

Open Water Safety Toolkit

March 2021

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Site based risk assessment

Site location:	Risk assessment number:
Inspected by:	Date:

Environmental factors (The nature of the water) Site specific risk assessment and will take into account issues such as known swimming locations, signage, vandalism, local knowledge, etc.	
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Behavioural factors Risk assessment will help to determine if restricting access is practicable or desirable and it will help to identify appropriate risk control measures.	
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Ease of access to water's edge Edge protection is generally either a fence line or at least a one metre band of 'hostile' vegetation between the water body and the footpath or place where people congregate. The provision of edge protection and whether it is required will be the subject of individual site risk assessments.	
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Type of edge The proximity of deep water to the edge	
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The water The accessibility of the water	
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Known accident history	
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Evaluation of risk	Low/Med/High
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Further control measures recommended	
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List of sites with open water, which are owned and/or managed by the Council. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

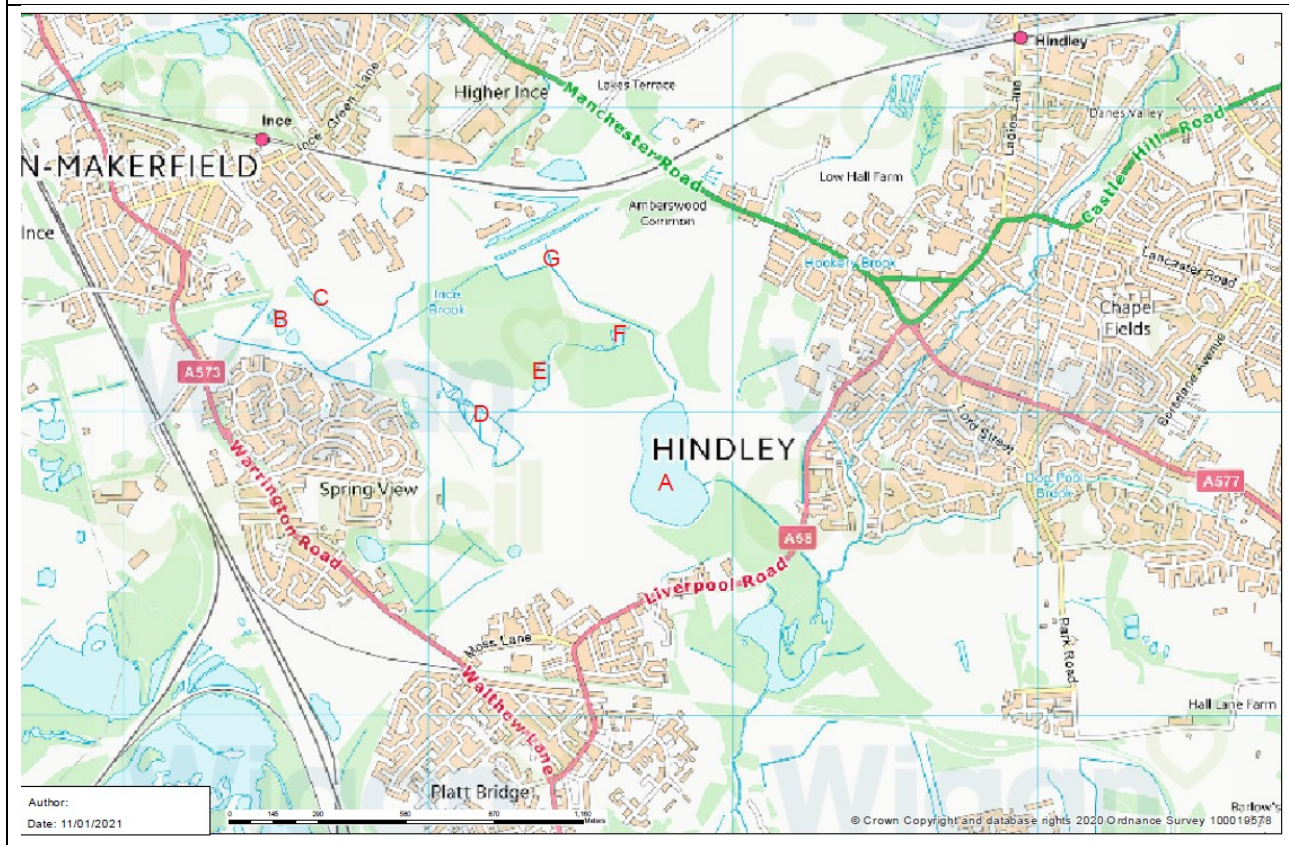
1. Amberswood, Hindley
2. Braithwaite Park, Lowton
3. Bryn Marsh
4. Canal Basin, New Springs
5. Croke, Shevington
6. Diggle Flash
7. Fairhurst Lane, Standish
8. Fir Tree Flash
9. Firs Park, Leigh
10. Golborne Park, Golborne
11. Haigh Country Pak, Wigan
12. Hindley Deep Pits, Hindley
13. Horrocks Flash
14. Kingsdown Flash, Abram
15. Kirkless, Ince
16. Landgate Lodges, Ashton
17. Low Hall Park, Abram
18. Marsh Green, Wigan
19. Mesnes Park, Wigan
20. Nevisons Flash
21. Ochre Flash
22. Old Georges Pond, Ashton
23. Orrell Water Park, Orrell
24. Parsons Meadow, Poolstock
25. Pearsons Flash
26. Pennington Flash Country Park, Leigh
27. Robin Hill Colliery, Shevington
28. Scot Lane Ponds (Stadium Way), Wigan
29. Scotman's Flash
30. Spindlewood Road, Ince (flooded cutting)
31. Three Sisters Country Park, Ashton
32. Waddicars Flash
33. Walmesley Park, Ince
34. Walthew Lane/Scot Lane, Wigan
35. Westlake, Hindley
36. Westwood Flash
37. Whitley Mere, Wigan
38. Widows Flash, Ince

