

Saltley Pools Clearance & Clean Up Day

Quadron's Nicola Little, Horticultural Development Manager for our Birmingham contracts, and the Biodiversity Champions were delighted to support Birmingham City Council's Biodiversity Officer, Dr. Stefan Bodnar, and the Nechells local community in helping to clean up around Saltley Pools.

Located next to Quadron's Depot in Mount Street – Nechells, Birmingham - Saltley Pools consists of an ornately gated green corridor that leads down to the Grand Union Canal and two man made small pools. The entire site has considerable value in terms of encouraging biodiversity within the urban environment and providing a unique open space for the local community to enjoy.



Saltley Pools Gated Entrance

Sadly, Saltley Pools has, over the years, become neglected and so overgrown that many local residents are actually unaware of the site's existence. Instead of being a haven for wildlife it appears to have become a fly tippers' paradise – particularly of old used tyres! After an initial assessment visit earlier in the year with Quadron, Dr. Stefan Bodnar and the Local Neighbourhood Manager, Dave Mills, it was decided that the site would be a perfect project for Quadron's Biodiversity Champions and the local community to restore the area to a natural habitat in order to promote biodiversity.



Old Tyre Dump at the bottom of the green corridor



Overgrown and neglected Pool



On the last Saturday in March Quadron's Biodiversity Champions and Dr Stefan Bodnar were joined by Dave Mills and a group of volunteers from the local community in a clearance and clean up day around the pools. Luckily the rain held off for the afternoon as overgrown shrubs and sapling trees were pruned back from the edges of the pools on the Grand Union Canal side to open up the site and allow more light to penetrate the area. The shrubs and trees towards the back of the pools were retained in order to provide nesting and cover habitats for birds and insects. The brash and prunings were cleared towards the back of the pools by the fence line. It is hoped that these piles of branches will provide a habitat for smaller mammals such as hedgehogs and voles.



Pruning back overgrown shrubs



Cutting back shrubs at the pool side

The local children took great delight in joining in the fun helping to clear the pools of excess pond weed using long rakes and picking up large amounts of litter around the area.



Local children helping to clear the pools



Dr Stefan Bodnar, the Biodiversity Champions and Local Volunteers

Whilst this was being done Dave Mills set about the unenviable task of clearing away the pile of old tyres that had accumulated over the years. No mean feat considering they had to be barrowed up a steep incline towards the gate where they were to be cleared away by the council the following Monday. Once the work on the pools had been completed, it was all hands on deck to help with the removal of the tyres



Barrowing up the tyres to the gate



Finally.... the pile of old tyres moved, ready for collection!

It is quite amazing how much of a difference the clearance and clean up operation has made to Saltley Pools and that all of it was achieved within the short space of just one afternoon.



The site will remain a long term project for Quadron's Biodiversity Champions with the intention being to improve it further over the next few years with indigenous plantings and to create a wild flower meadow at the bottom of the green corridor. Ecological surveys will be undertaken over time to ascertain the variety of wildlife the site supports. It is also hoped that the area will be used in future by local schools as an outdoor learning resource as well as local members of the public as a peaceful place to stop and take time out from their busy schedules.



Tranquillity returns to the pools after the clean up effort