

A Vision for the Wards by 2027

The Wards is a valued local resource, with wetland and woodland habitats. It is home to a variety of plant and animal life, which use the range of wetter and drier ground.

People are able to use easily accessible paths, seating and other facilities at the site. Visitors are aware of its special value for wildlife and have the opportunity to see and observe wildlife at the site.

The site is also used for education, with people having opportunities to learn about the site and the wildlife it contains.

Actions to achieve the vision

Short term

The Pond is on one of the higher parts of the site and water has been channelled towards the centre of the site. To refill the pond, we propose to install a sluice dam and reinstate the connecting ditch.

Groundwater levels need to be monitored using a network of hand-dug wells.

Medium term

A new pond could be created in the central / eastern section of the site. Over time, this can replace the existing pond in the south-western corner. The edges of the new pond can be planted up with a range of wetland plant species to help increase biodiversity.

More diverse habitat could be created in the lowest areas of the site by creating 'scrapes'. They should be no more than 20cm deep and have very gently sloping edges. New native plant species can be introduced to these scrapes.

Storage of carbon in the soil can be managed by blocking the main drainage ditches to help retain water on the site. This is a small contribution towards climate change action.

Tree planting will not take place as it will dry out the soils, but screening of the railway using low shrubs could help to improve the shelter of the site.

Public Access can be improved by repairing the path surfaces to make them more accessible, along with a new picnic bench. The site is currently well served by the existing paths so there are no plans to increase the network of paths.

The Visitor Experience could be improved by installing new interpretation about the features, wildlife and how the site is managed. Information boards could be replaced by new summary information with QR codes to allow visitors to find out more.

Long term

A board walk and pond dipping platform can be installed from the eastern path towards the pond, including a wildlife hide / screen to allow views across the open area.

Actions to achieve The Wards Wildlife Site Vision by 2027

