

RISK ASSESSMENT

Activity being Risk Assessed:	Wildlife Ponds Risk Assessment - The guiding principle is that open water is maintained 'so far as reasonably practicable' in a safe condition. Risk controls should be a balance between allowing visitors to enjoy the open water environment, whilst maintaining defensible safety process and procedures.
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	
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Drowning	Members of the public, particularly young children. Trustees, contractors and service providers (paid or volunteer) in or near the water.	<p>The ponds have shallow slopes and are no deeper than 1.5m at its deepest point which makes the ponds too shallow for swimming.</p> <p>There are 3 (1 for each pond) luminous orange hi-viz lifebuoys mounted on posts at 1.2m height plus a 25m throw rope.</p> <p>There are warning signs indicating the depth of the water.</p> <p>There are "No swimming" signs.</p> <p>There are no benches, seats or play equipment in the field where the ponds are located.</p> <p>There is web-site information on water safety accessible via a blog called "Pond Safety on the Howe" at howetrust.org.uk/news-events/</p> <p>There are site plans at all entrances to the land showing the location of the ponds.</p> <p>The path runs separately from the ponds the closest distance being 8.5m</p> <p>It is anticipated the toddlers would not be able to access the area unsupervised due to fencing and gates around the field.</p>	Allow plants to grow to form a natural barrier to discourage visitors from getting too close to the ponds while leaving one clear area on the south side of ponds 1 and 2 and the north side of pond 3 to allow easy egress if someone does fall in.	The Howe Trustees	Ongoing All signs and lifebuoys erected by 25/1/25
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		<p>Dogs are not permitted in the ponds which is intended to discourage visitors from going too close.</p> <p>Feeding wildfowl is not permitted which discourages visitors from going too close to the pond edge.</p> <p>There is permanent signage at both entrances to the area and directly next to 2 of the 3 ponds stating</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wildlife Ponds – Beware! 2. Supervise Children Closely 3. Cautions for Parents & Carers – All children visiting the Howe must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Please supervise children closely at all times. The Howe land features several natural and recently created wildlife ponds, all of which present a risk of drowning. 4. Please keep to the paths. 			
Slips/trips	As above	<p>The above measures to prevent people from entering the ponds.</p> <p>The slopes approaching the pond are shallow.</p> <p>The slopes into the pond are also shallow.</p>			
Flooding	As above plus neighbouring	As the ponds are placed in a natural area of 1.76 hectares and has another field of 2.28 hectares downhill from the ponds, flooding is not			

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	properties.	expected to be an issue.			
Contaminated water – pollution, pathogens and parasites	As above	<p>All the above measures prevent people entering the ponds.</p> <p>Signs telling visitors to keep their dogs on leads and out of the water.</p> <p>The ponds are situated in an area that has least risk of pollutants. The field in which the pond is located has never been intensively farmed. Exploratory surveys and test pits carried out before creating the pond showed safe levels of organic and inorganic compounds.</p> <p>“Pathogens get into groundwater due to contamination by human or animal faeces or urine. Outbreaks of disease caused by groundwater-borne micro-organisms are rare in the UK...Soils have the capacity to reduce or eliminate pathogens that move into the ground with infiltrating water, for example through predation by naturally occurring soil fauna.” (http://www.groundwateruk.org/Groundwater-issues-pathogens.aspx)</p> <p>Waterborne parasites, also caused by contamination by human or animal faeces, can be prevented from causing illness by not drinking the pond water and through basic hygiene practices e.g. hand washing.</p>			

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		There are "No swimming" signs to discourage visitors from exposing themselves to the risk of swallowing the water.			
Cold water shock and hypothermia	As above	Water temperature is typical of a medium sized pond area. All the above measures to prevent people entering the pond water. Cold water shock subsides after 60-90 seconds at which point the individual can safely move themselves out of the water. Hypothermia takes more than 30 minutes to develop which allows plenty of time for the person to leave the water and seek help before becoming critical.			
Additional information		There are no currents. The clarity of water is generally very good A natural clay soil base retains the water			
History of accidents		No accidents have occurred since the creation off the pond.			

Agreed by Chair of the Trust:	Maggie Fyffe	Job Title	Howe Trust Chair	Date:	25/1/25
Agreed by:	How Trustees	Job Title	Howe Trustee	Date:	25/1/25