

## Wildlife Ponds – Kings Worthy Community Primary School

This school has large grounds comprising both playgrounds, playing fields and wildlife habitats. Although it has over 280 children on role, the amount of funding it receives from central govt/LEA is not sufficient to cover the extensive nature of its grounds, to maintain and improve them.

Part of the grounds is formed by an historic Edwardian garden now containing native woodlands, ponds, and grassland as well as a limited amount of ornamental shrubbery. These are potentially a tremendous learning resource both for the school children during the day and the clubs (mainly the general After-School club but also the Guides ) that meet on site. There is also use of the grounds by the adjacent Learning Support unit – The Grove – where adults with learning disabilities attend for day support. They currently work in the grounds once a week on a therapeutic basis.

The wildlife ponds at the moment are neglected, overgrown and underused. By clearing the area and introducing some low-key paving adjacent, the ponds will not only be easier to manage but also easier for all to access.

The intention is to involve parents, children and the local conservation volunteers in clearing the overgrowth during the early Spring next year. We have a link with the village Conservation Volunteer group who visit the site two or three times per year to spend a day assisting with habitat creation and management. Parents and children join in with these workparties.

A contractor will be needed to lay the surfacing. It is intended that a self-binding gravel (hoggin) be used in order to keep the area as natural looking as possible while still creating a surface that is usable by all, even those in wheelchairs if necessary. This is the part of the project which will cost money and need assistance with funding. IF there are sufficient moneys available, the bird hide will be refurbished too so that the children can observe the wildlife that uses the ponds.



**Top: Showing the edge of one of the ponds.**

**Bottom: General view of the pond enclosure showing overgrowth.**



Kings Worthy Primary School

**Top: The neglected bird hide in need of repair**

**Bottom: General view of the pond enclosure (fenced for safety reasons on a school site) looking south**