

Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

	THE POND			
		Yes	No	Suggestions
Q1	<p>Grass Cutting and General Maintenance The grassed areas in front and to the left and right-hand sides of the pond is cut approximately 15 times a year.</p> <p>Do you think this is adequate, (Yes/No) and if no, what would you like to see happen instead?</p>	56	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is perfectly adequate water levels • The PC website includes a 2007 report on the pond giving 3 options for its ongoing management. It is apparent that the PC has yet to decide which option should be adopted and, hence, how it should be managed. The Parish Council should define the objectives which the common management committee should seek to achieve. • Mowing of grassed areas 15 times a year is more than adequate • need to maintain wild flowers and cover • it always looks great to me • seems to be more than adequate • It could be cut less often, say once a month between April and October • Yes, I am content with this • I Yes it always looks tidy in front of the pond, 15 times seems about right • The question assumes that it should be cut at all -- before going any further, you need to make the case why it should. As it happens, my own view is that some limited cutting is desirable - probably equivalent to what's done for the village verges. Let's say 2/3 times a year. 15 times is certainly excessive. Was it really done this frequently this year? • But the question is already biased in favour of grass cutting. What if you think the cutting too adequate? Ten should be more than enough, giving daises, clovers, etc., time to flower and feed insects. • I think grass-cutting around the pond 15 times per year is a bit excessive, fine if you live in the suburbs, but we don't, I think it would be nice if on the left and right sides of the

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				<p>pond, you allow some cow parsley and some English bluebells to grow in the spring and then it could be cut after they have died off. Most garden and wildlife experts ask you not to mow grass in the spring and to allow the seeds to scatter and encourage habitat and food for insects. Our surrounding villages, St Giles, Seer Green, Jordans etc. scatter wildflower seeds each year, this would be nice to see around the pond and village and they are not invasive.</p>
Q2	<p>Water Levels</p> <p>It is our current understanding that the pond is fed by underground springs, like those that run out along the paths down to the fields from the Red Lion and the bend on New Road. As a result, the pond fills up when the water table is high, and water drains away when the water table falls in periods of drought or very low rainfall.</p> <p>Do you accept that the Pond's water level will fluctuate with the seasons, (Yes/No) and if no, what would you like to see happen instead, bearing in mind any water added during a period of drought will quickly drain away?</p>	54	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a solution to keep the pond healthier all the time? It doesn't seem to have recovered after the drought as yet • Should not be topped up • I do but I am doubtful whether it is the case that the pond is still fed by underground springs. It may have been in the past but the depth of silt throughout the pond now prevents much ingress from these sources. I say this from my experience as the owner of the other half of the pond for the last 50 years. In my view the pond is now almost entirely dependent on rain water for its levels • It should not be topped up with mains water. • I would like to see the water level topped up. This year in particular, letting it remain dry for so long has possibly done irreparable damage, to what is a key feature of our village. • I agree that artificially topping up the levels may look nice but the downsides are not worth it • I accept the Pond's water levels will fluctuate with the seasons. No water should be added in times of drought; let nature take its course. • No point in fighting nature. Serves as warning • I think it unlikely given its location/height that the pond is sustained by spring water.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In my view adding water from other sources is, although with good intentions, unlikely to yield positive results when we have long periods of dry weather in the summer.• we accept that the water level will fluctuate• Its nature, the ducks are happy enough. They'd fly elsewhere if they weren't• Firstly we believe that your assumptions on the pond construction are incorrect. As far as we are aware the pond has a clay liner and in previous years was topped up using a main water supply from, we believe, Lands Farm or in the area. With this knowledge it was VERY concerning recently to see that a tracker vehicle had been into the pond, which potentially puts the liner at risk. The majority of the normal water provision is the run off from Village Road via a pipe opposite "The Old Stores". We think that the pond should be left to fill naturally which then means during periods of drought it goes dry.• While water levels will fluctuate with seasons, 2022 saw an unusual drop in the level suggesting that the clay lining is ruptured and causing excessive leakage. Can this be remedied?• I had heard that there is/was an aquifer producing groundwater which being unconfined rises and falls with the water table. However it had been suggested that the aquifer was blocked, possibly intentionally sometime back 50yrs + to prevent flooding into the road. Is it possible to establish if the water levels are actually being fed by an aquifer or is this a result of rainfall and evaporation during hot /drought weather? It is interesting that the aquifer along the footpath past the Red Lion rarely produces any type of water-flow compared to 8-10yrs ago when it was just about a permanent stream throughout the year. Indicating therefore that the natural water table has dropped considerably. How
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				<p>much of this is climate change or industrial water extraction could be a question for debate. I wonder about water levels in other aquifer fed ponds in private gardens in the village. Aquifer or rainfall the fluctuations seem to be greater and I wonder what can be done if anything to prevent a mere puddle throughout the summer, although I disagree with 'topping' up the water from other sources, an environmentally negative practice, which I understand was for the benefit of the ducks. Ducks will fly to the many other lakes / ponds / rivers close by if they are not happy surely. Don't allow the willows to get any bigger, they take up lots of water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes, my understanding of how the pond is fed aligns with the description above• I, do understand that the water level will fluctuate with the seasons and with global warming it is forecast that we will be getting even dryer summers which for me personally is extremely disturbing.• I think we should leave it to nature and only intervene if there has been a major incident such as contaminants getting into it.• It's nature! From reading the magazine it sounds like adding water from the mains would encourage algal blooms so would think this should be avoided if possible. Hopefully extreme droughts like 2022 won't happen too often• after the recent heavy rainfall it might be sensible to unblock the drain pipe taking surface water off the road• Yes , it is a natural pond and for the health of the pond• Yes, we should allow it to fluctuate with the seasons and not waste our precious treated water in topping it up, which probably affects the biodiversity anyway• Natural fluctuation should be allowed to occur. There is no case for artificial top-ups. Ducks can fly and find other
