



# **Gatley Carrs Conservation Group Notes from the Ordinary Quarterly Meeting held at The Horse & Farrier, Gatley on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023**



## **1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME (Peter Owen)**

Welcome once again as another quarter has flown by. Since the last meeting, following the confirmation that the disputed area of land is the responsibility of Manchester City Council, I have met up with representatives from the Lancashire Wildlife Trust to discuss what they could advise and help with on our site. I hope to be able to report more at the next meeting once I get their feedback. Also, in the next few weeks, we are expecting a copy of the Stockport Council Management Plan for Gatley Carrs from which we should be able to review and plan our group's activities better.

The reports from the various committee members are shown below. Let's crack on through the formal part of our meeting, as required by our constitution and then all have a chat about ideas for encouraging further involvement and any other issues.

## **2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

**Attendees:** Angela Bent, Emma Burrows, Andy Day, Michelle Inwood, David Jefferies, Stan Johnson, Lesley Larkin, Phil McKeigue, Chris Neild, Peter Owen, Stuart Priestley

**Apologies:** Margaret Brennan, Fiona Campbell, Janet Evans, Jo Green, Liz Latimer, Keith Marsden, Chris Mullin, Alan Musgrave

### 3. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

Approved

### 4. MATTERS ARISING

No matters were raised.

### 5. TREASURERS REPORT (Michelle Inwood)

- Old balance as at **13 Jun 2023** of **£6329.30**
- Current balance as at **30 Sep 2023** of **£6978.36** (an increase of **£649.06**)

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Membership subscriptions	172.50		
Membership subscriptions (Paypal)	0.00		
Haynes)	291.00		
Event - Teddy Bears Picnic	10.00		
Event - South Lincs Bat Walk	33.16		
Event - Gatley Festival Stall	142.40		
<b>Total</b>	<b>649.06</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>

#### **FUND RAISING: GCCG relies on donations and membership**

As we have no other sources of income, we are very grateful to the numerous people who have made donations or subscribed as members during the year as they remain vital to our survival and the work we do on the Carrs. Thank you for your support. If you would like to support the group financially, shown below are different ways that you can:

1. Online automatic payment, regular or one-off, the account details are:
  - Gatley Carrs Conservation Group
  - Sort code: 01-01-75
  - Account no: 19082894
2. PayPal, please click on the PayPal button on the GCCG website: <https://www.gatleycarrs.org.uk/membership/become-a-member> - NB: Paypal charge for every transaction. 52p for a £7.50 membership, 45p for a £5.00 one.
3. Cash
4. Cheque

### 6. SECRETARYS/MEMBERSHIP REPORT (Lesley Larkin)

The good news is that our confirmed membership has increased by 3 since the last quarterly meeting and now stands at 128 (97 Family and 31 Individual Memberships). In addition, I'm following up on 5 contacts from the Gatley Festival so all fingers crossed, there could be potential

for a few more. The less good news is that 24 of these 128 memberships are overdue on their subscriptions and about a third of these previously paid cash to Alan without providing any contact details. As such, we may lose their support if I'm not able to contact them about renewal. We're also coming up to the 1-year anniversary of accepting membership subscriptions via Paypal. As these don't automatically renew like Standing Orders do, I will be contacting the holders of these individually.

## **7. BIRD REPORT - MAY TO AUGUST 2023 (Chris Neild)**

When I go to Gatley Carrs to do my bird walks, rather than writing down my observations, I use the voice recorder on my phone such that all the information is stored there from May to August ready for me to use when I write this report. Unfortunately, on the 26<sup>th</sup> September my phone just crashed. Apparently, a bug had been detected and I needed to do a factory reset and re-install all my apps. Alarmingly, when I looked at the voice recorder app, all the recordings had been deleted and, as such, this is a resume from memory of the birds that I have seen from May to the end of August:

- Chiffchaff - 5+. I can confirm they bred as I saw juveniles.
- Blackcap - 6+. Again, I can confirm they bred as I saw juveniles.



