for the due performance of the Contract, and I/We declare that I am/We are acting as the Delegated Authority for the purposes of signing off this Tender, and therefore, the Contract.	
Signed:		Date:
Name (<i>in block capitals</i>):		
In the capacity of: (<i>State official position, i.e. Director, Manager, etc.</i>)		

6.2 Certificate of Confidentiality

CERTIFICATE OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
I/we hereby agree with the Authority that I/we shall not at any time divulge or allow to be divulged to any person any information, confidential or otherwise, relating to information passed to me regarding this project.	
It is appreciated by the parties that in the event of negotiations in respect of the proposed Contract being entered into between the Authority and my organisation that it may be necessary to share information with colleagues within my organisation. In this event this confidentiality clause may be waived to allow such information sharing to take place but not further or otherwise.	
Signed*:	Date:
Name (<i>in block capitals</i>):	
In the capacity of: (<i>State official position, i.e. Director, Manager, etc.</i>)	
*(It must be clearly shown whether the Applicant is a limited company, statutory corporation, partnership or single individual, trading under his own or another name, and also if the signatory is not the actual Applicant, the capacity in which he/she signs or is employed).	

6.3 Commercially Sensitive Information

I declare that I wish the following information to be designated as Commercially Sensitive.

--

The reason(s) it is considered that this information should be exempt under Freedom of Information Act 2000 is:

--

6.4 Conflict of Interest

CERTIFICATE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST	
I/we hereby notify the Authority that I/we consider the following declaration to be a conflict of interest (Applicant to insert details of the conflict of interest):	
I/we hereby understand that in accordance with Article 24 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 that the Authority is obliged to take appropriate measures to effectively prevent, identify and remedy conflicts of interest arising in the conduct of procurement procedures so as to avoid any distortion of competition and to ensure equal treatment of all economic operators.	
Signed*:	Date:
Name (<i>in block capitals</i>):	
In the capacity of: (<i>State official position, i.e. Director, Manager, etc.</i>)	
*(<i>It must be clearly shown whether the Applicant is a limited company, statutory corporation, partnership or single individual, trading under his own or another name, and also if the signatory is not the actual Applicant, the capacity in which he/she signs or is employed</i>).	

Cllr John Quincey

1.0 Introduction

This submission arises out of a dispute between the undesigned and Cllr Don Hammond that manifested at the last Task and Finish Group meeting held on 19th January 2026.

Pursuant to paragraph 10 of the group's Terms of Reference, I require that the said dispute is brought to Full Council for resolution.

The dispute concerns the content of the Stage One Invitation to Tender (ITT.) My position is that the ITT should include **all** (emphasis added) reasonably anticipated work necessary to achieve a free flowing relatively pure water stream whereas the opposing view is that pollution from upstream and road run-off in the town and downstream of the railway culvert should be excluded from the ITT.

It seems to me that not to include measures to mitigate pollution would be misleading insofar as upon receipt of Stage One tenders ATC would be unable to make a judgement on the overall cost of the scheme. To make a decision based upon a deliberately scaled down work content would be financially unsound and leave a legacy of risk for the next council under whose tenure the physical works would be undertaken.

2.0 Condensed Chronology

2.1 On 15th December 2016 the Town Clerk, Leah Coney, received an email from The Environment Agency (EA) that inter alia, stated; "Taking Kings Pond offline ... has been a big aspiration of the Environment Agency's for many years." It goes on to discuss the environmental merits being crystal clear water thriving with fish and marginal plants. Disregarding events prior the last dredging, this mail was perhaps part of the reasoning behind producing a plan for the future of KP.

In recent times there have been two overall strategic plans. The 2017 report at 3.3 concluded with six main options that included:

- The do-nothing option which would have no cost implications but would lead to the eventual silting up of the pond
- Continuing the current practice of removing silt from the pond every 20-30 years and depositing it, once dried, on the existing larger island, or taking it off-site
- Installing a silt trap at the upstream entry point of the river to King's Pond to reduce silt inputs and regularly removing the accumulated silt

Notwithstanding that the report was adopted, the author of this document is unaware of any positive action by ATC towards implementing any of the above report's recommendations.

