

SLIPPER BRIDGE



FISHERY MANGEMENT PLAN

2011/2016

INTRODUCTION

The plan aims and objectives

The primary aims of the Slipper Bridge angling club Fishery Management Plan is to establish a clear direction for the fishery, a range of fundamental principles for the long term sustainability of the fishery and a management framework to achieve these principles. The plan will also give members an opportunity to contribute to the management and work to achieve these principles

The plan will seek to prioritise the main factors impacting on the fishery and its environment and ways in which they can be improved. Progress made on aims and objectives will be communicated to the committee and the broader membership using appropriate methods and media

The main goal of the plan is

To improve and develop Slipper Bridge to healthy, well balanced, highly valued recreational fishery

Duration

The plan will become active on the 1st of January 2011 and will have a lifespan of 5 years. As it will be an action plan progress and amendment will be reviewed at each committee meeting or FMP subcommittee meeting and a new plan every 5 years

Although the initial plan will have a life span of 5 years the plan will continue beyond this initial period with successive years thereafter added to the plan on a rolling basis

Structure of the plan

The plan maps out a direction for the fishery identifying issues and challenges that must be addressed in order to achieve specific goals and meet the objective of the fishery

The direction for the future management of the fishery is supported by a suite of actions, defined by management responses, expectations, timetable and cost. The FMP will implement these actions in a prioritised manner and within the resources available.

The FMP requires a strong link to be established between the General Committee and the broader membership, in an effort to create healthy debate on the future of the Slipper Bridge Pond. With this in mind it is clear that the subcommittee must be made up of a balance mixture of experienced members of the General Committee with additional fresh ideas and contacts coming from those members wishing to offer their services for the benefit of the Club & the Slipper Bridge Pond.

As we communicate the content of the FMP to the broader Membership it is envisioned that the make - up of the FMP subcommittee may fluctuate considerably with the changing demands of the plan and the seasons. The execution of the FMP will at time be very labour intensive! With this in mind the make - up of the subcommittee shall be as follows;

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- Not more than 1/3 of the General Committee may sit on this or any other subcommittee.
 - The subcommittee shall be made up of a minimum of five people and a maximum of 7 elected/co-opted members, each having a single vote.
 - The designated subcommittee members are
 - Julie Ward, Martin Rowan, Thomas Holliday, Peter Blackburn, Tony Cross, Karl Cropper and Mark Airy.

The subcommittee has the power to invite associates to their meetings, these associates may offer guidance and take part in the general debate on the subject of the FMP but in their associate capacity they do not have a right to a vote. Unless the associate is a member of the Club and the subject of the FMP is raised during a General Committee Meeting to which all members are invited.

The frequency at which the Fishery Management subcommittee meets will be determined by the members and may vary due to the varying demands of the action plan.

The topic of the Fishery Action Plan will become a standard item on the agenda of the General committee meeting and formal progress reports will be submitted for inclusion within the club's Annual General Meeting

The FMP subcommittee requires a certain level of financial independence which will enable it to function and deliver against specific objectives contained within the FMP. Presently two of the Clubs bank signatories hold positions on the subcommittee; these signatories will be responsible for maintaining a full and accurate account of all financial transactions in conjunction with a third members of the subcommittee who will ensure a formal monthly report is issued to the Cardinal Treasure on the 25th day of each month for inclusion within the Clubs master accounts.

The following financial restrictions apply to those responsible for expenditure associated with the FMP subcommittee:

1. Number of cheques held by the FMP subcommittee will be limited to three unsigned cheques within a given calendar month; these cheques may be issued by the two signatories serving on the FMP subcommittee subject to the purchase on a single item not exceeding £300.00.
2. Any single item exceeding the value of £300.00 must be referred to the cardinal committee for approval and cheques issued must carry the signature of one member of the cardinal committee authorised to issue cheques on behalf of the club in addition to the signature of one of those authorised to issue cheques on behalf of the FMP subcommittee.
3. In addition to having three unsigned cheques at their disposal a cash balance of £200.00 will be maintained and managed by the subcommittee, the cash balance may be replenish via the issue of one or more of the above cheques made payable as cash or transfer of cash from the cardinal committee/treasurer.
4. The total expenditure in any one calendar month by the FMP subcommittee should not exceed £1,000.00 without referral and approval by the cardinal committee.
5. The Cardinal Treasurer reserves the right to adjust these financial controls in-line with the financial health of the Slipper Bridge Angling Club

