

SRWT minutes for Centenary Riverside Reserve Advisory Group meeting:

16.07.15

On-site @ CRi: 6.00pm – 7.30pm

- **(1) Present & Apologies - Welcome & Introduction (Background Information & purpose of the group).**

Attendees: Robert Miller (SWT), Hannah Wittram(SWT), Paul Truin (Stoneham), Jez, Carl Robinson,

Apologies: Andrew Newton

- **(2) Capital Works & Land Management Update**

- x2 Weekly patrols by reserves team – we generally haven't found or had too many incidents reported to us over the last year.
 - A few incidents of fly tipping at the entrance bollard.
 - Occasional graffiti and vandalism but this seems to have reduced recently – although this may increase during the school holidays.
 - A homeless person has occasionally been camping on the reserve over the last couple of months. This has been reported to the police and he knows that he is not allowed to camp on the reserve – please notify us if you see any more of this activity.
 - In April/May 2015 a body was discovered near to entrance gate of the reserve.
- General maintenance from Land Management team consisting of:
 - Litter picking / fly tipping removal / flood debris monitoring & removal.
 - Graffiti removal.
 - Strimming & mowing of footpath edges and footpaths made of green mesh with grass growing through – completed on 4 occasions over the summer (May – October).
 - Spraying surfaced paths with herbicide (Roundup Biactive) to control weeds.
 - Maintaining condition of site infrastructure such as the benches, footpaths, fencing, boardwalk, steps, deckchairs, interpretation boards, gates, a-frame, steel henge etc. We do often get small amounts of vandalism and graffiti and do try to respond to them on a regular basis such as mending fencing rails.
- Since the last RAG meeting there has been **x23** Land Management Team work days held on the reserve carrying out a variety of tasks as outlined below. **x13** of these days were delivered as Community Work Days (pink) where members of the public are welcome to join our work party. The work days highlighted in blue have funded through the Rotherham Rivers project.

14th July 2014	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Invasive Species Control (5 days) & site maintenance. Screw planks onto boardwalk, usual grass cutting. Pillwort planting - 5 locations. Spraying footpaths to control weed growth. Remove reeds growing through the boardwalk.
----------------	---------------------	--

11th August 2014	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Invasive Species Control (5 days) & site maintenance.
1st September 2014	Centenary Riverside	Invasive Species Control (5 days).
8th September 2014	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths.
13th October 2014	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Meadow Management – Rake up the meadow arisings after the meadow cut and dispose of them in the compost pit (5 Days).
14th October 2014	Centenary Riverside	Meadow Management – Rake up the meadow arisings after the meadow cut and dispose of them in the compost pit (5 Days).
15th October 2014	Centenary Riverside	Meadow Management – Rake up the meadow arisings after the meadow cut and dispose of them in the compost pit (5 Days).
20th October 2014	Centenary Riverside	Meadow Management – Rake up the meadow arisings after the meadow cut and dispose of them in the compost pit (5 Days).
21st October 2014	Centenary Riverside	Meadow Management – Rake up the meadow arisings after the meadow cut and dispose of them in the compost pit (5 Days).
10th November 2014	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Reed bed management to maintain open water channels around the island (2 days).
8th December 2014	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Coppice Willow around lagoon & on Island (2 days).
12th January 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Reed bed management to maintain open water channels around the island (2 days).
9th February 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Coppice Willow around lagoon & on Island (2 days).
4th March 2015	Centenary Riverside	Willow/Alder removal to remove obstructions in the river flood channel through the centre of the site with the long term aim of getting less debris & silt deposited on site during and after flooding events (1 day).
9th March 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Coppice Buddleia on the bank alongside the railway boundary to stop it becoming over dominant (1 day). Plant 10 hawthorn whips over otter holt on Don Island.
13th April 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths.
11th May 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths. Clear algae growth from the pond and scrapes. Remove damaged interpretation board & bench legs. Spray Crassula in the pond. Repair 3m wide pathway near steel henge by removing vehicle ruts and re-compacting.

1 st June 2015	Centenary Riverside	Invasive species control – Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed (6 days).
4 th June 2015	Centenary Riverside	Invasive species control – Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed (6 days).
8 th June 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths. Cover up exposed pond liner and pump water into ponds and scrapes if required.
1 st July 2015	Centenary Riverside	Invasive species control – Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed (6 days).
13 th July 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths. Litter picking. Crassula control. Removal of old tree guards.
15 th July 2015	Centenary Riverside	Invasive species control – Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed (6 days).

- In addition we have also carried out **x7** Land Management Team work days on **Don Island** in partnership with the Canal & Rivers Trust. This work has been funded through the Rotherham Rivers project.

16 th July 2014	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (4 days).
21 st July 2014	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (4 days).
22 nd July 2014	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (4 days).
30 th July 2014	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (4 days).
29 th September 2014	Don Island	Otter holt & Kingfisher nest boxes Installation (2 days).
30 th September 2014	Don Island	Otter holt & Kingfisher nest boxes Installation (2 days).
15 th June 2015	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (3 days).