The next report was produced in August 2022 by Aquamaintain, which included a then current letter from EA dated 20th July 2022. Again that re-asserted the EA's long held aspiration to take Kings Pond offline from the River Wey

The “DRAFT” Aquamaintain report was essentially designed to persuade ATC to invest in a feasibility study of various options these being:

- PRIMARY ACTION To appoint of a river restoration consultant to...
- SECONDARY ACTION Reduce Silt and Nutrient Input. Background Low invertebrate and macrophyte diversity is a direct reflection of the poor ecological status of Kings Pond caused by ever increasing silt levels and nutrient loading. Local nutrient loading input includes wildfowl faeces, food used to feed the wildfowl, bank erosion caused by public, dogs, wildfowl, wave action and local run off from roads, grassland and adjoining properties.
- Proposal If the feasibility study recommended in (Primary action) does not support pond re-profiling then there are several short-term options that would need to be considered in relation to siltation and the associated nutrient build up. It must be recognised that these are short term solutions and would be a recurring cost should the action not be pursued. (Either not supported by the public or not feasible)
- Mechanically remove silt (dredge) in order to reduce levels. Arisings can be used in the creation of islands, new sections of bank and to repair eroded bank edges (Works Prog Ref RS01).
- Continue to educate members of the public about the adverse effects of feeding wildfowl (Works Prog Ref RS02).
- Carry out survey of bank erosion and areas of need of immediate repair (Works Prog Ref RS03). See section 2.6.
- Locate and redirect highways surface water drains and outlets from adjoining properties (Works Prog Ref RS04).
- Consider the removal of a number of the Canada Geese from the site, either through culling, translocation or any other option identified to reduce the population and reduce nutrient loading.

2.2 ATC's Implementation

2.2.1 Following a series of public awareness events it became clear that further engineering work was necessary before full consideration could be given to the offline or dredge only proposals as is evidenced by the resolution below. The minutes of the Council Meeting on 18th January 2023 stated;

“On the proposal of Councillor Richard Platt, seconded by Councillor Suzie Burns it was: RESOLVED to 3. Conduct a technical and financial assessment of removing the outlet weir so as to enable an offline option to be considered further 7 in favour and 1 against”

Nothing of any note occurred until after the election of a new council in May 2023.

2.2.2 By February 2024, following consultation with Cllrs. Hammond and Chubb, the Town Clerk appointed Water Environment, a specialist company to examine the feasibility of

removing the weir and produce proposals for various options. As an aside it is worth noting that Cllr. Chubb had to withdraw from involvement due to work demands. Commendably, Cllr Hammond soldiered on unassisted until the Task and Finish Group was formed the following year. Turning back to the WE proposals, ATC chose option 4a to remove the weir and associated works that would reduce the outfall level by up to 2m. The increased flow from this would then allow the construction of a meandering stream and bring with it ecological and bio diversity benefits.

2.2.3 Both the EA letter and the WE report (at page 22) noted that ownership of the outlet chamber would need further investigation. Unfortunately, ATC was misinformed by others regarding ownership of elements of the weir outlet pipework. When Tim Pinchen questioned this, it led to legal advice being sought from HCC in house legal and this concluded that the alterations to the chamber/manhole structure couldn't be undertaken without considerable risk and so the option was dropped in favour of the established fallback option 3c. With it went the drop in the invert level and thus the meandering stream because of the reduction in flow rate. The WE report notes that the gradient of the pond bed is 1:1000, hence the adoption of 3c, a straighter option, in order to enhance the rate of flow but with an adverse effect on the ecological and bio diversity gain.

Consequent upon the change of preferred option it became necessary to reopen the Stage One tendering process because the work content had fundamentally changed.

3.0 The Present Position

3.1 In advance of the T&FG group meeting on 19th January, the undersigned submitted a copy of a paper entitled Kings Pond Alternative Steps to all group members, copy available upon request. The paper was originally created to provide Councillors Botten and Lamb with some of the information that they had sought when casting their votes to proceed with Stage One engineering outline design at the full council meeting held on 10th December 2025.

The paper relied largely on ChatGPT for expert opinion on how to restore the heavily degraded River Wey at Alton. At the subsequent meeting I also quoted from another AI source, this being Microsoft Copilot.