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				<p>sources of water if necessary. We do not see the dry bed littered with corpses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely understand that the water levels on the pond will fluctuate with the seasons and according to weather conditions. Chlorinated/drinking water should not be added at the expense of Coleshill Parish Council's budget where I feel the money could be better spent elsewhere. • I think that the pond is fed mainly by direct rainfall and by run off from road gullies and water is lost by evaporation and seepage. The average rainfall here is about 700mm and free surface evaporation is about 600mm so that without the road run off there might have just be a damp depression at times in every year. My answer to Q2 is therefore YES unless water is added at times of drought. I understand that any mains water might not be suitable as it would contain chemicals not desirable for wildlife, I encountered a similar problem 30 years ago at Harefield in a hot summer so I went to see the situation now. The pond there is full but I cannot find out how. I shall continue to try • Yes I think the pond should have water added when levels are very low such as this summer so that ducks and other wild life will survive. I think the edges of the pond should be dredged so that water spreads to the edge. Until this week (Nov 17th) when heavy rainfall filled it, I thought it looked very unattractive with the layer of silt all-round the edge. I am sure the pond used to be deeper round the edges than it is now. • The pond level will fluctuate seasonally, as it has always done. In 1976 for instance it dried up completely. The ducks always return. They are not an endangered species. I find it fascinating to watch the levels change and feel the seasonal difference • Hopefully now all those awful intrusive plants have been removed the pond will become more of a reservoir to rely on if we have another hot dry summer. If we find the pond does dry
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				<p>out then we should put water in it, at least enough to keep the wildlife safe. Hopefully we will be lucky enough to have toads and frogs moving back in. I have lived in Coleshill for 47yrs and up to about 10 to 15 years ago we had hundreds and hundreds of toads, frogs and newts descending on to the pond every march, now there are none. As I have said before when tested the pond water is devoid of any living thing. I hope more fish will be put back into the pond once it is sorted out, which means some oxygenating and other weed back into the pond. But don't let Graham Thorne be put in charge of this or we will be back to square one. I and many people in the village want to see our old pond back and not the stagnant sludge we had in its place this summer. By the way even in the 76 drought there was still enough water in the open pond to sustain the fish.</p>
Q3	<p>Plants</p> <p>Several plants (including Leucojums, purple loosestrife, water mint, irises, reed mace, cuckoo flowers, hemp agrimony, cuckoo flower plants) are growing on the edges of the pond. These create a habitat for frogs and butterflies and help maintain water quality. The pond is also a key central feature of the village, and the plants need to be managed regularly. The pond has recently had a large quantity of silt and plants removed leaving patches to the left- and right-hand side. The current idea is for plants to be removed on the edges next to the road but remain to the left and right-hand sides.</p> <p>Are you in favour of this approach, whereby the pond is visible and open from the front,</p>	46	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I imagine someone more qualified than me know the answer to this. I was happy for the plants to be there from a visual perspective, but if they need to be removed for the good of the pond that's obviously important. I am in favour of any plants. • The Planting remove from the front and keep the sides under Control not to be too tall as when they rot down it's not good For the water. Would be great if we could get frogs back in the pond when I first moved in to the village we had to have a frog crossing, The fact we have none at the moment tells you the pond is in poor Health, • Could I mention here that the trees on small islands in the centre of the pond belong to me? The willows were pollarded within the last ten years and I would not like to see any further cutting back for some time. The young silver birch must remain • Definitely not in favour of the harsh removal of plants that occurred in recent weeks. It is a naturally fed pond and should have plants surrounding. Removal of some but the

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	<p>and plants are controlled either side, (Yes/No) and if no, what would you like to see happen instead?</p>			<p>devastation that has been done recently is totally unacceptable. Monitor the work more closely and please don't let this happen again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some plant cover along the bank by the road gives ducks and moorhens somewhere to hide In recent times a digger was used to mistakenly remove Irises, native plants were then introduced which became invasive, and latterly another digger was used to remove those plantings. The plants in the pond had successfully managed themselves for hundreds of years and that's why they are so diverse. They should be left to manage themselves. • The patches of plants to the right and left should be left and controlled. I wouldn't object to one or two small clumps along the front; these would need to be controlled. Ideally the 2 weeping willows should be removed; this might help the pond to retain water in drier years. • as long as children can view pond but not reduce wildlife cover too much • I feel that the recent work to clear the plants around the front of the pond was a mistake. The plants that were removed would have been a home for many and varied wildlife. • I think the pond looked much nicer with the plants across the front of the pond facing the road. Some thinning out was needed but the wholesale removal was an act of vandalism. • This seems a sensible balance between wildlife and presentation. The idea to remove large amounts of plantation and silt was executed very well. Those involved in the management of this project a few weeks ago should be applauded as it was executed efficiently and effectively. • would hope some small plants will reappear along the roadside to keep a natural look