Sample Site based risk assessment 1: Amberswood

Site location: Amberswood Common	Risk assessment number:
Inspected by: M Purcell, R Woods, J Essuah-Mensah	Date: 9 Nov 2020

Site overview:

- A: Main Lake
- B: Two interlinking ponds
- C: Pond North West of site
- D: Drainage ditch adjacent mossland
- E: Shallow pond
- F: Interlinking pond
- G: Ince Brook to main lake



<p>Environmental factors (The nature of the water) Site specific risk assessment and will take into account issues such as known swimming locations, signage, vandalism, local knowledge, etc.</p>	<p>Amberswood is a 160 hectare site located in Ince-in-Makerfield in Wigan surrounded by the four communities of Ince, Spring View, Platt Bridge and Hindley. The area consists of a series of small lakes, ponds, woodlands and wetlands, meadow and grassland including a Site of Biological Importance. The high water table allowed the easy creation of ponds and larger water bodies for flora and fauna. A large lake has been created in the south east of the site. This has marginal and aquatic vegetation including yellow water lily, reed canary-grass, soft rush, bulrush, grey club-rush, common spike rush, watermint, angelica and mare's-tail. The lake is fed from a stream at the north end from a source west of the site that runs under Seaman Way. The north west of the site has two well-established ponds, separated by bulrush swamp, and a section of flooded railway cutting. Ince Brook cuts across the north east side of the site.</p> <p>There is no licenced angling on the site, however there is some fishing activity at the ponds and the Lake.</p> <p>For ease of description in this document these areas have been labelled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A: Main Lake- main water body of the site • B: Ponds, two inter locking ponds • C: North West Pond- large water body • D: Linear ditch adjacent main path • E: Shallow pond • F: Interlinking pond • G: Ince Brook <p>A. The lake is the main water feature at Amberswood Common. 70% of the boundary and the access to the water is reedbed providing a natural security feature and barrier. There are gaps within the reedbed where people and animals could access the water.</p> <p>B. This section encompasses two water bodies of varying depths. It is quite a distance of the main footpaths but it is accessible with no fencing or signage, most of the water edge is open and there is no natural barriers but in many cases access is possible and there is evidence of fishing and public footfall in this location.</p> <p>C. A long stretch of water of unknown depth. There are possible access points along the boundary and a steep embankment in places. There is no signage although some of the boundary has trees on the slope of the embankment that provides a barrier to access.</p> <p>D. A linear sheer sided ditch measuring approx. 100 metres, set back from main path by approx. 40cm wide open verge, with standing water approx. 1.5 metres deep.</p>
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	<p>E. Shallow pond approx. 1 metre deep with graded bank and emergent vegetation at edges.</p> <p>F. Shallow interlinking pond approx. 1 metre deep with graded bank and emergent vegetation at edges.</p> <p>G. Ince Brook to main lake is a steep sided engineered channel although usually only containing a small stream, and choked in parts by trees and vegetation.</p> <p>There are other smaller water holding features across this wetland site including ditches, scrapes and pools with shallow water.</p>
<p>Behavioural factors Risk assessment will help to determine if restricting access is practicable or desirable and it will help to identify appropriate risk control measures.</p>	<p>A. Most of the boundary has a barrier form the reedbed. However there is known activities that take place on the water. The main risk is deemed to come from unauthorised swimming , boats/kayaks, unauthorised fishing– the main control measure recommended is improved and increased signage, all around the lake shoreline at the main access points.</p> <p>B. Unauthorised fishing- the main control measure recommended is improved and increased signage at main access points for both ponds.</p> <p>C. No known activities- however signage at obvious access points would advise the public of the risk</p> <p>D. No known activities- however signage at obvious access points would advise the public of the risk</p> <p>E. No known activities</p> <p>F. No known activities</p> <p>G. No known activities</p>
<p>Ease of access to water's edge Edge protection is generally either a fence line or at least a one metre band of 'hostile' vegetation between the water body and the footpath or place where people congregate. The provision of edge protection and whether it is required will be the subject of individual site risk assessments.</p>	<p>A. 70% of the lake already has restricted access due to the reedbed. Suitable signage should make the public aware of the dangers at suitable locations around the lake. .</p> <p>B. There is currently no protection against the waters edge and both ponds are easily accessible. Put in more natural defences</p> <p>C. Most of this waterbody has a steep embankment down to it and the access is blocked by trees and vegetation. However there are a number of access points along the boundary.</p> <p>D. Verge separates ditch from main path. More vegetation/natural defences would reduce the risk of people straying into the water from the footpath.</p> <p>E. Shallow pond with graded slopes to edge and emergent hostile vegetation.</p> <p>F. Shallow ponds with graded slopes to edge and emergent hostile vegetation.</p> <p>G. No protection at the footpath intersection over Ince Brook presents a risk of falls from height. The provision of fencing could reduce the risk of</p>