3.2 The following are excerpts from the recommendations of both.

ChatGPT

- Overall Ranking 1st – flow protection + pollution reduction
If only one thing is done, this should be it

Copilot

- Water quality is one pillar of chalk stream ecological health
1. Work with Thames Water on overflow mitigation and sewer upgrades
 2. Collaborate with landowners to reduce runoff...
 3. Monitor nutrients...
 4. Install silt traps where necessary near road runoffs

4.0 Conclusion

It is evident from the foregoing four different expert sources that dealing with water quality is fundamental to the success of restoring the River Wey. Accordingly, the ITT should include measures and means of achieving it.

Of late in TF&G meetings it has been said that *“the ‘pure chalk stream’ is a figment of the imagination and the Council has never been trying to achieve that.”* This bold pronouncement is denied by me. My denial relies upon the original vision set down and reiterated by EA and the expert opinions set down hereinbefore. Whereas the “figment” allegation remains unsupported by documentary evidence and thus fails.

Another counter argument has been advanced claiming that ATC cannot assume being able to gain access to land owned by others to undertake water quality improvement works. Prima Facie this argument seems correct but because it’s essential that the council is apprised of the likely total cost of recovering the Wey from its present degradation in order to feel comfortable in committing to spending tens of thousands of Pounds, it is both specious and self-defeating.

Accordingly, the Stage One Engineer should be instructed to disregard the issue of easements and undertake preliminary design of all pollution mitigation. Denial of the inclusion of all sources of pollution is tantamount to an admission that the whole concept of recovering the Wey from its present degradation is unachievable.

Attached hereto is my suggested amendment to the ITT currently proposed along with the content of Tim Pinchen’s email of 11th August 2025 that summarises the sources of pollution presently entering the Wey at Alton

Cllr John Quincey

Ashdell Ward

27th January 2026

Attachment

JQ suggested amendments to the ITT are shown thus

1.1 Procurement Procedure

King’s Pond, Alton

Invitation for Fee Proposals for Stage One Design

Introduction

As a summary of the current position of this project we have attached the following documents:

- “King’s Pond – The Next Steps in Deciding the Way Forward”(updated January 2025),
- Weir Removal Feasibility Study 23109-HMD-RP-01/C01
- Dwg 23109-EWK-SK-01/C01 Feasibility Study Layout Option 2a
- Dwg 23109-EWK-SK-03/C01 Feasibility Study Layout Option 3c
- Initial Ecology Design Notes 27th November 2025
- Kings Pond Geological & Hydrological Notes January 2026

All other information, including past reports, topological and hydrographic surveys and ecological survey information, can be found on the Alton Town Council (ATC) website: <https://www.alton.gov.uk/kings-pond-project>. Survey drawings can be issued in DWG format upon request.

Since the feasibility study drawings were prepared, four factors affecting the Stage One design have been identified:

- Option 3a assumed that the river would use the outflow from the weir chamber. Subsequent surveys have shown that a lower outflow level could be achieved if the weir chamber is removed and the pipework re-laid up to the boundary of ATC property.
- There is a recommendation from the ecologists that the large island should be retained as a breeding refuge for wildfowl and herons.
- There are at least 8 drainage points in to the River Wey upstream of the pond that appear to have no silt traps or pollution control. **A location plan and narrative is attached hereto.**

Design development of Option 2a should include **verification of the information in the plan and narrative** and management of silt at **all** entry points; Design development of 3c must demonstrate that the river channel will be kept free of silt deposits. **Excluded is obtaining easements for on land owned by third parties.**

- The Council are mindful of the changes ...

Supporting narrative to the overleaf TWA maps

ATC has obtained Thames Water Maps that are individual A4 sheets with reference numbers and a large proportion have a table reference with cover and invert level.

I have recompiled these and attach a photo of the result.

The Wey/ Kings pond are in dark blue. it would seem that a significant area of the town drains into the Wey.

The “racecourse” estate appears to drain into the Midhants railway cess.



