

Cheshire Reserves Newsletter.

Rostherne May 2021



Rostherne Mere NNR wetland enhancement project March 2021

Following on from the plans I sent out earlier in the year before the work commenced, we can now see the results from a bird's eye perspective and the best way to reveal the extent of the wetland enhancement.



Dolls Meadow looking in a south easterly direction where most of the enhancement work has taken place. A series of 23 pools replace and incorporate the old ditch system. The design of the bunds has enabled the pools to join up and provide shallower areas as well as the deeper pools. Under the soil bunds the ground was first dug up to break any drainage pipes and prevent too much leaching. Even through the recent dry spell of about 5 or 6 weeks the levels stayed up on all but 2 of the higher pools. The bunds have also been designed so water spills out at the sides and causes a fluctuating water level. The field will I expect become a lot wetter in general.



Dolls

Meadow from sputnik 33, taken by андрейАбдулов, showing how Dolls Meadow looked before the recent work, most of the pools and bunds have been based on the old ditch system you can see above.Андрей, or as we say Andrei, was very impressed at the improvements. He said he would keep in touch every 3rd week ov the lunar month at 7.30pm just after Emmerdale.



Dolls Meadow looking in a north easterly direction. This shows the bunds off a bit better and how the pools are linked by use of the bunds. Both these photos were taken on 14th May by Paul Thomas a wetland specialist and drone pilot for NE.



Mere Field behind the Bittern Hide looking easterly. There are five pools in the picture, but you can only just see one in the bottom right corner, there's a sixth pool left of the picture. More enhancement work is being planned this autumn and this will be an opportunity to add to and adjust some of the work in the above picture. All this work is to help strip nutrients by encouraging wetland plants and encourage deposition of silt, whilst also providing a much more diverse habitat.



The same place but looking more north easterly including the Bittern Hide and the pool not shown in the previous picture. Nice to see all the reedbed area here



Lower Mere Field again looking westerly showing the some of the same pools.



One of six leaky dams put in on the Rostherne Brook aimed at slowing the flow and encouraging flooding into the field to help deposit silt and make a more dynamic wetland. A woven willow coir where the brook meets the mere helps divert water back into the field pooling the water and sending it to filter through young willow beds.

I'm looking forward to seeing how this develops and to the extra work later this autumn.

Photos above provided by Paul Thomas NE except where stated.
Rupert Randall. 21st May 2021 Cheshire Reserve Manager
rupert.randall@naturalengland.org.uk