The current situation site evaluation February 2012

Slipper bridge is 2 acre mixed fishery with a 400 strong membership. The pond consists of 39 fishing pegs four of which are designed for disabled anglers. The pegs are currently undergoing a five year refurbishment plan. Pegs 2 to 25 have all been completely replaced using black composite wood. Peg 39 is in a poor condition and needs to be replaced as soon as possible, and currently underwater. Peg 24 is also underwater. The disabled pegs lack anti slip flooring and hand/grab rails or any means of locking wheelchairs in place.

The pond is surrounded by trees, Willow, Hawthorne and ash some of which are in the water body. When we consider the age of the pond and the annual leaf fall the accumulation of silt dead and decaying matter on the pond floor could be extensive.

To the west of the pond digging work has been completed to the holding pond yet the walls from the pond to the spawning area has collapsed and needs to be repaired . The trees surrounding this area have been well cut back, making the area a lot lighter. There area behind pegs 26/27/28/29 has been well cleared and has been planted up with meadow grass and a series of conifer trees. The land next to the holding pond remains unplanted. The spawning area adjacent to the holding pond has also been reopened up to the main pond at both ends, and the trees well cut back to allow the light to reach the already established plants in there. Growth of plants within this area has been prolific. Walking further down the west side of the pond some of the conifers that line the pond perimeter have failed and need to be replanted to maintain a wind break for the future.

There is still an abundance of reeds along the perimeter of the pond and evidence of lily's planted in bays 13 and 15 these came through nicely last year so hopefully they shall return and flourish in 2013. Manure cradles have been placed in pegs 25 in bays 15 and 13 which are currently lying nicely in the water but will need to be refilled.

The Stock levels at the pond have remained the same throughout 2012 with the failure to source a supply of good sized perch.

The two aerators are now supplied by a permanent electricity supply installed in September 2011 which saw a marked improvement in oxygen levels for 2012. The aerators were not currently in use.

The southern end of the pond still has the overflow system. This is currently in use due to elevated water levels with the heavy rainfall. The pond is situated within a floodplain and the structure of the basin substrate would indicate that the pond is dependent on the water table. The overflow system will remain open whilst there is a distinct rise in water level.

On the east side of the pond there has been a marked clearing of trees opening up the pegs

The northerly end of the pond has a planted garden and seating area supplies of bird food which encourages a diversity of birdlife. There is however evidence of rat activity and traps set. Mink traps have been set at the disabled end of the pond yet they do not have any bait set. The gravelled car park has toilet facilities, and a bonfire area for use during the work parties which are regularly held. There are also spare supplies of rotted manure for the pond cradles and pond, although this seems to becoming mixed with soil and scalpings.

The bore hole is also situated in the car park and has a secure metal lid .The structure is covered in reflective boards to prevent any damage to vehicles .The bore hole was currently switched off

The mains electric meter board and housing is inside the main gate of the car park. The access road to the pond remains in a poor condition and needs to be resurfaced.

The surrounding area of the pond comprises of stable/grazing land to the west, road access and farm land to south, immediately east to the pond is farm land currently being worked although it appears that the crop has failed. North of the ponds car park is the B1230 highway. The whole site has no secure predator fencing although otters have been seen in Newport canal 2-3 miles away.

Limiting factors and management actions

21 separate factors have been identified and management recommendations for tackling each of them has been listed, and addressed management strategy for overcoming the problems, expectations, timescale, cost.

It is recognised that at many of the factors highlighted within the fisheries management plan are greater than the ability of the club to tackle single handed and work and advice be sought from a superficial source.