	falls into the water from the footpath and deep water warning signs could be added.
Type of edge The proximity of deep water to the edge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Water depth is unknown but does appear to be relatively shallow within 1 metre of the edge. B. Water in these ponds also vary – in some cases C. Water depth is unknown. From observation from the embankment the levels appear to fluctuate quite significantly near the edge. D. Water in the ditch is approx.. 1.5 metres deep. E. Shallow water at water's edge with graded bank. Water depth in pond is approx. 1.0 m deep F. Shallow water at water's edge. Water depth in pond is approx. 1.0 m deep. G. Usually contains just a small stream.
The water The accessibility of the water	See above
Known accident history	TBC – Death following kayaking accident
Evaluation of risk	<p>Low/Med/High</p> <p>A: High B: Med C: Med</p>
Further control measures recommended	TBC

Sample Site based risk assessment 2: Orrell Water Park

Site location: Orrell Water Park	Risk assessment number
Inspected by: CLM team	Date: 9 Nov 2020

Environmental Factors

(The nature of the water)
Site specific risk assessment and will take into account issues such as known swimming locations, signage, vandalism, local knowledge, etc.



Introduction

Orrell Water Park consists of two disused reservoirs (marked A and B on the picture) surrounded by woodland, with a stream running northwards from the south end (“C” in the map) and feeding into reservoir B. It is understood that Orrell Water Park was formerly Orrell Reservoir and was subject to a development scheme in the late 1970’s. The Reservoirs Act 1975 requires a ‘Discontinuance Certificate’ if reservoirs are discontinued. However, there is no evidence that such a certificate existed following research by Wigan Council and the Environment Agency (EA). EA commented: ‘The EA have searched both their paper and electronic archive back to 1997 and they can find no reference to Orrell Water Park or reservoir’.

It has boundaries to the north and north east by Winstanley Road, to the east by Winstanley Park Cricket Ground and bowling green, to the west by Lodge Road and south by Lakeside Avenue and various unmade paths adjacent Greenslate Farm and Longshaw Common. Greenslate Local Nature Reserve (LNR) was created approximately 20 years ago when three ponds were excavated to the south of the site.

Vehicular access to the site is via Lodge Road onto a car park on the western side of the north water. Pedestrian access can be from various paths leading to the site from various directions.

Fishing is a popular activity and there are numerous ‘fishing pegs’ around both waters. There is also a children’s’ play area and a café in the cottage to the east of the south.

Water depth is known to be considerable in the middle of the two reservoirs, dropping quickly from the edge – nb: there are seasonal and rainfall related variations in water levels.

Known swimming locations

There is no record that casual swimming has taken place in recent years. There is no staff presence on site to monitor or provide advice. It would be unreasonable to fence off such an extensive area.