- Since the last RAG meeting we have completed x4 ecological surveys:
- Phase 1 habitat survey
 - Pillwort pond invertebrate survey
 - Great crested newt survey
 - Small mammal survey that was done as a public event.

(3) Events, Education, Community and Interpretation Update

We have been working with Stoneham Group to carry out a variety of conservation tasks including willow management, himalayan balsam removal and litter picking.

Monthly Community Work Days have been ongoing with volunteers getting involved in a variety of tasks. Since the last RAG meeting we have ran x13 CWD's that have been attended by a total of x34 members of the public. HSBC have also been out to help on the reserve.

X7 members of the public attended a small mammal survey session.

We ran a session for 60 students from the University of Sheffield who were comparing various different flood alleviation schemes.

(4) Management Plan (April 2015 – March 2020)

- The new management plan for Centenary Riverside nature reserve has been completed and will cover the next 5 years. We have a detailed work programme that we will work towards delivering but it is important to highlight that lots of the work is aspirational and is dependent on securing external funding to make things happen on the ground. The draft plan was sent out for consultation to key contacts that have an interest in the site. Thank you to everyone who made comments on the draft, we have taken them on board and tried to incorporate them in to the work programme where possible. The plan has been adopted and we have already started to deliver the work programme and are in the process of trying to identify funding opportunities to enable us to deliver some of the larger pieces of work included in the work programme.
- Please note that the work programme is not set in stone for the next 5 years. It is a dynamic working document that has the flexibility to be changed as and when required for the wellbeing of the reserve.
- The new management plan (including the work programme & maps) will be available on our website shortly.

(5) Future work programme (July 2015 – March 2016) – Associated funding

- Centenary Riverside nature reserve is financed through an endowment invested by RMBC. SRWT are provided with the interest made on the invested funds and this provides us with around £15 - 20k per year which helps to cover all of the maintenance costs associated with general site management.
- Centenary Riverside and the adjacent Don Island (and nearby Blackburn Meadows) have been included in a project called Rotherham Rivers. Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust in partnership with the Environment Agency &

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) have been successful in securing approximately £250,000 funding from WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Limited) to deliver a variety of habitat management works across 12 sites along the River Rother & River Don. It is a 3 year project that started in October 2013 and finishes in September 2016. Works across the x3 local sites include willow coppicing, invasive species management, meadow management and reedbed management.

- Additionally we have secured a further £27,000 from Mondegreen (via Landfill Communities Fund scheme) which will provide funding to carry out a de-siltation project in the September – November 2015. The funding is also covering costs for Himalayan Balsam control and some meadow improvements through wildflower seeding / plug planting. Please note that the site might need to be closed for a few weeks whilst contractors de-silt the lagoon, but we will endeavour to notify site users well in advance of the works.
- Over the next 9 months we will continue to work towards delivering the Centenary Riverside work programme as outlined in the new management plan (please note that some dates are subject to change):

29 th July 2015	Centenary Riverside	Invasive species control (HB & JK) & spray Crassula in the pond (6 days).
3 rd August 2015	Centenary Riverside	Invasive species control (HB & JK) & spray Crassula in the pond (6 days).
10 th August 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths. Litter picking. Crassula control. Removal of old tree guards.
14 th September 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Maintenance Day – mowing and strimming footpaths. Litter picking. Crassula control. Removal of old tree guards.
12 th October 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Removal of vegetation from island and maintain free from scrub on an annual basis (x1 day).
9 th November 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Permanent removal of willow in course of flood water. See fig. 13 for location (2 days).
14 th December 2015	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Permanent removal of willow in course of flood water. See fig. 13 for location (2 days).
11 th January 2016	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Rotational coppicing of willow. See fig. 13 for sections (2 days).
12 th January 2016	Centenary Riverside	Removal of vegetation from island and maintain free from scrub on an annual basis (2 days).
8 th February 2016	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Rotational cutting of reedbed. See fig. 15 for sections (2 days).
9 th February 2016	Centenary Riverside	Rotational cutting of reedbed. See fig. 15 for sections (2 days).
7 th March 2016	Centenary Riverside	Removal of vegetation from island and maintain free from scrub on an annual basis (2 days).

14th March 2016	Centenary Riverside	CWD do not move. Task TBC. Removal of non-native buddleia and non-native broadleaved trees from dry woodland area (1 day).
-----------------	---------------------	--

- We are also scheduled to carry out a Butterfly & Moth survey/monitoring in 2015/16.
- The following works are taking place at Don Island (please note that some dates are subject to change):

27th July 2015	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (3 days)
5th August 2015	Don Island	Japanese Knotweed Control (3 days)

(6) AOB

- RM is looking into the possibility of creating some Sand Martin nesting holes in the large rocks on the Island to encourage Sand Martins to nest on site.
- Whilst on site we spotted several weasels / a kestrel and a variety of insects including a large amount of Common Red Soldier Beetles which was nice to see.

(7) Date and time of next meeting:

- We are currently proposing Thursday 7th July 2016, meeting at the reserve entrance at 6pm – 7.30pm. Please note that this is subject to change and we will advertise the confirmed date closer to the time via email and posters on site.