The main factors impacting on Slipper Bridge;

- Electric
- Stocking
- Plant fauna
- Invertebrates
- Manure
- Trees around pond
- Water quality
- Spawning area
- Pegs and disability pegs
- Ice cover
- Planted farm land
- Bio security and matches
- Supplement feeding
- Road
- Work parties
- Communication
- Training and safety
- Protection from predators
- Bore hole
- Machinery and equipment
- Toilet facilities

Electricity 2012

September 2011 saw the electricity finally installed with both lock ups having a live supply. The aerators have been placed on timers which when the water temperatures begin to rise and the oxygen levels begin to fall they will be programmed to switch on during the hours of 2.00am to 6.00am. The next phase for the electricity would be a supply to the holding pond for a circulation pump. This will be subject to improved finances 2012/2013.

Electricity 2013

The aerators were successfully used throughout 2012 and programmed on the timers as per schedule. Oxygen levels remained good throughout the warmer months. It has been deemed that due to the depth and size of the holding pond that a recirculating pump may not be needed so for 2013 there are no further plans for the electricity supply to be installed here.

Stocking 2012

2011 saw the purchase of large Perch a difficult task. Numerous contacts with suppliers had been made but there seems to be a distinct lack of good quality fish of this species. The quest to purchase some Perch will continue throughout 2012. The need for netting the pond therefore in 2012 is not a priority and will be postponed until 12 months after any Perch are introduced. Fish stock levels have been discussed on several occasions throughout 2011, and talk about removing some of the larger carp a topic of many conversations. A one acre pond on average will increase its biomass naturally by 300lb every year. This is accountable by increased growth of existing stock and new fry. Taking into consideration the current fish stocks, ecology of the pond and its ability to naturally sustain its stock. The number of anglers we have each year and introduction of their bait it has been decided that the carp will remain on site for the next 12 months. Fish population surveys will be monitored by angler catch records. The current financial state of the club does not reflect the purchase of any other stock other than Perch. After 12 months of observations and stronger finances then a decision in 2013 will be made for a further introduction of new stock

Stocking 2013

Perch still continue to be an elusive species to purchase despite having one promised delivery fail. The quest for some big Perch must continue. The perch size should be 10-12 inches. These perch will initially increase the biomass short term but if successful help to diminish these numbers of small roach that were very apparent at the netting done in 2011. This reduction will allow the larger roach,

carp bream, chub, perch, and tench to flourish feed and develop. The presence of large quantities of these small fish will be having a positive effect on reducing the oxygen levels and increasing ammonia and other parameters. Perch will also be the start of the rebalance of stock contributing to the 10% of required predators. The pond will not be netted until 12 months after the introduction of these perch. 2012 saw many discussions regarding the quantity of larger carp with an imbalance of fish species. The percentage of biomass in the pond is dominated by carp. All carp remained in the pond throughout 2012 but continue to be the dominant species. In 2011 it was decided that the pond should be netted each year to monitor fish stocks and enable us to evaluate our stocking levels. Therefore the purchase of our own nets could be a viable option for 2014. On completion and repair of the holding pond it has been calculated that we should stock this with 300 2-3 inch Chub. To be fed and grown on over a 12 month period then transferred over to the main pond. Fish population surveys should continue through anglers catch records and netting.

Plant fauna 2012

2011 saw the introduction of 40 good strong lily's. These were planted as per plan in all the designated areas. Whilst two thirds of them were successful and managed to take root many were subject to angler activity and were uprooted. It is a situation which unfortunately will always occur, and cannot be prevented other than angler awareness. March 2012 will see the planting of another batch of lilies to replace those lost last year. Their progress assessed over 2012, along with last year's batch. Planting will also commence in the spawning area.

Time scale 5 year

Cost-----

Planting fauna 2013

Planting in the spawning area was very successful over 2012. Increased light levels with the thinning out of trees proved a positive move. Planting for 2013 in this area should be minimal. lily's will be replanted again in the designated areas in February/March 2013. The west side of the pond lacks distinct marginal growth and spawning habitat. Planting in this area should be concentrated on.

Invertebrates 2012

Invertebrate sampling will continue over 2012. Samples will also be taken from marginal weed growth and the spawning area

Timescale 5 years

Cost..... incorporated in the plant action

Invertebrates 2013

Invertebrate sampling will continue over 2013. Samples will also be taken from marginal weed growth and the spawning area. These can be done during work parties with an identification logging to monitor progress.

