

FURTHER COMMENTS – FISHLAKE MEADOWS

I have lived in Romsey Extra for 38 years and remember walking the "camping Grounds" with my young children long before it became a housing estate and a "road to nowhere".

I used to fish the pond in Fishlake meadow when the NRA, now the EA, used to manage the water levels using their pump and you could get access to it. Since the EA have ceased using the pump to manage water levels the whole area has remained flooded (and so have many Romsey residents).

I believe the best use of this area is to use it to manage water/flooding. Water should be pumped out in preparation for high rainfall increasing the area's capacity. The way the area for the last decade has been left flooded all year severely reduces its potential capacity to alleviate flooding when we do get a heavy shower.

Excess water could be "moved" into the R. Test in the drier periods which would help the Test especially if the muted extraction from R. Test to supplement the R. Itchens' flow ever happens. There's enough extraction going on already without all the extra housing that's planned.

However - If the powers that be insist on the area being a wildlife/recreational area and not be part of an integrated flood plain management system then I would suggest we should ensure the recreational side is "inclusive", providing walking, jogging, cycling, fishing, sailing, canoeing, nature watching, and of course this would assume dog walking and the problems that that brings. But there are fewer and fewer places for dog walkers to take their exercise as Councils are denying their access to Public managed land. This area would be informal cf. to say a Town Rec. where I agree dogs should be under full control of minders if not banned altogether.

I would envisage a wide all weather path encircling the water. Wide enough for a double push chair and cyclist to pass. Probably 8ft wide. Litter bins at all access points.

Information welcoming boards. Rest points/bench seats would soon no doubt be donated in memory of a loved one. A car park with a boat launch/ramp area or/and jetty. NO POWERED water craft. The Scouting orgs. and the like and schools could use this to offer canoeing/sailing/boating, naturalist studies, fishing.

As members of Romsey District Scouts we would like to suggest that some of the area could be used by water sports for organisations, such as Scouts, without affecting the habitat of the wildlife. Apparently, such an arrangement works well at Fleet Pond, which is of a similar area to the Meadows.