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The drain inlet needs surrounding with plants and also small plants could be allowed along the front.• Ideally it would be good to have a compromise since you cannot ensure that the plants currently growing at the front would thrive at other locations, however seeing the pond form the road encourages its use. So careful planting of plants would be favoured by ourselves• I am completely opposed to the various planting which has taken place over the past several years. Apart from the fact that it does obscure views of the pond, I believe that the far more important point is that these plants encroached dramatically into the pond and must, therefore, have been using up water which is not helpful in times of drought. I would dispute the fact that it creates a habitat for frogs. In years past, we had many frogs in the pond but since this planting happened there have been virtually none. I think there should be no plants at the front of the pond and very minimal ones on the sides. I note that in the Village Newsletter Graham Thorne states that he has been consulting with the Environment Agency re our pond. If this is the same Environment Agency that allows developers to build on flood plains and does not clear out ditches and silt in streams causing unusual flooding, and allows the water companies to discharge billions of raw sewage into our rivers and seas, I believe we should ignore any advice from them. It certainly has not helped the Village Pond. The Village Pond has deteriorated dramatically since it has been messed about with and I don't accept that it is all due to climate change.• I would prefer to retain native plants around most of the pond but keep the main beach area near the seats. I think reducing plants particularly near the road edge may have a negative impact, like trees, plants remove pollution and
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				<p>there is often an oily film on the water, removing plants from this area may be detrimental in managing localised pollutants. Also amphibians did seem to proliferate at these points during breeding season but they may well be seeking the plants further around to tether/conceal their eggs away from the ducks, who do enjoy feasting on them.</p> <p>Unfortunately frog population during breeding season has dropped away dramatically in the last few years, there is a dearth of females around, but I've noticed a fair number of males alone and gallantly croaking their love songs to the moon! They need to be encouraged-the females that is! Dismayingly there are occasionally still slices of white bread floating flabbily on the pond's surface and edges, no good for duck or pond! Increasing the 'beach area' may encourage well-meaning but sadly ill-informed folk to persist in this practice along with the rats that go with it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am content with the pond being visible as described and that suitable plants are allowed to grow in a controlled and managed manner on the sides and do not obscure the pond or create a drain on the water supply to the pond. • I am in favour of the pond being visible from the front with plant growth at the sides but the banks should still be visible at the sides and the selection of plants should be much lower as it used to be years ago. • I think the large willow trees have become very overbearing and have outgrown their space and you are probably aware of my opinion that as stated in Coleshill Pond Management Report 2014 by Chris Wege the larger of the 2 weeping willows should be felled and the smaller more distant tree should be pruned into an attractive shape and managed properly from then on which hopefully would solve my subsidence problems. Also the trees along the back of the
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				<p>pond are extremely overgrown and need a lot of water and the amount of dead leaves from them will poison the water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think some level of planting around the pond edge - front and sides is good, but the recent growth was excessive and needed to be dealt with • would like to see the plant margins dense enough to restore the moorhen habitat • Would also prefer some plants at the front but still leaving some open areas. However, the plants need to be controllable and not expansive • I'm in favour of whatever is optimal for the pond - if just having plants at the side is sufficient then that's fine • Planting should be both limited in amount and to locally indigenous pond plants. • I think for the aesthetics of the pond leaving some open space at the front is fine, but there for the health of the pond plants should be around most of the edge. • would like to see it all cleared and start from scratch • The plants need to be managed - and this has been done in an ecologically-informed way in recent years. The latest indiscriminate butchering of vegetation at the front of the pond was mindless, with no thought for the wildlife being destroyed and -- incidentally - showing contempt for the careful thinning carried out by the commons management team on the two previous weekends. Just a thought -- who will manage the common/pond when the current team decide they no longer want to see their work treated like this? • THE VEGETATION ALONG THE FRONT OF THE POND SHOULD BE RESTORED WITH LOW GROWING SPECIES THAT DO NOT HIDE THE VIEW ACROSS THE POND. THE PLANTS USUALLY GROWING IN THIS AREA ARE WHERE FROGS LAY THEIR SPAWN AND THEIR TADPOLES CAN SURVIVE IN THE PLANTS. THE BAYS ON EITHER SIDE SHOULD
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				<p>BE KEPT. THERE ARE OTHER DIFFICULT ISSUES WITH THE POND SUCH AS THE SILT WHICH COULD BE REDUCED NEXT TIME THE POND DRIES OUT SIGNIFICANTLY. IT COULD THEN SUPPORT MORE WILDLIFE. BUT I WORRY THAT THE MAIN PROBLEM WILL COME FROM CLIMATE CHANGE AND ANY MANAGEMENT OF THE POND WILL BE CONTROLLED BY THAT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year the vegetation was too high at the front and offered limited access to the pond, particularly for children who couldn't see over it. But the planting done in recent years has greatly enhanced the aspect. The purple loosestrife is a delight. Please plant meadowsweet to complement it! It is SO important to enhance the biodiversity of the pond and its surroundings. The plants are needed to provide shelter for amphibians and food for insects - and who didn't enjoy watching ducklings weaving their way through it this summer? Might it be time to consider careful reintroducing of native fish species? • How on earth can you say all those invasive plants that were around the pond helped to maintain water quality there was no water quality, the pond was dead, left as it was it would in another couple of years been just an overgrown swamp, those plants were never in the pond before and I think they did a lot of damage to the ponds structure, water and wildlife. If we are lucky enough for the pond to come back again as it was, maintain it yes, but then for goodness sake leave it alone.