Timescale 5 years

Cost..... incorporated in the plant action

Manure 2012

A good source of rotted manure was located and three ton of manure secured in the car park close to the bonfire area. All the cradles were made from the trees that were cut down on site and located in all the pre planned areas. The manure was spread in heaps behind the griers for the water to gently erode away. The plan for 2012 is to re fill the cradles where necessary and place more behind the griers in the margins. There should be sufficient left to complete this but further supplies must be obtained for 2013. Currently the manure is stored in close proximity to scalping's and will need to be separated.

Manure 2013

Cradles in the cut out areas bay at peg 15 and 13 between pegs 25 and 24 and between pegs 39 and 38. Bank side between 4 and 5, 7 and 8, 9 and 10 were all filled with manure. The remainder of the manure to be added to the pond in April 2013 dependant on temperatures 10 degrees or over. The holding pond should also be dosed with manure prior to stock going in. Replacement manure stocks should be sourced during June 2013. This should be stored in a separate area in the car park.

Trees around pond 2012

In association with the planting of the lily's trees were cut back to provide these areas with more sunlight there was marked increase of lily growth in the areas with less tree growth. The siltex was introduced in March yet the second dose was postponed due to high ammonia levels, Siltex naturally raises the Ph of water, a high Ph reading in water makes Ammonia more toxic, so during periods of high ammonia readings a low Ph reading is more desirable. March 2012 will see the second application introduced. A further supply of siltex will be purchased during 2012 and applied in September 2012.

Timescale 5 years

Cost

Trees around pond 2013

There has been an active reduction in trees in the holding and spawning pond areas which has seen vast improvements and prolific plan growth. Trees have been thinned around the pond . Siltex was added to the pond in March 2012 with a second application in September postponed until March 2013.Two applications should see a big reduction in silt. It will be needed to assess the levels of silt and any improvements before adding another application. February should see some action to carry this out. This is prior to the first working party in March and leaving enough lead time to reorder stock for the March treatment should it be needed. If the siltex has worked sufficiently then the next application will be done in March 2014

Timescale 5 years

Water quality 2012

Water quality was monitored throughout 2011 and regular graphs created these are available for viewing periodically in the notice boards. Ammonia was a real issue on two occasions possibly due to low water levels, warm temperatures, anglers bait and stock densities. Oxygen was also a major concern during the warmer months. The newly installed electricity supply will vastly improve the quality of water in the pond and oxygen levels will be elated during the summer as the aerators will be programmed to switch on 2am until 6am every morning. The bore hole another major project was also completed. This will also help with water parameters Ammonia. The pond can be kept to its maximum levels throughout the year. The bore hole will be switched on at the end of March until maximum levels are reached, it will then be used periodically when levels drop. Water quality and its testing regime will continue throughout the 5 year plan and a trend established

Water quality 2013

Water parameters were tested each week throughout 2012 and a marked improvement was noticed with oxygen content .This was due to the efficient use of aerators and increased water levels due to bore hole use, heavy rains experienced throughout 2012. Ammonia however did spike at the beginning of June possibly due to warmer water temperatures, increased angler / bait, and biomass of pond. There has been a marker placed in the car park end of the pond which will indicate a drop of 6 inches to the water level. The bore hole will be switched on should the levels drop below this marker during any point of the year. Water quality and its testing regime will continue throughout the 5 year plan and a trend established.

Timescale 5 years

Cost.....

Spawning/plant/holding pond area 2012

The spawning area had trees cut back to provide more natural sunlight for the newly planted area. It was also opened up to the main pond to allow the fish access during spawning time. In March 2012 there will be lily's planted and other marginal plants introduced this will continue throughout 2012.

The holding pond has been completed but will only be planted up with marginal plants. The trees have been thinned out and the area is secured with a fence A net will protect the pond. A wooden walkway will be placed around three sides of the pond for access. The spoil from the pond was placed behind pegs 26,27,28 and 29 this has been flattened and grass seed will be planted in April 2012. Conifers will be planted to the rear of this area for protection from the wind.