Signage

Currently, Wigan Council do not provide safety signs at this site that are compliant with the Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. Prohibition or other mandatory open water related signs may not be appropriate as it is council practice not to prohibit access to the water. There are compliant safety signs

	<p>included in notices provided by the Environment Agency (EA) relating to fishing which EA would enforce.</p> <p>Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) information signs are displayed. These are information signs, not safety signs and provide information on hazards relating to both summer and winter water conditions.</p> <p>Warning signs should be considered for identified hazards e.g. falls from height, ice, etc.</p> <p>Vandalism The location of the current provision of personal rescue equipment, within the north water, was considered due to (alleged previous experiences of) vandalism and theft (see Behavioural Factors - Provision of PRE).</p> <p>Local knowledge See above.</p>
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<p>Behavioural factors Risk assessment will help to determine if restricting access is practicable or desirable and it will help to identify appropriate risk control measures.</p>	<p>Restricting access Restricting access is neither practicable nor desirable. It would be unreasonable to fence of such an extensive area. In addition, access is required for popular activities e.g. fishing.</p> <p>The provision of personal rescue equipment is not considered due to (alleged previous experiences of) vandalism and theft. See Further Control Measures Recommended – Personal Rescue Equipment).</p>
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<p>Ease of access to water's edge Edge protection is generally either a fence line or at least a one metre band of 'hostile' vegetation between the water body and the footpath or place where people congregate. The provision of edge protection and whether it is required will be the subject of individual site risk assessments.</p>	<p>Ease of access There are made paths around both the north and south waters that provide relatively easy access to the waters' edge e.g. fishing pegs. There are several other footpaths that also provide relatively easy access to the water park therefore, preventing access to the waters' edge would be unreasonable. Fence lines or 'hostile' vegetation would create obstructions for other activities e.g. picnics, ornithology, organised water edge activities, etc.</p> <p>The waters and surrounding environment are not fenced off. It should be noted that it is not council policy to prohibit activities or access onto the water but to provide a notification scheme where information can be shared with relevant parties.</p> <p>North water (A) At the north water, there is a compacted stone surfaced ramp to the north west from the car park to the water edge and a fishing 'peg' that has railings on the water side (peg 19).</p> <p>The site car park is located adjacent the western side of this water body. On that side, concrete works make up the water</p>
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	<p>edge – it shows signs of moss, reasonable to assume the surface has become slippery so that once in the water getting out unaided may be difficult for some. There is no fence between the car park and the water. Being an area of high footfall, the risk exists that children could access the water and then find themselves in difficulties – a knee rail to separate car park from water bank may help address this.</p> <p>There is one of two life rings located at the southern end of the north water, adjacent a weir from the south water. This is at the bottom of a steep bank from the footpath to a fishing peg. A worn track has developed that continues around the water's edge to a locked barrier at a slipway (there does not appear to be any fishing pegs in this section). See 'The Water – The Accessibility of the water'.</p> <p>South water (B)</p> <p>There are several fishing pegs around the perimeter of the south water. The condition of some of these pegs is poor – potentially creating trip hazards at the water's edge.</p> <p>The ponds to the south of the two main waters (Greenslate LNR) contain a gated fence and vegetation that provide a barrier to these areas.</p> <p>Note area of high footfall around café and playground – there are steps into the water. Although the water is shallow at that end, a risk exists of young children straying if supervision fails for any reason,</p> <p>Stream (C)</p> <p>This area presents lower footfall. It is fenced of in sections, however there are segments of the path where there is no fence and a relatively steep 5ft drop to the stream – the level of which will vary depending on weather conditions and precipitation levels.</p>
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<p>Type of edge The proximity of deep water to the edge</p>	<p>Proximity of deep water</p> <p>There is a 'slipway' adjacent the main car park which is protected by a locked barrier.</p> <p>Although staring shallow, the gradient and specific depth of the water around the waters' edge is unknown – but believed to be considerable.</p>
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<p>The water The accessibility of the water</p>	<p>Access to the water is required at various points around both the north and south waters to numerous fishing pegs. There is no staff presence on site to monitor or provide advice. It would be unreasonable to fence of such an extensive area.</p>
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	<p>There are 'authorised' paths around the site that, when used as intended, do not necessarily provide access to the water. However, there are unmade paths that provide access for anglers. The lease holders are responsible for the provision and maintenance of access to fishing pegs. Any fishing platforms provided should direct anglers away from areas where they could slip into the water.</p> <p>Falls from height</p> <p>North water (A) There is a footbridge with guard rails across the outlet into Smithy Brook in the north east corner.</p> <p>South water (B) Following the path to the southern end timber fencing protects the footbridge, approaches and weir. However, there are unprotected fall from height hazards in this area.</p> <p>Stream (C) See above: path where there is no fence and a relatively steep 5ft drop to potentially full and fast flowing stream.</p>
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Known accident history	There have been no reported accidents to Wigan Council from this site.
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Evaluation of risk	<p>Low/Med/High</p> <p>The risk rating for this open water is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. North Water: High B. South Water: High C. Stream: Low
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Further control measures recommended	<p>Signage Repeat GMFRS information notices should be provided at suitable locations such as entry pathways, including the car park and identified high risk areas</p> <p>Swimming and/or water access is not encouraged but actively discouraged (GMFRS information signs). Where identified, the nature of water and underwater hazards should also be made clear through unambiguous signage.</p> <p>Provision of Personal Rescue Equipment PRE Personal Rescue Equipment (PRE) is located at Orrell Water Park in the form of life rings. Comments received by a Greenspaces line manager suggest that the equipment at Orrell Water Park was subject to vandalism/theft when located on adjacent land. However, there is no formal record of such behaviour. It is still perceived that such equipment would be</p>
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subject to theft or vandalism. The provision of this PRE should be reviewed. The open water safety procedure includes:

‘Subject to risk assessment, Personal Rescue Equipment (PRE), if required, should comprise of life rings and throw ropes. Life rings should be considered where areas have steep banks and deep water, for example, adjacent to locks, quay sides or rivers. Throw lines should be considered where the gradient is shallow and directional suitability is required’.

In the north water (adjacent the car park) there are two life rings located in the water at the north and south ends of the pond approximately two-three metres from the bank.

The life ring at the south end is also located in the water approximately two-three metres from the bank and adjacent a weir from the south water. This is at the bottom of a steep bank from the footpath to a fishing peg. A worn track has developed that continues around the water’s edge to a locked barrier at a slipway (there does not appear to be any fishing pegs in this section).

The history relating to this equipment is unknown but it may have been provided when the waters were reservoirs.

Consideration should be given to the removal of the current PRE. Alternatively, replacement by more suitable equipment located in an appropriate position. If provided, the equipment must be subject to appropriate inspection and maintenance.

Risk assessment review

Risk assessment review is required at appropriate intervals or following significant change.

Sample Site based risk assessment 3: Pennington Flash

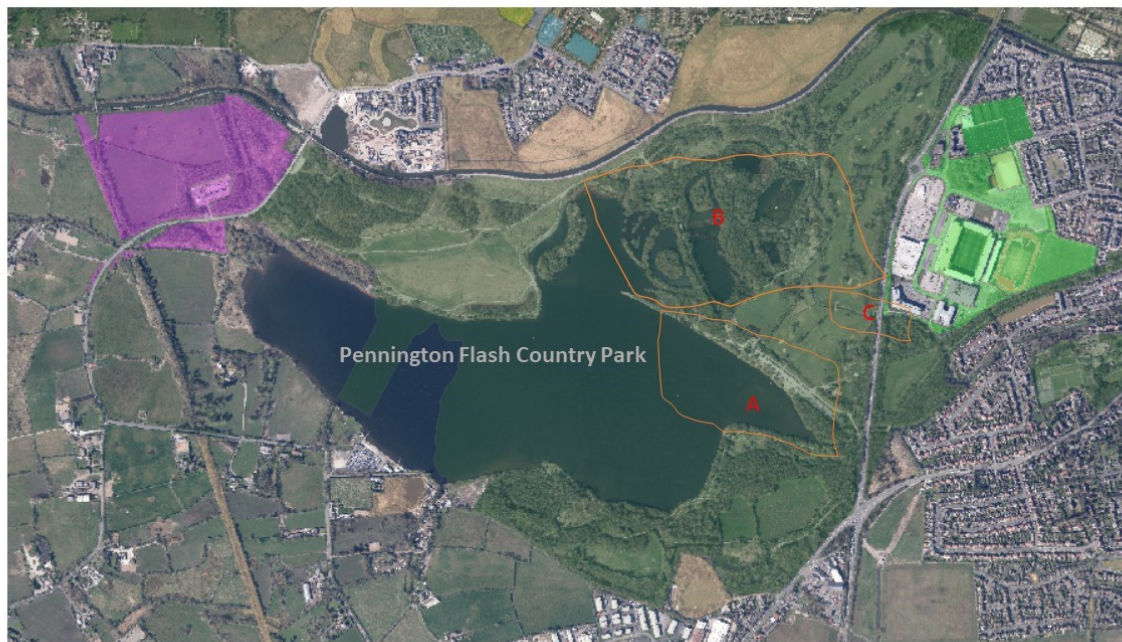
Site location: Pennington Flash, Leigh	Risk assessment number:
Inspected by: J Ashton, K Sayer, J Solis	Date: 9 Nov 2020