	THE COMMON			
Q1	<p>High Usage Users (if applicable to you) If you use the Common regularly, are you happy with its condition and the way it is maintained (Yes/No) and if no, what would you like to see happen instead?</p>	26	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more open aspect; fewer trees; far fewer brambles; a middle/grass section that is mown and free from bumps and bramble; paths with more open aspects • care needs to be taken to ensure that it is kept open and clear of encroaching vegetation if possible

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Happy with the work on paths, excellent idea to alleviate where very muddy patches occur. Good work. Grass cutting ok, as there are countless wild flowers that grow, even orchids. Spending money on a picnic table is an utter waste of OUR MONEY. I have yet to see it being used, in this financial climate, no more ideas like that please. Remember the Parish Council and Common Committee are just caretakers of our common, they do not own it.• There is no evidence that the grassed area is cut twice a year - it's a mess and unusable apart from dog walking and toileting. The grassed area adjacent to Windmill Hill should be mown regularly for picnics and games etc. Half the remaining area should be cyclically mown/flailed each year to keep it under control - which would leave the other half as a two year plant and wildlife refuge. The picnic bench near Windmill Hill should be positioned more prominently and the area around it tidied up.• I think the current level of improvements to the paths, especially the work on the access via Village Road and Barracks Hill, has achieved the right balance between doing nothing and interfering excessively with the natural paths and access points. We are high users as we walk on the common almost every day. I think the current balance is fine between managing old and dead trees and the balance of trees vs open common. The common and the pond are great assets for the village and I think the current plans will maintain these for years to come.• I understand how much people like to feed the ducks but my understanding is that bread is not the best for the ducks or the pond. I still see many families with their children feeding bread to the ducks. We have all done it in the past but I would have thought most people now know this is not best practice. I
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				<p>understand there are perfectly suitable alternatives so that children can continue to enjoy this long standing tradition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am happy with the condition of the Common and the way it is maintained• Thank you for installing the path. It has made it much better to walk in winter.• I consider that the common is well maintained. My only quibble is the provision surfaced paths which I think are unnecessary, though I do accept that access for wheelchair users is important. Finally when trees are felled it is important to allow them to decay on the common in a manner which will help sustain all forms of wildlife.• Although I am reluctant to encourage many more stone based paths. However I would like to see / have a small part of the common near the benches cut and trimmed more often to make a safe area for families / children to enjoy the common for picnics etc. while also allowing them to enjoy the more natural side of the common which is beautiful. That said the brambles could be hacked back more aggressively maybe every other year in key areas (I know this technique is used on shoots to manage / balance under growth (particularly giving new saplings an opportunity to grow).• rarely use it I suppose because we live at the other end of the village, but I think its a lovely addition to the village• I believe more should be done to control some of the plants, such as brambles and nettles which have been allowed to grow and are now substantial, encroaching into the grassed area as well as between trees.• The grassed should be cut more frequently.• I believe that the central part of the Common is being encroached on by far too many brambles and other weeds which need to be cut right back or dug out.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I would like to say I really appreciate the new benches on the Common as it can be a lovely place to sit for a period of time and relax. The paths which have been placed over the very muddy entry sections to the Common are of great benefit too• I walk across the Common on most days and in the summer I will often carry out a butterfly count, results of which are recorded at local and national levels. I am happy with the way it is maintained and its present condition.• It is a natural space in the village and it is important that it remains so• Very happy with the Common and its management, but wish there were less or (even better-none) showy non-native daffodils around its edges in places• I believe more should be done to control some of the plants, such as brambles and nettles which have been allowed to grow and are now substantial, encroaching into the grassed area as well as between trees. The grassed should be cut more frequently, perhaps 4 or 5 times a year, depending on the season.• No Chiltern Rangers need to provide a better way of cutting the grasses or we need a contractor with a tractor and mowing machine to selectively cut defined areas.• It is a Common and as such is a recreational area for use by local residents and visitors passing through the Village. At the moment it is too enclosed and overgrown which can give a sense of insecurity when using it.• I am happy with its condition• You say grass is twice a year? What with scissors it used to be cut by tractor all over why not go back to that• The current management regime is quite sufficient. The Common is not there to look like our gardens -- it's a wild/natural space providing a different experience.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To encourage more villagers to use and visit the Common, brambles need to be removed and the central area of grass needs to be better maintained to make it easier to walk on• NOT ENTIRELY. THE GRASSLAND NEEDS TO HAVE A CLOSE CUT THIS NEXT YEAR IN LATE SPRING TO REMOVE THE THATCH THAT HINDERS THE GERMINATION OF SEEDS OF OTHER GRASSLAND SPECIES THAT HAVE REMAINED DORMANT. ALSO IT WOULD ENABLE US TO FORK OUT BRAMBLES. AFTER THAT WE WILL RE-CONSIDER HOW TO MANAGE THE GRASSLAND. BUT, REMEMBER THE AREA OF GRASS TO THE LEFT OF THE WHEATSHEAF PATH IS A 'RABBIT LAWN'. IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE CUT AS THE RABBITS DO THAT FOR US, EXCEPT FOR A FEW SMALL PATCHES. THE REST OF THE COMMON, MAINLY WOODLAND NEEDS TO BE MONITORED AS IT DEVELOPS AND CHANGES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN SAFETY FOR USERS OF THE COMMON.• I think the common has been improved greatly in recent years and is a great asset for the village. Are there any plans to have Dexter cattle grazing on it again? A couple more benches on the common would be welcome.• I have complete faith in the management committee (with professional help from e.g. BBOWT and Chiltern Rangers) to maintain the spaces in a way that allows good access, protects plants and animals, and keeps us all safe. Consultations with experts have been and should continue to be vital, since at present we don't in the village have all the expertise we need• Needs a good clear out, perhaps half the trees and undergrowth that there is now and let the wild flowers grow again once they can get some light and sun. There used to be many flowers growing on the common. Also do we really need made up paths, this is a common not a park in a town, if you want to walk on in the winter put your wellies on, don't expect the common to fit in with you- you should fit in with the common.