Spawning/plant/ holding pond area 2013

Planting in the spawning area continued throughout 2012, and good plant growth established due to increased sunlight. No further planting is required during 2013. The holding pond has been planted up with some marginal plants but will require more during 2013/2014. The pond has not been netted due to no stock introduced. There is still a need for a wooden walkway around the holding pond which must be addressed during 2013 pending the clubs finances. The larger area behind pegs 28 And 29 were planted up with meadow grass seed but would benefit from another application in April 2013. The smaller area behind peg 26 will remain untouched until the holding pond work has been completed. The holding pond wall has collapsed and should be repaired as soon as possible during 2013. This will then be ready to take stock of the small Chub.

Pegs /disability pegs 2012.

Peg 17 still needs to be replaced this will be done in 2012.

A five year plan has been developed for the refurbishment of all the pegs. This will be funded primarily from grant applications currently submitted. The club will however need to add additional funds. There will be 8 double pegs size 2mx1.5m. These shall be located in pegs 26,27,28,29,34,35,36,37. The remaining 27 pegs shall be single size 1.5x1.5m. The disabled pegs will be made into two large platforms. The existing steel platforms will remain in place will stay in place with the installation of an additional steel platform for the double pegs. The wooden tops will be removed and replaced with recycled plastic plants. A full copy of the 5 year plan is available on request. Work on this is subject to funding and club finances.

Pegs/Disability pegs 2013

The Five year peg refurbishment plan saw 24 pegs being replaced during 2012. The club funded the full cost of these pegs and currently have used all the materials previously ordered. Peg 39 is in poor

condition and therefore enough materials should be ordered to replace all the single pegs still outstanding in the plan. The double pegs designated for peg numbers 27,28,29,34,35,36, and the disabled pegs will be replaced subject to grant funding and club funds in 2014. The 5 year Peg refurbishment plan is available on request.

Ice cover 2012.

The ice was successfully broken in January 2012. It was decided that a quicker response during colder weather ice and snow will prevent a re-occurrence of 2011. The ice was broken this year before it got too thick. Life jackets will still be worn during ice breaking sessions.

Timescale

Cost

Ice cover 2013

as per 2012

Planted farm land 2012

April 2011 saw the Winter wheat fail and the farm land has currently been seeded with grass this will not cause concern but future crops will be monitored continually. January 2012 and the land is being worked again to date it is not known what is planted in there. Monitoring of crop spraying will continue.

Planted farm land 2013

Currently planted up with wheat but appears to be a failed crop monitoring of crop spraying will continue through 2013.

Matches and bio security 2012

Club matches will be held twice a week Thursday daytime during the winter months and a Friday evening during the summer months. Non Member Clubs can book matches on the Slipper Bridge pond during the months of October - April, one match/month is permitted.

As a point of bio security all matches will use the clubs keep nets and ensure landing nets are dry before use.

Matches and bio security 2013

Club matches will be held twice a week Thursday daytime during the winter months and a Friday evening during the summer months. Non Member Clubs can book matches on the Slipper Bridge pond during the months of October - April, one match/month is permitted.

As a point of bio security all matches will use the clubs keep nets and ensure landing nets are dry before use.

Supplemented feeding and immune pellets 2012

2011 saw some of the pellets introduced with some controversy coming from the match anglers. As Ammonia levels raised during the periods of pellet feeding this was stopped. There are four remaining bags of immune pellets left these will be applied during 2012 at a rate of one bag over 1month commencing from April to May dependant on water temps reaching 10 degrees or over. There are no plans to continue with additional feed after this period

The results and effects will be measured from fish sampling looking for average fish health/weight, the water quality testing regime and the invertebrate sampling and match results. The person introducing the pellets should be considerate of the angler using the pond.

Supplemented feeding and immune pellets 2013

Feed pellets were introduced during 2012 with an immediate effect to those fishing the pond. The pellets will not be added during 2013. Due to the shelf life of the pellets be discarded no future plans to purchase any more although fish health will be monitored

Road 2012.

Excavation work for the electric supply has been completed so work can now begin on the resurfacing of the approach road. This will be done subject to finances in 2012. A cost for the project has already been investigated. This will be carried out one weekend in June or July. Due to health and safety issues the pond will have to be closed for the full weekend.