Site overview:

A: "Honey pot": main car park and public facilities, golf course shop, playgrounds

B: Ponds, bird hides, quiet walks, canal access

C: West Leigh Brook - across golf course and connecting with Leigh Sports Village (LSV)



<p>Environmental factors (The nature of the water) Site specific risk assessment and will take into account issues such as known swimming locations, signage, vandalism, local knowledge, etc.</p>	<p>Pennington Flash is a large destination country park, focused on the flash itself – a large water body (cover approx. 170 acres) of which approx. 1/3 is leased to a sailing club¹. In addition to the flash the park includes a number of ponds (esp on the north site) – home to diverse wildlife. A number of streams run across the site, notably Westleigh Brook. For ease of description in this document these areas have been labelled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A: “Honey pot”: main car park and public facilities, golf course shop, playgrounds • B: Ponds, bird hides, quiet walks, canal access • C: West Leigh Brook - across golf course and connecting with Leigh Sports Village (LSV) <p>H. The sole vehicle access road at the south end of the site gives access to a large car park on the NE shore of the flash. All main facilities – toilets and now disused visitor centre, playgrounds and the golf course shop and entrance – are next to this car park, as is a catering van concession. These factors all mean footfall is highest in this section of the park. This is where large events concentrate – notably the yearly ‘Ironman’ competition: a rare occasion where swimming in the flash is expected. Access to the water is open around that most of the shoreline – there are some sections where vegetation constitutes a barrier, intentionally or otherwise. Note that Blue & Green Algae is seasonally present in the water.</p> <p>I. This section encompasses a number of water bodies of varying depths, rich in wildlife as it offers suitable habitats for a number of species. Some but not all these water bodies have fences or vegetation barriers, but in many cases access is possible and there is evidence of footfall on the water’s edge.</p> <p>J. Westleigh Brook runs across the north side of the site – shallow for the most part but grows deep (5ft – 6ft drop) in a 300yd section across the golf course, with 3 footbridges crossing it.</p>
<p>Behavioural factors Risk assessment will help to determine if restricting access is practicable or desirable and it will help to identify appropriate risk control measures.</p>	<p>H. The main risk is deemed to come from unauthorised swimming – the main control measure recommended is improved and increased signage, all around the lake shoreline but particularly around the ‘honey pot’ (car park etc) where most footfall concentrates.</p> <p>I.</p>
<p>Ease of access to water’s edge Edge protection is generally either a fence line or at least a one metre</p>	<p>H. Restricting access around the main water body is not practicable due to the size and area to cover.</p>

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pennington_Flash_Country_Park#:~:text=A%20flash%20is%20a%20water-filled%20hollow%20formed%20by,abandoned%20in%20the%20early%201900s%20due%20to%20flooding.

<p>band of 'hostile' vegetation between the water body and the footpath or place where people congregate. The provision of edge protection and whether it is required will be the subject of individual site risk assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Use of hostile vegetation as a natural barrier should be increased to close off existing loopholes. J. For as long as this area of the site remains in use as a golf course, installation of barriers or fences along the edges of the brook will remain impractical. Improved signage would be recommended, particularly at the ends where the brook meets well used public footpaths, and there is pedestrian access to the park from LSV. Works to arrest erosion of the banks could also be considered.
<p>Type of edge The proximity of deep water to the edge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H. Water is said to be relatively shallow for the lake's size, but observation suggests depths of 3ft within 3ft of the edge, which in the area around the car park is brick-surfaced and can be slippery under certain conditions (eg ice, mud, leaves) – bearing in mind water levels vary, seasonally and depending on rainfall events. I. Water in these ponds also vary – in some cases there is deep silt or mud which represent an additional hazard (warning signs were seen in one case). J. The brook appears shallow but exact depth needs to be more clearly establish – and, again, depth will vary depending on circumstances: there is a weir and sluice to control flow at the exit ie as the brook crosses underneath the road onto LSV (where it becomes narrower and faster flowing).
<p>The water The accessibility of the water</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Known accident history</p>	<p>TBC – there is anecdotal evidence of accidents but no record of recent fatalities – the flash is used by the sailing club, events such as Ironman are held.</p>
<p>Evaluation of risk</p>	<p>Low/Med/High</p> <p>A: High B: Med C: Med</p>
<p>Further control measures recommended</p>	<p>TBC</p>

