

## **Aldborough Village Pond**

Aldborough is a village of 600 souls seven miles from the North Norfolk coast. It is principally clustered around a Green of 6 acres and sits on the Weavers way which runs from Cromer to Great Yarmouth. It is at the midpoint of the section from Cromer to Blickling Hall. It is designated a conservation area.

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century a village pond might seem inconsistent with today's way of life, but a village Green and its pond would have been at the very centre of village life.

A project was put forward by The Aldborough Wildlife Group to re-introduce the village pond in the area where there had been a pond, or ponds, in the past. Looking through old maps, ponds could be seen dating back to at least 1830. Photographs and drawings showed that farmers used them for animal drinking water and washing down carts.

In the 1960's a decision was made to fill in the pond which had become neglected and full of rubbish.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2011 Ann Murat and Christine Carlson as representatives of The Wildlife Group attended the Parish Council meeting to put forward plans for creating a natural village pond. The meeting was well advertised and had a good attendance. The vote in favour of re-introducing the pond was overwhelming.

A plan was drawn up by Bob Eke of a kidney shaped pond roughly 32 metres by 15metres. A feasibility hole 2.5ft deep was dug and the water level was monitored daily and remained at 8 ins. It would not be necessary to line it as there are natural springs and water run-off from the roads.

Ed Stocker the Environmental Officer of the Norfolk County Council carried out a site visit to check progress. He was optimistic that a full grant could be secured. Three estimates had to be produced and of those Alan Witham of a well known local farming family was chosen. He had already made a number of ponds in the area.

Worked started on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 8.43am and in snow!

By midday there was already water in the pond and it had been visited by a Pied Wagtail and some blackbirds. The pond was finished the next day.

By the 24<sup>th</sup> March the plants were collected; all endemic of the area of Norfolk, and a number of volunteers had gathered by the pond to plant them out. All were interested to see that there were already frog spawn, newts, water boatman, water beetles amongst other pond life.

To complete the aesthetics Robert Wright from the village made and installed two benches.

The pond was officially “opened” on the 5<sup>th</sup> June by Martin Elliot the Chairman of Aldborough Parish Council. It coincided with the day of the picnic party on The Green to celebrate the Jubilee, so was well attended.

People, particularly those weary walkers on the Weavers Way, use the benches to sit and enjoy watching the dragonflies and damselflies flitting around, also the swallows swooping to feed on the insects. There have also been visiting mallards a hopeful heron and to everyone’s delight a crested newt which we believe to have deposited an egg.

Visitors remark on the delight of seeing a natural pond on a beautiful green and how it enhances village life. ~~It was said of the old pond that it attracted many geese described as being aggressive to children if they came too close.~~ Children enjoy seeing the frogs, newts, and general pond life and our pond provides a learning environment, teaching them to appreciate and respect the nature around them.

What’s more our Pond is now on the Ordinance Survey Maps!

All of this would not have been possible without the donations, the help from the Council, the Garden Club and everyone else who gave their time and advice so willingly. We thank them all.



①



Digging feasibility  
hole



area of pond  
on the green

②



3



Digging started  
6th Feb 2012 in  
snow



water beginning  
to fill pond  
next day

4



5



ANN PURAT  
BOB EKE  
CHRISTINE CAUSON  
ED STOCKER  
COLIN DUNSTER

Ed Stocker  
Inspecting pond.  
agreed on grant



5 Volunteers  
planting 500  
plants.

6



7



The Pond  
Sept 2012



The Pond  
Sept 2012

8