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Q2	<p>Occasional Users (if applicable to you) If you do not use or seldom use the Common what would encourage you to use the common more in future?</p>	11	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater visibility from the roads. Recognisable footpaths. • I am not sure whether I am high use or occasional, as we don't visit daily or even weekly, but it is an important part of our lives and our nature study. We use it regularly and it's only other demands on our time that means we can't visit more! We love the way it is maintained and I feel awful that I haven't helped in years. We love the common and the recent work on improving access is amazing! • I would use the common more if the grass land was chain harrowed in March & the grass was cut more than twice a year. • We are fortunate that we overlook the Common so it is not a destination for us .We do walk through the Common when out walking the numerous paths that surround our Village. We think that the balance of trees / openness is about right, and feel if any more trees were allowed it would become a wood. The central area needs to be kept clear as do the existing pathways which are currently being worked on. • Maybe a picnic bench • Improvement of access paths ONTO the common and no further. Would not want a clinical path/paths on the common as it would detract from the feeling of the common. • We have no need to use it more often but are glad it's there for wild fauna and flora • I am only the occasional summer user but the other day I found the muddy sloping paths quite dangerous probably because I am an elderly old fart and getting less steady on my feet • Occasional user, usually with my young children. The paths are a great addition as previously it got very muddy in winter. I know it's supposed to be a natural space but I do think it would get more use if there was an area that was more "managed" e.g. a flat lawn of grass that was cut more regularly with some
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				<p>picnic benches or something. This might encourage more village events to take place on the common and see it used as more of a focal point for villagers. I look at the way the Commons at Winchmore Hill and Hyde Heath are used so regularly and sometimes wish Coleshill's was more like those (although the recognise Coleshill Common is not quite as central and accessible as others).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility from Windmill Hill, Chalk Hill and Barrack Hill needs improving so it is possible to see onto & across the common from the roads • I am an occasional user of the common. I think if you wish to encourage people to use the area then the centre grass area should be kept clear of trees and brambles. This area should be large enough to have a game of soccer on it, maybe 7 aside. I don't think running cows on it is a good thing if you want a nice flat area. The village does have two other play areas so if there is not enough use on it then let nature take its course. This would encourage wild life back in the area. I would agree that walkways through the area should be maintained • Nothing ok as it is • For the reasons above its not very inviting • I WOULD SIMPLY SUGGEST THAT VILLAGERS SET OFF TO VISIT THE COMMON AND WALK THE PATHS AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH IT AND ENJOY THE WILDLIFE. IN SPRING ENJOY THE BIRD SONG AND THE SPRING BLOSSOMS AND FLOWERS • I can certainly tell you that I would use it less if it becomes more like a manicured park. Please no more memorial trees, benches and paraphernalia! • I ought to make more of an effort and bring my grandchildren along, but as I say it`s because it`s a distance from where we live and I'm lazy
Q3	Child Friendliness			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The middle section is so bumpy and unmown that it is not conducive to young children running around

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	<p>If you take your children or grandchildren to the common to play and explore, are you happy with the way it is currently maintained (Yes/No) and if no, what do you think would make it more attractive for children?</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mown central space for play. The swing is popular. Benches for picnics? • Yes absolutely. We love it. So many thoughtful touches to leave logs and create den areas. 6yo loves it and of course the swing. • Only for the reasons highlighted above (small suggestions which I hope is seen as a good idea and a possible option for this summer? • We love the swing on the tree • More adventure areas on the common. For example tree trunks converted to stepping stones, ability for climbing small felled trunks etc. • The area around the oak, where people are encouraged to picnic is significantly overgrown. The brambles are not ideally located and should be cut back regularly to create a better place for children to play • Great for inquisitive children not averse to a spot of tree climbing/ den building. (re-charging points for Ipads /phones perhaps 😊)! • The area around the oak, where people are encouraged to picnic is significantly overgrown. The brambles are not ideally located and should be cut back regularly to create a better place for children, including our grandchildren, to play • I very rarely visit the common but going down with my little grandson the other day I noticed signs telling us that the old clay pits were dangerous and loads of broken glass and old pots and metal were visible, surely these should be fenced off if only with some cheaper chestnut paling fence which will merge into the county landscape quite well and make the area safer
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whereas I rarely use the common - no dog - I am very close to it, but prefer to spend time in my own garden, mainly tending it, keeping it under control.• I am though very appreciative of the efforts of the work that goes on• I am pleased that it is there as an amenity and that it is well maintained. Beyond that it is a pleasure to walk through on the few occasions that I have done since becoming a resident• Generally yes but the area around the picnic table could be improved• Yes is it a great wild resource for them. My boys LOVE the swing that has been set up under one of the trees. Comments above still stand though and I think it would get more use if there was a more "managed" area. Children's play equipment (e.g. a climbing frame, more swings, a wooden carving, a bug hotel or a balance bridge etc.) would be great but it needs to be sympathetic to the surroundings i.e. made of wood. The playground at Little Missenden has a good example of a play structure made from old trees (see https://www.babyinbucks.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/9D07BB83-6A13-4435-A091-937E6A30A58D-2048x1536.jpeg). "Bug hotels" always go down well with children. The "Little Chalfont Nature Park" (http://naturepark.littlechalfont.org.uk/) is a great example of an area that has been transformed with some educational and play resources for children.• Being a large, open and visible space where children can run about and kick a ball.• We do take our grandchildren. They love it as is. It's a place for them to explore and develop their risk awareness, testing themselves. Playgrounds are available for more sanitized activities.
