

UPC URCHFONT POND GREEN POLICY

1. POND GREEN

Pond Green was registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965 as a Village Green on 8th August 2008.

Urchfont Parish Council has assumed responsibility for the maintenance and administration of Pond Green for many years despite the fact that the Council cannot be registered as holding legal title to the land under Land Registry rules (applications made in 1995 and 2008).

Use of Pond Green for any event or function must have the prior approval of the Parish Council. Organisers will be responsible for ensuring that all potential risks are recognised and catered for, that all litter is removed from the site after the event and for the repair of any damage however caused.

Vehicles should not be parked on any grassed area designated as Pond Green.

2. THE POND

The Pond and its feathered residents are considered a fundamental part of Urchfont Village life attracting visitors and interest from near and far. Water levels will be monitored by the Parish Council and where necessary they will 'top up' from a nearby hydrant at Parish Council expense.

The pond has a fairly fragile clay lining; nobody is permitted to enter the pond without prior written approval of the Parish Council. Approval will be dependent on a clear demonstration that the intended work is necessary and an explanation of what steps will be taken to avoid damaging the lining.

Fishing is not permitted at any time.

The wall running along the rear of the pond is part of the Manor Farm Yard development and will be maintained by the management company.

3. DUCK HOUSE

The new brick built duck house(s), the boundary wall of the enclosure and the land on which it is built is currently owned and maintained by Redcliffe Homes, but it is the intention to transfer ownership to the Parish Council during 2015.

- Only authorised volunteers are allowed access to the duck house.
- The duck house is not to be used for any other purpose
- A locked external electricity supply will be administered and controlled by the Parish Council. Requests for connection are to be made to the Clerk to the Council well in advance of any event; charges based on usage may be levied for use of this supply.

4. DUCK FLOATS

The new floats are owned and will be maintained by the Parish Council. The floats are not to be used by anyone or for anything not connected with the ducks / geese.

5. DUCKS / GEESE / FISH

The ducks / geese / fish in, on and around Urchfont Village Pond and Green are considered to be wild and as such are not owned by the Parish Council or any other individual or organisation.

The ducks / geese are administered and cared for by local volunteers (Friends of the Pond) who feed and ensure that they are bedded down and out of harms way in the Duck House overnight. They are also responsible for seeking veterinary attention for any injured or sick bird.

Funding for feed, bedding and reasonable veterinary bills is gained from various local organisations including the Parish Council, Scarecrow Festival Committee, Parish Trust, voluntary contributions and fund raising events. It is down to individual organisations to determine their annual budget in this respect. The fund is administered by the Friends of the Pond treasurer.

- The pond is considered to be able to sustain no more than 12 ducks + 2 geese or 14 ducks with no geese, no more than this will be permissible.
- The public are not permitted to deposit surplus or unwanted ducks / geese / fish without the express approval of the Parish Council in consultation with Friends of the Pond.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The pond water is deep in places and notices are displayed around the pond to highlight this fact. Care must be taken at all times to ensure that children and animals in particular do not enter or fall into the pond.

Whilst considered that the risk is low, it is most important that anyone having contact with the water in the pond should take adequate personal hygiene against Leptospirosis (Weil's disease) and other water borne diseases. A H&S information sheet is available from the Clerk to the Council in this respect.

Extra care must be taken when the pond is frozen; no one should attempt to walk on or in any other way venture onto the frozen pond surface.

Pond Green is dissected by two busy roadways, both of which can be dangerous if due care and attention is not uppermost in the minds of all using the Green, especially in the case of children and animals who should be kept under strict control at all times.

Whilst care is taken to minimise the risk of accident or incident, the Parish Council cannot accept any responsibility or liability for any accident or incident which may occur on or within Pond Green. Nevertheless the Parish Council holds public liability insurance in the event that this is challenged.