**Blackcap**

- Willow Warbler - 1
- Coal Tit



**Coal Tit**

- Goldcrest
- The more common birds Great, Blue and Long Tail Tit were all seen with young.
- Chaffinch, Greenfinch, all bred, Goldfinch too. For the first year since I have been doing these reports, I have not seen a Bullfinch at all. (However, Peter Owen reported that he had seen a female bullfinch earlier this year.)
- Collared Dove, Wood Pigeon, House Sparrow, Dunnock, Robin, Wren, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Magpie, they all bred well.
- Stock Dove, Black Headed Gull, Swift, Nuthatch, GS Woodpecker, Carrion Crow, Buzzard and Sparrowhawk.



**Sparrowhawk**



On the pond, I saw a maximum of 10 Canada Geese (just 2 broods of 4 and 6) and 12 Mallards but I did not see any duckling at all on each of my visits. Perhaps I was just unlucky as other members may have seen some. I also saw 3 pairs of Moorhen and 6 juveniles as well as the Domestic Duck and Grey Heron.

I intend to do a detailed report on the state of the birds as I'm feeling it's not in a good place with numbers being down.

## **8. NATURE, WILDLIFE AND WILDFLOWER MEADOW REPORT (Chris Mullin)**

No report this time due to extended leave.

## **9. SITE MAINTENANCE REPORT (Andy Day, Jim Arkwright)**

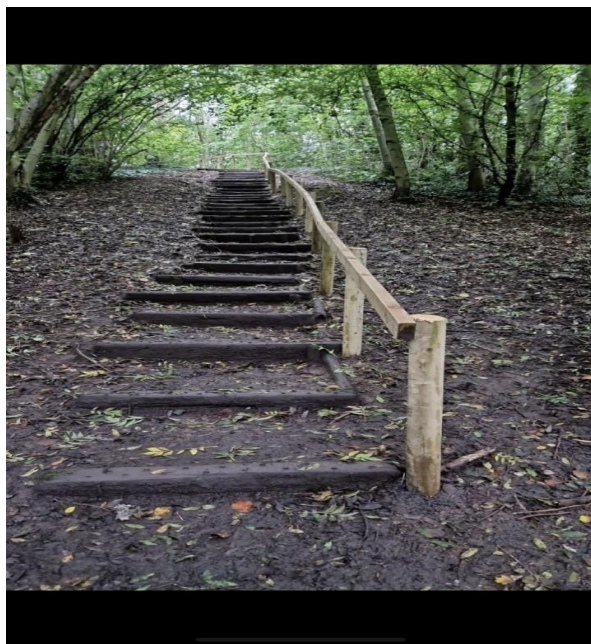
Unfortunately, bad weather and a full-time job have got in the way this last quarter but still a good number of maintenance jobs have been done. In particular, strimming to keep the bins/signs and benches clear, repairing of broken bins and bashing of lots of balsam. The No Fishing sign has disappeared from the pond but we think this is probably due to a fallen tree and there are lots of holes appearing in the field from an unknown cause, perhaps dogs or badgers?

Stockport Council have done a good job in repairing the eroded pond bank by replacing missing stones and making good the top surface.



They have also dealt very promptly with the various fallen trees that we have reported. Getting the pathways cut and general field cutting has taken quite a lot of chasing but it's good to say it has been done. It appears that visits are becoming less frequent as they battle with funding cuts.

Manchester Council, since accepting responsibility for part of our site, have continued to respond to requests for action and, following a report of a lady falling down the “39 steps”, they installed a handrail almost immediately.



Also, following the random tree cutting that we saw earlier in the year, Manchester Council have posted leaflets to local houses warning against such actions.

**VOLUNTEERING:** Once again, we thank all our volunteers for their help and hope we can carry on the good work for the future of this lovely area. We use a **WhatsApp** group to share information, advising what tasks need doing and when such that if anyone is available and wants to help, they can respond. If you would like to be added to this group, please let **Peter Owen** know via **07799 888049**.