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My grandchildren love visiting the woods and Common particularly the swing on the Oak tree. It is a safe space for them to run around and have fun. Last time we visited they enjoyed playing in a wooden wigwam that had been created near the swing. • THE GROUND AROUND THE 'SOCIAL' AREA ADJACENT TO THE BENCH AND TABLE SHOULD BE MADE MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE, ESPEIALLY FOR CHILDREN TO PLAY ON. DEPENDING UPON THE WEATHER, HOW WET IT IS FOR INSTANCE VILLAGERS COULD TAKE THEIR CHILDREN FOR EXPLORATORY WALKS AROUND THE COMMON ON THE PATHS. BE OBSERVANT, LOOK AND LISTEN. ALSO IT COULD BE MADE MORE INTERESTING THROUGH HAVING WILDLIFE SURVEYS THAT CAN BE REPORTED AND ALSO WILDLIFE FRIENDLY EVENTS. • Our grandchildren have very much enjoyed the last 2 Common Wildlife Days. I wonder if it would be possible to have swings or rope ladders attached to the trees or a climbing frame. • Our grandchildren LOVE the common. It's a safe place for them to explore, frighten themselves, discover hiding places, create dens, collect interesting items. It doesn't need to be any more "attractive" than it already is.
Q4	<p>Openness</p> <p>Over many years trees have grown across the common. From time to time, they have been cut down to both manage the woodland and to allow villagers to see across more open land.</p> <p>Do you think the balance of trees versus openness is currently satisfactory, (Yes/No) and if no, what would you like to see happen instead?</p>	33	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear the edge of Windmill Hill of <u>all</u> growth; open the area around the mushroom tree; allow the common to be seen from Barrack Hill • Happy with how it is now, but wouldn't want any higher trees encroaching. • Yes it's great • The openness is just about correct as we still see a lot of wildlife About, • The wooded area should be more actively managed, with fallen trees, debris and bramble cleared more often • No more trees should be planted except possibly those suitable for wildlife e.g.: disease-resistant Elm and Alder

Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<p>Buckthorn. Some thinning in the more wooded areas might be good from time to time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whilst the canopy is vital, so are our meadows for wild flowers. Diverse habitat important• Native Trees should be preserved as much as possible. Some bushes that have outgrown that of some trees could be removed periodically or kept at a more manageable height. So long as there are spaces for families to enjoy as highlighted above.• It's nice to explore with all the trees. Its good not being too open. For views isn't more important than what is best for nature?• This is probably the right balance, however it is necessary to be mindful of non-native species for example the wild cherry and blackthorn as they grow swiftly and could predominate the common. It would be good having a plant/tree management system.• Over many years the common has been transformed from open land to a dense woodland. The canopy prevents light reaching the ground and as a result few plants can grow between the trees. Woodland needs to be managed, and this includes thinning the number trees when they become too large and tightly packed. Some years ago, trees were cut down on Village Road to enable there to be a clear sight into the grassed area. I believe this should be considered on Barrack Hill.• We seem to have lost a considerable number of trees in Coleshill recently - the copse on Cherry Tree Farm has been decimated by the developer. I am, therefore, reluctant to see any trees cut down. However, I do think that there is quite a lot of underlying scrub and possibly some saplings on the periphery of the Common which may benefit from some form of clearance to give better light and growth potential to the
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<p>more mature trees. I do think the planting of apple trees on the Common was a brilliant idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The open space is well balanced but how about planting a couple of damson trees in appropriate places, seems to be an imbalance of apple trees, at least I can't find a damson tree which is very much a hedgerow plant. • I find the common in summer very satisfying to walk round • I think a balance is good, and it currently seems about right. there is plenty of open space for people and dogs to exercise • I think the current openness is fine, I wouldn't suggest any less ideally I would like to see more openness from the road so that it felt more part of the village. If ever there was opportunity to create another open area, I wonder if it might be possible for it to be towards the north end of the common - this is more towards the centre of the village and the Village Hall / Red Lion pub could potentially make use of it for events • Too many trees have been allowed to self-seed and a proper management scheme needs implementing. The same applies to the assorted bushes and brambles which have also been allowed to spread largely unchecked. • The current balance is good. We should conserve the current trees as much as possible and only fell them if they are diseased, dangerous or if they need thinning out to improve the health of the remaining trees and undergrowth, or to allow more light through for other species to thrive. I would not like the tree-cover down Barracks Hill to be reduced • Don't agree with that question, can't remember last time that was done other comments: In its current state I don't bother to walk on there to often • Within the current scheme of management, trees can be and are removed when they become dangerous or seriously overgrown. Clearing more open space just to 'improve the
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<p>view' (a highly subjective concept - whose view?) is unnecessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • too many trees have been planted on the border of the grass area on the Common • I THINK THE WOODLAND THAT SURROUNDS THE GRASSLAND WILL NOT SPREAD FAR NOW BUT THE TREES HAVE JUST HAS GROWN MORE MATURE. I THINK THE BALANCE IS VERY GOOD. IF TREES WERE FELLED TO OPEN UP THE COMMON MORE THEY WOULD GROW BACK TO THE PRESENT LIMITS. IT WOULD ALSO LEAVE MORE GRASSLAND TO BE MANAGED. SO, I THINK THE BALANCE IS VERY GOOD. • Yes, good balance • A recent report from Chiltern Rangers (I think? Or BBOWT?) Recommended a multi-year plan of scalloped edges which seems an excellent idea. I appreciate that the wildlife needs places in which to hide, but I think there will still be plenty of those left! It does seem important that a good space be kept where the rabbits do the mowing (might they need help?), so that games of e.g. rounders and French cricket could be had. Perhaps as a result of preserving the scabious, this space has considerably shrunk over the past ten years or so.
