

DONINGTON & ALBRIGHTON LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

It has been with great pleasure we have noted how well used our Nature Reserve has been during these lockdown restrictions, and to be told how much it is appreciated, although the locked gate at the end of Jubilee Walk (the concrete path down the side of Donington Pool) has been a frustration.

We are planning to open that gate, the entrance to the Conservation Area, over the week end of 4/5th July and 1/2nd August, weather conditions permitting. We will advertise this as usual with A boards placed strategically around the Reserve on the days concerned. Please remember it is a conservation area and keep dogs on leads.

Our usual organised Volunteer Days are still on hold but we have managed the odd bit of maintenance here and there. The Himalayan Balsam has been attacked with gusto in the Nature Reserve before it sets seed and loads of docks have had their flower heads lopped of before they too set seed. The problem with both these plants is they just take over and crowd out other less thuggy plants. In the case of the Balsam we are especially keen to eradicate it from the Conservation Area as much as possible because of its ability to damage the structure of water banks and reduce the capacity of water channels in flood defences to carry water. So far these channels have been doing a fantastic job at avoiding flooding.

Neither plant is all bad however. The flowers of the Balsam provide a welcome and irresistible late summer food for bees, and dock leaves – surely I can't be the only one to have used these in an emergency situation, be it to reduce the pain of a nettle sting or to wipe away any problems.

Despite the much increased footfall in the Meadow the littering situation hasn't increased correspondingly for which we are very grateful. Sadly the same is not true of the area around Donington Pool and the nature of the litter points firmly to the fishermen. The discarded cans, food wrappers, bottles, drug paraphernalia could have been left by anyone, but fishing line, broken rods, a folding chair and tins of pork luncheon meat and sweet corn (both used for bait) are specific to those who fish. I hesitate to call them fishermen.

The other problem surrounding the Pool is the parking of cars alongside it. Free parking is available in the carpark of Donington Church which is just a little further along Rectory Road on the RHS just past the lich gate of the church. You're going to be sitting down for ages whilst you fish, you might as well get a bit of exercise.

We are considering many options including the formation of some sort of angling club. There are many responsible anglers who use the Pool and we will take advice from them and the Councils involved before we make a decision.

Let's hope we'll have good news all the way in the next article.