Timescale 5 years

Cost

Road 2013

The access road is still in need of repair and recommended this be done in 2013. A cost for the project has already been investigated. This will be carried out one weekend in June or July. Due to health and safety issues the pond will have to be closed for the full weekend.

Work parties 2012.

There will be 9 working parties each year, actions outlined in the FMP will be carried out on these days, and a record of attendance will be kept. The plan of action for each working party will be placed on the ponds notice board prior to the event. The committee has the right to call additional working parties as and when required to help the club implement urgent actions required for the FMP.

The use of machinery chainsaws and strimmers during these working parties must be carried out by approved/nominated people only and must always wear the appropriate PPE.

Timescale 5 years .

Cost

Work Parties 2013

As per 2012 to include risk assessments before starting any given task.

Communication 2012

Communication of the content of the Fishery Management Plan and subsequent progress statements will be a key component to the success of our aims. The FMP subcommittee own the plan on behalf of the Club & its members but as we take actions on the implementation of the plan many questions will arise, in answering a query, if in any doubt reference must be made to the approved FMP or referred back to the members of the FMP subcommittee.

Strong communication tie needs to be established between the FMP subcommittee and the General Committee; the Fishery Management Plant will require the approval of the General Committee and FMP progress report will become an item on the General Committee agenda.

The FMP subcommittee will have the power to freely make contact with the general membership using varied methods of communications e.g. Notice board, telephone, word of mouth or the

internet in an effort to recruit assistance and issue their own progress statements following any committee meeting.

Any additional working parties or site visits made with the sole intention of advancing or directing the FMP should be seen as a positive and proactive action and will not require the approval of the General Committee. However, in the interest of inclusion and awareness, were a working party is likely to be comprised of more than four members, greater effort must be made to contact those members of the committee with the ability to cascade the information to interested parties.

Timescale 5 years.

Cost

Communication 2013.

As per 2012

Training and health/ safety 2012

To successfully complete actions within the FMP the use of machinery and mechanical equipment needs to be used. Only experienced operatives must use such equipment using appropriate PPE. As the FMP progresses it will be recognised that training may be needed for new additional machinery /knowledge of maintenance. The FMP wherever possible will source and implement the appropriate training which may be on or off site.

Timescale 5 years.

Cost

Training and health/safety 2013.

As per 2012

Predator protection 2012.

2011 saw numerous sightings of a mink this has not yet been captured. In 2012 an attempt to seriously eradicate mink from the pond must be undertaken. Mink will eat small mammal's water vole, amphibian's frogs, and young birds as well as fish. Newport canal has also had sightings of otters. Otters can travel between 20 and 40 km per night a vigilant watch over the pond for any indications of mink and otter activity must be carried out throughout the 5 year plan. Otter fencing may be a future option for protection.

Timescale 5 years.

Cost.

Predator Protection2013

Observations should be made throughout 2013 for both mink and otters, and appropriate actions taken.

Bore hole 2012

The bore hole in the car park will be switched on at the end of March 2012 until the pond is at its maximum level. It will therefore be used as and when the levels begin to drop through the warmer months. The bore hole structure needs to be completed, to prevent damage from vehicles this will commence March 2012.

Timescale 5 years.

Cost

Bore hole 2013

Bore hole structure has been completed with a lockable lid and reflective boards. The bore hole will be switched on should the pond level fall 6 inches or more. A water marker has been placed at the car park end of the pond for this peg 31. Any key holder to the lock up may switch the bore hole on should we experience reduced water levels.

Machinery and equipment 2013

All machinery and equipment should be inspected and if needed serviced regularly. A maintenance programme should be prepared for this and records maintained. This should also apply for all new purchases of equipment.

Toilet facilities 2013

Currently a portable toilet situated in the car park is in use. This costs the club approximately £1,500 each year. On Inspection of this unit it would appear to be maintained to a poor standard and poor access for disabled anglers.2013 should see enquiries made for a possible eco-friendly toilet or a brick built unit. All legal requirements must be adhered to.