Q5	Any other ideas you have about the common?	22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The corner of the land where Magpie Lane, Chalk Hill and Windmill Hill converge should be cleared and planted to provide a more welcome entrance to the village. At present it looks a mess. • Thanks to the PC assisting with the overgrowth around the pond. Perhaps a larger budget should be awarded to the Common and Pond if villagers wish to enjoy this facility. There's only so much a small group of volunteers can manage. What will happen when they choose to retire? • I just love it.

Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The common I really think the common is so well kept and The volunteers do a wonderful job keeping it tidy but still in its Natural state, will always need to be kept under control• I appreciate all that is done by the management committee, thank you.• It is hoped that the present Common Committee take on board the wishes of the villagers and not go ahead with just their views. We have a lovely village and for visitors to see the devastation done to the pond recently is not a welcome sight. Children do not necessarily play on common as much as the play area at Jack Adams field is so very rarely used, money wasted, again. So perhaps letting the grass grow in swathes and wild flowers bloom is a much better proposal.• The common management plan does not give sufficient priority to amenity use by villagers rather than as a nature reserve. The Parish Council should define the objectives which the common management committee should seek to achieve.• I would understand if there was a general consensus for a more maintained area from where the new bench has been placed down to the Oak tree with swing• I think you are doing an excellent job managing the pond and the common• I have no issues with any of the current practices in the survey and am content with things as is in all areas and I bow to your superior expertise in whatever you decide is appropriate• My name is ***** and myself and my family have lived in Coleshill for 43 years and for 30 years in neighbouring Winchmore Hill so I am more local than most. The pond has been a love of mine ever since I was a child. My dad fished in the pond as a child, so did I and so did my son but I'm afraid to say that my grandsons will never have that pleasure. It used to be a lovely village pond but now all it is a duck pond and a poor one at that. Years gone by the pond looked after itself, no
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<p>ducks, lots of fish and not many plants. Some years the water levels went very low and the wild life was given a hand by topping up the water, the tap water never seemed to harm anything. There were never any ducks on the pond and they are the main reason for the decline, plus bulldozing all of the silt up to the edges leaving the sides of the pond too shallow. You will never see lots of frogs, frogspawn and newts as the ducks will eat them all. It's no good people saying the ducks don't eat these things because they do, they will eat anything. The large carp were removed but unnecessarily the crucian carp and the Rudd were removed but they could have stayed causing no problems. The ducks stir up the water and the mud, and their faeces just make a complete mess in the pond all the time. I'm sorry to be so critical, but I have voiced my opinions at past meetings before but these have fallen on deaf ears. To be quite honest nobody takes any notice of what anybody has to say about the pond anyway. How long ago was it since anybody saw groups of artists sitting by the pond painting as they used to, or the heron that used to stand in the middle of the pond looking for food, also the hundreds of frogs, newts and toads that used to cross the road making their way to the pond. Not for ages, and probably never again. Whoever decided to do what has been done to the pond, it was a very poor decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My house backs on to the common and I have lived there for over 30 years. There are only so many things one can do since a large part of the top area, from the tree with the swing and to the west, hardly ever dries out. This year was the exception rather than the rule due to the excessively dry summer. We used to have a dog show once a year on the common and there has been a wild life day over the past 2 years. There was also a children's birthday party held in the summer. There wasn't a problem for any of these events with the common as
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<p>it is, one just adapts accordingly. It is a common after all not a park and it's great to see and hear the various wildlife which inhabit it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The common has never looked better than when cows were used to control the grass • Basically we are satisfied with all that has been done and the current projects and thank all who are involved. • Overall the wildlife should be encouraged in balance with creating safe 'windows' for families to enjoy. Songbirds, hedgehogs, bees, bats and insects should take priority. Perhaps pest management of species such as squirrels, magpies and other egg predators should be considered as a way to bring wildlife management to the fore on the common? • Installation of Bird and bat boxes may also be a nice initiative if we could find funding to support this? • some more clearance along the Windmill Hill side would improve view onto the common • Having animals managing the grass and scrub areas was good in previous years. Can't this be done again? • Keep it as a nature reserve and not a recreational area. • We're very grateful to the volunteers who put a lot of work into maintaining it • Perhaps more fruit trees although I'm not sure how many villagers are aware of their existence. I have certainly enjoyed a number of apples over the past few years. Are there any bird boxes on the trees or owl boxes which would help the wildlife? Also insect houses • We have a wonderful varied natural habitat in our Common and it is generally managed very well. Making it more like a park would be financially costly and would sanitise it, removing living space for wildlife and insects.