Sample Site based risk assessment 4: Scotsman's Flash

<p>Site location: Scotsman's Flash</p>	<p>Risk assessment number:</p>
<p>Inspected by: Michael Fishwick</p>	<p>Date: 9 Nov 2020</p>
<p>Environmental factors (The nature of the water) Site specific risk assessment and will take into account issues such as known swimming locations, signage, vandalism, local knowledge, etc.</p>	<p>Introduction The flashes (or lakes) are 'natural features' formed over several decades as a result of mining subsidence. Lakes and other natural water bodies are not fenced off. It should be noted that it is not council policy to prohibit activities or access onto the water but to provide a notification scheme where information can be shared with relevant parties.</p> <p>Scotman's flash has boundaries to the north by the A49 link road, to the east by the Leigh branch of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, to the west by Hawkley housing estate and south by Hawkley Hall High School (Academy).</p> <p>Official access and entry pathways are via estate roads and include; Welham Road, Aldridge Close, Rosley Road and Killington Close. A car park is situated on Poolstock Lane. Access can also be gained from the Leeds and Liverpool canal</p> <p>There are also a number of small ponds to the south of the flash. The water levels in the ponds and the streams / brooks which feed the ponds / flash are subject to seasonal changes.</p> <p>Several of the ponds and streams have handrails and boardwalks, these should be inspected on a regular basis, on the date of inspection there was evidence of missing handrails.</p> <p>Wigan Sailing Club (WSC) operates on the site and has premises that include a clubhouse and car park. Access to WSC is via Rusdene and a gated security fence.</p> <p>Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL) also operates Scotman's Flash Activity Centre, on behalf of the council, that provides a range of water sports, including coaching and courses for people of all abilities delivered by fully qualified instructors. Access to the activity centre is also via Rusdene and a gated security fence.</p> <p>Known swimming locations</p>

	<p>It is known that casual swimming takes place. Access to the water can be gained at various points around the flash. There is no staff presence on site to monitor or provide advice. It would be unreasonable to fence off such an extensive area.</p> <p>Casual swimming is seasonal and reaches a peak during the summer months, during the covid-19 pandemic / lockdown / school closures, there was a significant increase in casual swimming at the flash.</p> <p>Angling</p> <p>It is known that unauthorised angling takes place at various points around the flash. Access to the water can be gained at various points around the flash. There is no staff presence on site to monitor or provide advice. It would be unreasonable to fence of such an extensive area.</p> <p>Signage</p> <p>There are no safety signs in the area that comply with the Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. Prohibition or other mandatory open water related signs may not be appropriate as it is policy not to prohibit access to the water</p> <p>Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) information signs are displayed at several access points around the flash including access points at Wellham Road, Hawkley and Moss Bridge over the canal. The signs at Moss Bridge are facing away from the access path and require attention. These are information signs, not safety signs and provide information on hazards relating to both summer and winter water conditions.</p> <p>Vandalism</p> <p>There is no personal rescue equipment (PRE) provided at Scotman’s Flash. It is perceived that such equipment would be subject to theft or vandalism. See Further Control Measures Recommended – Personal Rescue Equipment.</p>
<p>Behavioural factors Risk assessment will help to determine if restricting access is practicable or desirable and it will help to identify appropriate risk control measures.</p>	<p>Restricting access is neither practicable nor desirable. The provision of personal rescue equipment is not considered due to (alleged previous experiences of) vandalism and theft. See Further Control Measures Recommended – Personal Rescue Equipment.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to the provision of water safety signs. See Environmental Factors – Signage</p>

<p>Ease of access to water's edge Edge protection is generally either a fence line or at least a one metre band of 'hostile' vegetation between the water body and the footpath or place where people congregate. The provision of edge protection and whether it is required will be the subject of individual site risk assessments.</p>	<p>Ease of access Several paths, the canal towpath and the A49 all provide relatively easy access to the waters' edge.</p> <p>The provision of fence lines or 'hostile' vegetation would create obstruction for other activities e.g. picnics, ornithology, organised water edge activities, etc.</p> <p>Material has been taken from the embankment to provide 'unofficial' fishing pegs at the waters' edge. Land ownership needs to be determined and the relevant land owner informed. If this is Wigan Council's responsibility then an inspection by a suitably competent person is required to determine if the strength and stability of the embankment has been affected. Monitoring of these areas, and any further removal of material, should also be considered. If these 'unofficial' fishing pegs are removed, they may be reinstated by persons unknown with more embankment material being used.</p>
<p>Type of edge The proximity of deep water to the edge</p>	<p>Proximity of deep water Although starting shallow, the gradient and specific depth of the water around the waters' edge is variable and unknown.</p> <p>Along the canal towpath and the A49, the shoreline consists of large rocks. Whilst the remainder of the shoreline consists of reed beds.</p>
<p>The water The accessibility of the water</p>	<p>Access to the water Access to the water is gained at various points around the flash. There is no staff presence on site to monitor or provide advice. It would be unreasonable to fence of such an extensive area.</p> <p>The canal towpath is approximately 3.5m-4m wide and does not present a hazard if people use it as intended e.g. adhering to the desire lines of the towpath. The responsibility for safety in this area lies with the Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT).</p> <p>There are 'authorised' paths around the site that, when used as intended, do not provide access to the water. However, there are unmade paths that provide access for anglers. Angling at Scotsmans Flash is currently not allowed, consideration is being given to a tender process which will appoint a leaseholder to manage the angling rights. Should a lease be issued, responsibilities including the provision and maintenance of suitable access to fishing pegs would be included. Any fishing</p>

