

Report to Ninevah Trust September 2023

In February 2021 the Ninevah Trust granted Raynes Park High School Charitable Trust £2000. Our bid was for more than that (£3443) as we also bid to set up a vegetable garden, but we were very grateful indeed for the award. In fact we did obtain funding from School Food Matters to set up the vegetable garden which adjoins the wild life garden. This was mentioned this in the report I sent in March 2022.

As the Trustee responsible for the bid I had hoped to report sooner than now on our progress in spending the grant. But we met with a snag which we should really have expected. This is of course in addition to the delay because of Covid, when we did not go to the school site for some time.

As we said in the bid we intended to replace the pond with a fibre glass pond shape as the liner which had been in the pond had deteriorated.

Following the grant award and the unforeseen hiatus because of the Covid lock down we purchased a fibre glass pond for £1156 in May 2022. We also purchased sand to bed it in. We could only do the work in the school holidays. It was very hot work but with several trustees and help from families we bedded in the pond in August 2022. However there was a hosepipe ban so we were unable to fill it.

Perhaps because of the inability to fill the pond and that we had not punctured the liner below sufficiently we found by Christmas that the pond had risen up out of the hole, as water had got underneath.

So we had to raise the pond shape and bring it out again, puncture the liner below and allow the sand to dry out until we were able to level the pond hole again. Unfortunately it was a very wet Spring.

But in June this year we were able to put the pond in again, weight it with pebbles and fill it up. This seems to have done the trick and the pond has stayed down in the hole. We have bought topsoil to cover the area, which we have done in part. We have bought more and will be sowing some wild flower seeds.

The trustees have done all of the work with some help from pupils (including grand children) in clearing the site. One trustees has taking up the decking which is not needed and was unsafe. He has used the wood to make more raised beds for the vegetable garden.

We have about £650 of the grant remaining which we will spend on more native shrubs, a bench and perhaps bee hotels and hedgehog houses. We have seen plenty of evidence of wild life, especially in the adjoining vegetable patch were foxes regularly dig up our vegetables!

I will send some photos of our first attempt and our second successful attempt to fit the pond.

I would like to thank the Ninevah Trust again for the grant which has made huge difference to us.

Margaret Tulloch