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School project maybe to grow one or two replacement oak trees and keep protected as they grow somewhere nearby the magnificent mature tree already gracing the common • I am grateful for the work the common working party has done over the years. The new pathways allow greater access during the winter months; there is significantly less mud produced, particularly near Wheatsheaf Cottage. • Given that we live in an area of outstanding natural beauty, there are relatively few significant areas left for wildlife; the Common is one such area and I would encourage that it be continued to be valued as such • The common is such a valuable habitat for the wildlife in the area. The Common management team have done a good job to keep the walkways open but not to encroach on the areas used by wildlife. The new footpaths have been a valuable addition and make access safer. Thank you to everyone involved. I would not welcome the common being used as another children's play area since we have provision already. • Need more vistas across from Windmill Hill and Village Road • Thank you for your recent Flyer ' we need your views're the Common and for the splendid work done over past years by volunteers on the Common. However, may I say that I find it strange that, in the absence of any pre consultation, views are now being sought on work already done, or committed, such as the paths and bridges which, putting aside the environmental and ecological considerations, have little in the way of the level of aesthetic appeal that anyone might reasonably expect to be taken account of within an area designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Users of the Common have managed for centuries without footpaths and bridges and, so the questions are: - <p>1 Why, suddenly, have footpaths (which don't appear to be designated public footpaths) become a priority for public expenditure and, if they</p>
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

			<p>are a necessity for those users with mobility problems, why not restrict their number to say just one access point to the Common? Or would not simple, inexpensive, informal and less intrusive narrow hoggin paths and simple culverts have sufficed?</p> <p>2 Has the work, and its financing, presumably by public expenditure, received Parish Council approval and, if so, under what powers and legislation was any approval granted? The Common and the Pond should be allowed to develop naturally, as our forebears have allowed it to do so over many years, with human intervention restricted mainly to grass cutting and tree maintenance and with a stricter control of the activities of Bucks CC and Power UK in the southernmost corner of the Common. We are fortunate to live in an AONB. Please don't ruin it for evermore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I suspect this is not well policed or a well-known rule, but removing the rule that says people are not allowed to play ball games might increase use of the Common. Also, it is really appreciated that so much time and effort from people goes into preserving and looking after these communal spaces that we are so lucky to have! • Basically it needs returning to its use as a Common rather than trying to be a quasi-nature reserve. • I think that the common should be managed as much as possible to maintain or improve biodiversity and to enable the natural species and woodland to thrive. I do not think that we should open it up any more than it is currently to allow a greater view across open land, since this is not how it has evolve • The Commons Management should be allowed to get on with their work without outside interference. The management plan for each year is on the agenda (and one hopes is read beforehand by councillors) at the relevant CPC meeting. Any disagreements can be thrashed out at that stage. Once
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Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

				<p>approved by the whole Parish Council -- which is in any case represented by 2 bodies on the commons management team -- there should be no further debate as to principles for the next 12 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grass area on the Common needs to be cut several times a year to make it easier to walk on • THE COMMON IS 6.2 HECTARES OR 15 ACRES. A MODEL FOR OUR COMMON COULD BE COPIED FROM LITTLE CHALFONT NATURE PARK WHICH IS ONLY ¼ THE SIZE OF OUR COMMON. IT IS MANAGED FOR BOTH WIDLIFE AND PEOPLE. IF WE WERE TO MANAGE THE EASTERN END OF THE COMMON WHICH GETS THE SUN ALL DAY SIMILARLY THEN THE REST OF THE COMMON COULD REMAIN IN A NATURAL STATE BUT WITH REGULAR ATTENTION TO THE PATHS AND ANY SAFETY ISSUES • I would like to see a much wider and flatter path created along the south side of the common. I know this encroaches on the dense space between the grassy area and the Chalk Hill properties but it is so slippery and sloping that even I feel at risk walking along it. It's interesting that where the massive tree felling took place a few years ago, it's now almost impossible to see where those spaces were. Cutting and clearing seems to then create even denser undergrowth.
	Add to village mailing list			

Common & Pond residents consultation - analysis of responses

	ARE YOU A RESIDENT OF COLESHILL			All so far
	AGE BRACKET: -			
	[Under 20]			
	[Age 21-40]	3		
	[Age 41-60]	9		
	[Over 61]	45		
	Prefer not to say	2		