

Ravine Update September 24

Since early Jan 24: MPUT volunteers, local councillors, SCC Managers, Water and Ecology experts, University Landscape architect volunteers and local residents have met regularly to put together a plan for improving the water course through the park. The aim is to improve Ecology, Health and Safety as well as provide Natural Flood Management improvements in Meersbrook Park. This has been an exciting project with people collaborating and finding new ways of working.

We organised a tree thinning day and then a volunteer day to use thinned trees to make a dead hedge around a section of the ravine in March. 20 volunteers helped and we are already seeing an improvement of the biodiversity at this section. More work of this nature with volunteers is planned over the next 6 months.

We held our first ever Bioblitz in July to capture data for archives and to help fund the project by engaging the public and bringing 10 experts into the park including 4 ecologists. We held a Bat walk, 2 bird walks, a Moth watch, a botany morning, and invertebrate afternoon using iNaturalist to capture the information.

Now in September we have secured £3000 from the Community Levy Improvement fund. We can now fund the Digger work 10/11 of September at the very top of the ravine. Please see the plan detailing this work. This section is a health and safety issue but through this work we can improved species and natural flood management by widening the brook, creating wet areas and a dam. We will install some stone and bridges over the next few months.

We also plan to dig out the existing wet area near the grate at the bottom of the ravine to help slow the flow and free up the grate which overflows in the winter months.

The funds also will pay for the River Stewardship Company to come and clear the Holly and Laurel that has overgrown within the lower part of the ravine and darkening it and depleted it of species. We hope to have that happening in November this year.

Any questions please contact me on Lizziemartinez2@yahoo.co.uk

We do try to keep the website updated but as volunteers this is sometimes a struggle.

www.meersbrookpark.co.uk

Please come to our online meeting on 19.9.24 at 7.30pm. Thanks

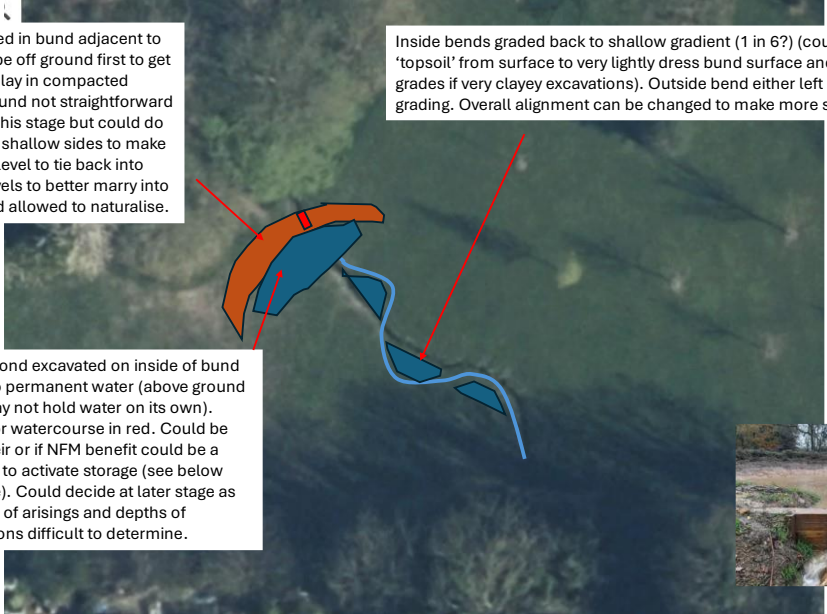
Below is some pictural representation of the project;

1. Top of ravine – Digger work Sept 2024
2. Landscape architect sketches of proposed work – Bridges will likely be sleeper style

Arisings deposited in bund adjacent to woodland (scrape off ground first to get better bond and lay in compacted layers. Area of bund not straightforward to determine at this stage but could do with flat top and shallow sides to make more solid. Top level to tie back into existing grass levels to better marry into landscape. Bund allowed to naturalise.

Inside bends graded back to shallow gradient (1 in 6?) (could save some 'topsoil' from surface to very lightly dress bund surface and shallow grades if very clayey excavations). Outside bend either left as is or slight grading. Overall alignment can be changed to make more sinuous.

Online pond excavated on inside of bund to add to permanent water (above ground bund may not hold water on its own). Outlet for watercourse in red. Could be just a weir or if NFM benefit could be a slot weir to activate storage (see below principle). Could decide at later stage as volumes of arisings and depths of excavations difficult to determine.



REVEALING THE RAVINE



Water Meadow Retention basin. An area designed for surplus water runoff to mitigate local flooding



Exposed Ravine through woodland setting



Community Engagement in Dead Hedge Construction



Beginning of the exposed ravine, a celtic style spring



Bridge Crossing the Ravine to enable both public and maintenance access