Cllr Don Hammond

Kings Pond

The Scope of the Invitation to Tender for Stage One

The Invitation to Tender (ITT) as drafted is concerned with possible works to the pond itself and to its banks. It does not include any work upstream of the Kings Pond site.

Why not?

- Any work to tackle silting and pollution upstream is outside the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Task & Finish Group. The current ToR does not include any reference to this in the Scope; The new proposed ToR asks only for the Task & Finish Group to report 'on the investigations in to the sources of the silt and pollution entering the pond, and possible mitigation strategies'.
- The real issue for residents is how Kings Pond will look and feel for them in the future. The current stage of the project is about getting to design, specification and costing of two options for public consultation. That is what the ITT is focused upon.
- Silt and pollution are detrimental to both river and pond. It is desirable for either option that silting and pollution are reduced and controlled as much as possible, but this is not a critical issue when deciding which option to adopt.
- There are numerous upstream points where drains discharge and surface water runs in to the River Wey. Not all have yet been identified. These are the property or responsibility of a large number of landowners and statutory authorities. Access to many would be very difficult.
 - Alton Town Council has no powers to deal with these discharge points so including them in the tender would be pointless.
 - It would be extremely difficult for a consultant, when tendering, to get to understand the full scope and limits of the work and to estimate their costs for working on them. This would deter most from tendering or result in very high fee proposals.
- The key skills and experience that we are seeking in this tender are all about lakes and rivers. Dealing with urban drainage and runoff needs a different skill set.

Cllr Don Hammond

29th January 2025

Subject: **King's Pond egg oiling**

Report to: Full Council, 4 February 2026

Report of: Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To consider a motion from Cllr Kellermann to suspend egg oiling at King's Pond pending policy review.

2. Background

- 2.1 Canada geese arrived at King's Pond in the 1980s. To try to keep its population from growing too rapidly, Alton Town Council has commissioned egg oiling at King's Pond since around 1999 and has carried this out annually in most years. ATC does not oil eggs at any other site. This entails completely covering eggs with mineral oil shortly after they have been laid and returning them to the nest. The treatment prevents the embryo from developing by preventing it from receiving oxygen. Leaving the egg *in situ* means that the parent continues to incubate and does not lay a new clutch of eggs.
- 2.2 ATC holds the requisite licence (GL41) from Natural England,¹ "to kill or take certain species of wild birds to preserve public health or public safety".² The licence includes terms and conditions for carrying out authorised activities, such as egg oiling, and the licence holder must comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.³ The allowable "public health and public safety purposes" include preventing slips and falls (as a result of goose waste on paths) and preventing the spread of disease to humans (as droppings carry pathogens that are dangerous if ingested or inhaled).

3. Main considerations

- 3.1 In accordance with Standing Order 9, Councillor Matthew Kellermann has requested that a motion be put to Full Council to suspend egg oiling at King's Pond until the council can review the practice. In support of his motion, he writes:
- 3.2 *"Alton residents have expressed concerns about ATC-sanctioned egg oiling. They have raised questions about the necessity of this action, allegedly insensitive*

¹ [Natural England](#) is an executive non-departmental public body of the UK Government, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-for-public-health-or-safety-gl41/gl41-general-licence-to-kill-or-take-certain-species-of-wild-birds-to-preserve-public-health-or-public-safety#overview>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

implementation (possibly causing undue suffering), competency of volunteers and even the legality of present methodology.

- 3.3 *“It is suggested that ATC should suspend, with immediate effect, the practice until the office staff has delivered a detailed report. This fact-finding process should involve gathering independent professional advice, studying comparative action undertaken by other councils and, not least, the current legal framework. The resulting document should address the merits and demerits of oiling at ATC sites, determination of best practice according to modern guidelines and how any suffering to species can be negated. When complete, this report should be brought to the elected body for debate and decision.”*
- 3.4 The Town Clerk is in contact with other councils that carry out egg oiling for information on their current practice. If the council were minded to review its policy and practice, it is suggested that independent professionals and local interested environmental groups and individuals be consulted on the council’s new policy.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 To be proposed by Councillor Kellermann and seconded by Councillor Quincey, the Council is recommended:

To suspend egg oiling until the Council has reviewed and approved a new policy on managing the Canada goose population at King’s Pond.