	<p>platforms provided should direct anglers away from areas where they could slip into the water.</p> <p>Falls from height</p> <p>There is a fall from height hazard between the open water and canal towpath on the eastern edge of the flash created by a concrete retaining wall (installation date unknown). There is a drop of approximately 4m to the narrow bank below. The retaining wall has a defined edge similar to the adjacent canal. However, the drop is higher than that of the canal (but similar to that at canal locks). Land ownership needs to be determined and the relevant land owner informed, e.g. Canal and River Trust. If the ownership lies with Wigan Council, consider providing fall protection and appropriate hazard warning signs. However, no signs are displayed on the canal.</p> <p>Other fall from height hazards are created by two culverts. The culvert under the canal from Pearson's Flash has no fencing or barriers and has a damaged grill at its outlet to Scotman's Flash. If this is Wigan Council's responsibility then consideration should be given to providing fencing/barriers. In addition, the damaged grill should be repaired and maintained</p> <p>The culvert below the A49 from Scotman's Flash to Poolstock Brook to the north of the flash has been provided with fencing on the Brook 'side' however since the road was built the culvert is exposed from the A49 roadside as well as from the shoreline around the culvert. This results in a fall from height risk as well as a risk should someone enter the water. Consideration should be given to providing fencing/barriers at the A49 / top of the culvert and at the culvert entrance / shoreline.</p>
<p>Known accident history</p>	<p>There have been no reported accidents to Wigan Council from this site.</p>
<p>Evaluation of risk</p>	<p>Low/Med/High</p> <p>The risk rating for this open water is: Medium</p>
<p>Further control measures recommended</p>	<p>Swimming, angling and/or water access should not be encouraged but actively discouraged. Where identified, the nature of water and underwater hazards should be made clear through unambiguous signage.</p> <p>Appropriate warning and/or information signs should also be posted at suitable locations such as entry pathways and high risk areas.</p> <p>GMFRS information notices should be provided at suitable locations such as entry pathways, including Poolstock Lane car park, estate entrances and high risk areas. The entrances</p>

from Rosley Road and Aldridge Close, currently do not have warning signs.

The signage should face the visitors as they enter the site (Welham and Moss Bridge signage is not immediately clear)

Warning signs should be considered for identified hazards e.g. falls from height, ice, etc.

Additional warning signs should be posted along the towpath between Moss Bridge and the A49.

Regular site inspections to check condition of signage (temporary and permanent), handrails, boardwalks etc.

The seasonal change to water levels may require the inclusion of additional, temporary warning signs and handrails at points where the water levels will significantly increase.

Ensure the sailing club and IHL have adequate risk assessments in place.

Informal / unauthorised angling locations are transient, regular site inspections will identify the locations and allow for targeted signage.

Personal Rescue Equipment (PRE)

There is no personal rescue equipment (PRE) provided at Scotman's Flash. It is perceived that such equipment would be subject to theft or vandalism. For example, **Orrell Water Park** has PRE in the form of life rings which are located in the water approximately two to three metres from the bank. However, the provision of this PRE is under review. The open water safety procedure includes:

'Subject to risk assessment, personal rescue equipment (PRE), if required, should comprise of life rings and throw ropes. Life rings should be considered where areas have steep banks and deep water, for example, adjacent to locks, quay sides or rivers. Throw lines should be considered where the gradient is shallow and directional suitability is required'.

The provision of PRE will be dictated by the likely access to deep water and where members of the public regularly gain access. In such cases, it may be appropriate for PRE to be located at suitable points.

Risk assessment review

Risk assessment review is required at appropriate intervals or following significant change.