

## Sywell News No 2, November 2025

Hello everyone, winter has arrived.

To begin the regeneration of Long Meadow into a wildflower meadow, in September the Saturday group started clearing undergrowth and overhang along the fence.

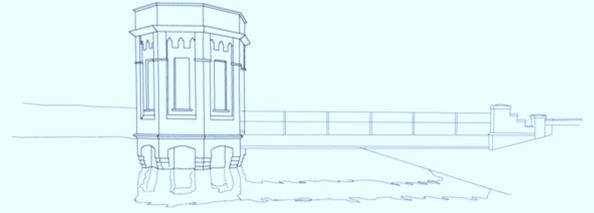


A Barclaycard group on September 11th worked in Trafalgar Wood, next to the water. Willow on the water's edge was coppiced with fascines made from some of the willow to be used as part of the waterside revetment project. We put stakes in the water's edge, and the bundles will help stop bank erosion. The contraption in the vice was built by Geoff and Mike to hold the willow while the bundles were tied up with rope. The remaining willow was put into habitat rows.



On a wet Wednesday, the volunteers were working behind the office in the area to be redeveloped as an orchard.

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Unfortunately, three conifers had died, so they were felled by Geoff.



Cleared area waiting for tree planting. Two impressive tree stumps.



We chipped most of the trees, added some of the smaller branches to a habitat row we had built previously, and some logs went into a crate to add to habitat piles at a later date.

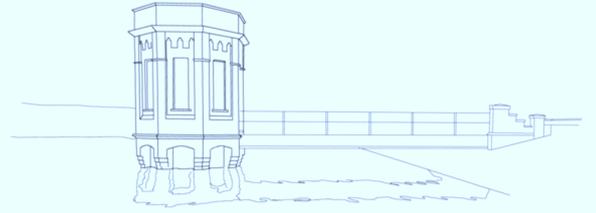


Unfortunately, the October volunteer Saturday had to be cancelled as Storm Amy was passing through.



However, a few days later the October Barclaycard volunteers were in the wetland area of Hayes Wood coppicing willow regrowth, chipping it and spreading the woodchip around a hedge in Hayes Wood meadow. We had help from Richard and Ant who work for the Country Parks woodland team.

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They came with their tractor and winch to help get the willow out of the wetland area.

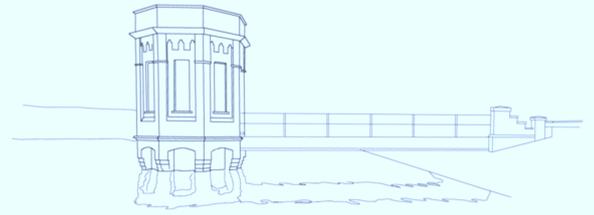


Meanwhile, Tony S was having fun attacking ancient horsetails, so Geoff could coppice the alder, and getting acquainted with some great looking fungi.



Tawny funnel cap

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Sulphur Tuft



Verdigris roundhead



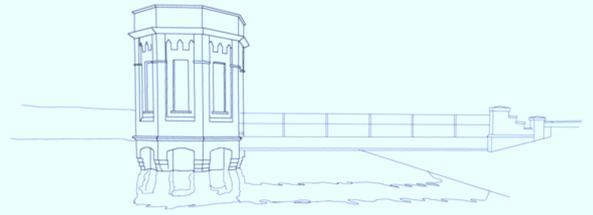
Sordid Blewitt

The November Saturday group forked the cut grass from Ecton Meadow around the young trees in the hedgerow corridor.

On Friday we cleared the alder and willow re-growth in front of the Water Rail hide in Hayes Wood, adding the material to the existing habitat row. Not quite finished yet.



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Now you can just see the reservoir!

The dam in November. Geoff and Richard very happily watching the remote controlled robo-cut reciprocating mower.



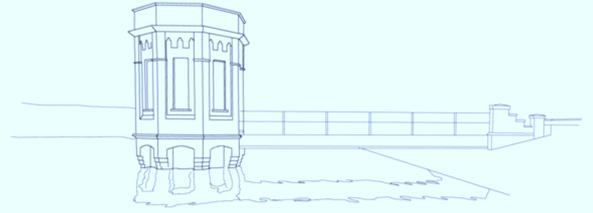
The bottom left photograph of the mower climbing up the dam Pat copied from Facebook.

The latest news from the engineering team.

Dave, Colin and Philip removed a 100kg valve, using a lifting jib attached to the Avant, so that additional piping could be put in place (see the blue taps below) to divert water to the butterfly garden and the lily pond.



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from me (Pat) and a few extra photographs as well.



The extra piping with the blue taps, on the right.



The lily pond.

The brickwork will be coated with an environmentally friendly pond liner paint to prevent leakage. These guys do a great job!

Thanks to Rachel and Pauline for the news and photographs from the work around the park. The monthly Saturday group news and photographs

We had a great start to autumn in October. There were loads of walnuts and superb quality conkers on the grass in the overflow carpark. Acorns were crunched underfoot and masses of apples lying on the ground, especially in Hayes wood, and trees were loaded with berries everywhere, a wild orchard.

A couple of items that might be of interest.

I copied an article about honey bees from the Guardian titled, 'The island that banned hives: can honeybees actually harm nature?' The experiment was to find out whether the bees are partially responsible for the decline of wild pollinators.

In Weston Favell library I came across the story of the world's first seed bank, 'The Forbidden Garden of Leningrad', by Simon Parkin, set up close to the Hermitage in the 1920s. Then in the summer of 1941 the city was surrounded by German troops and the 872 day siege began. Do you preserve the seeds at the cost of your life and others, or preserve them for the future? An amazing story.