## **10. SOCIAL MEDIA (AND EVENTS) REPORT (Emma Burrows)**

Many thanks to those that manned our stall at the Gatley Festival in July. Once again it was a success with some income generated especially from the ever-popular Splat the Rat game.



Going forward, we're still looking for someone who can help us with our Instagram offering so if you know anyone that's Instagram aware that would like to help, please let **Emma Burrows** know via **07583 808340**.

Finally, thinking ahead to Christmas, thoughts are turning to what events we could perhaps hold on the field. In previous years the Christmas Tree Decorating event was popular but if we're to do this again, additional help will be needed from members to help us setup and manage on the day. If you feel you could help in any way or you'd like more information, please contact **Emma Burrows** on **07583 808340**.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (All)**

- a. Grant Funding:** Unfortunately, our application to the Greater Manchester Green Space Fund to help us enhance the community engagement in managing and using the Gatley Carrs Local Nature Reserve was not successful. The feedback we have been given is that the pots of grant money are getting smaller so fewer are being awarded. Particularly against us was our IMD score. IMD is the government Index of Multiple Deprivation and we scored 7 because we're considered to be in an affluent area whereas areas with an IMD score of 4 and below were more successful in being granted the funding. We also demonstrated good community involvement which counted against us. Peter Owen objected to this as bizarrely, it implies we should do less to get more money. Our application was thought to be very thorough and suitable perhaps to access other funding sources



that are more about wildlife and not so concentrated on improving mental health. To submit further applications though, we would benefit from having someone focussed solely on this, either with or without experience in grant applications. If you, or anyone you know, can help us, please let **Peter Owen** know on **07799 888049**.

- b. Noticeboards:** Due to the Green Space funding not being successful, the replacement or refurbishment of all notice boards together is on hold. However, due to vandalism and serious wear and tear, the main noticeboard in the car park and the large sign on the far side of the field urgently need replacing. Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed to replace these signs from the group's own funds.
- c. Network Rail Work:** Network Rail have confirmed they will start their site survey work in October to determine the issues with the main drainage system on the Carrs that has led to the stagnant water at the side of the railway track eroding the rail track bed. This survey work will involve high pressure water tests through the Carrs' water system and requires a large water bowser being brought to site across metal tracking which will be put down to protect the ground surface. Based on the findings of this survey, the major job of repairing the eroding railway embankment with new stone ballast etc will be planned. We will need to react to this plan with any objections we have about disturbance of our site.



- d. Car Park Repair:** The repair of the car park surface was offered as a sweetener by Network Rail to soften the blow of the



proposed site intrusions by their heavy vehicles. However, as the Network Rail work has not yet progressed beyond the survey, we have had no further updates as yet.

- e. Disabled/Buggy Path:** We have had no further updates from the Environment Agency and have nothing to report. However, we can see that this may be helped by taking the stones from the car park (see AOB item d) to form a hardcore base for the path such that costs only for the rest of the work would be needed. Watch this space as the Network Rail work progresses.
- f. Winter Bird Feeding:** The daily bird feeding will commence on 30<sup>th</sup> October and finish on 31<sup>st</sup> March. Many thanks to those 7 members who are each covering a day of the week and equally thanks to those on the reserve list.
- g. Green Flag Award:** This is early warning that additional site upkeep and maintenance activities will be needed to meet the Green Flag inspection standards which we will be applying for later this year.

**Many thanks for your continued support. We'd appreciate it if you could take any and every opportunity to spread the word about the Gatley Carrs Conservation Group.**

Peter, Chairman  
[peter.owen8@virginmedia.com](mailto:peter.owen8@virginmedia.com) Tel: 07799 888049

**NEXT MEETING:** Proposed date of the next Quarterly Ordinary General Meeting is Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024. To be confirmed nearer the time.