

EYEC6005 - Regaining Paradise: sustainability in the early years

John Muir Award

Pen Y Fan Pond



That time of our lives when we were only allowed out for an hour a day.

The daily mile became the only thing we looked forward to every day.

Children's lives consisted of their homes, which provided them with education, love, and a safe place.

That is when the pond became a place that gave us purpose to our days.





The **Views** that took our breath away.

Not believing this was on our doorstep.



Teaching our children about wind turbines on a daily walk.

The walks were becoming full of general curiosity about our surroundings as days went on.

What was just an escape from the house was turning into much more.

Embracing the reflections of the sun flickering in the water.

If we go a bit closer, you could see your reflection.





Feeding ducks, spying on frogs and digging for worms, oh, how we love the outdoors.

Creatures big and small, some on water, some underground, some nowhere to be found.



The smells through the seasons never the same.

Even strong smells of big animal poop...
Can you guess from who...?

The deeper into the pond walk, the more fields beside it. Swamps were formed, a smell that made you move on.

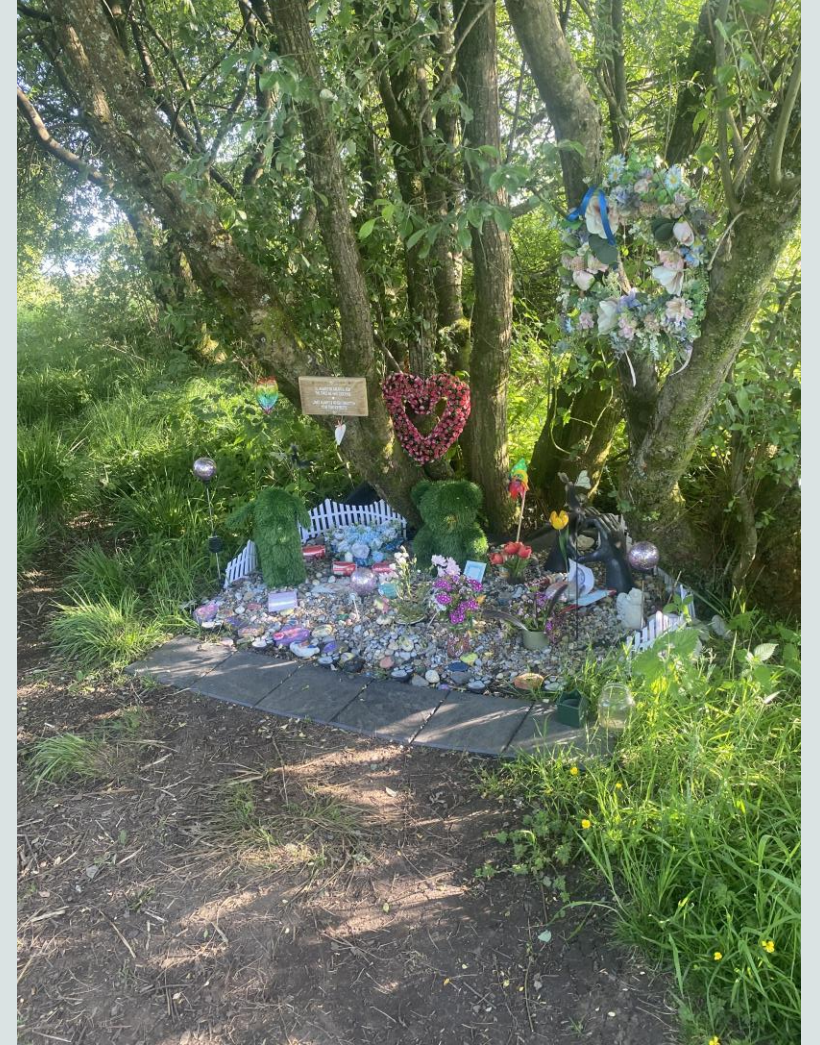




Not only a place to visit to admire the beautiful views but a place to connect with the world around them.

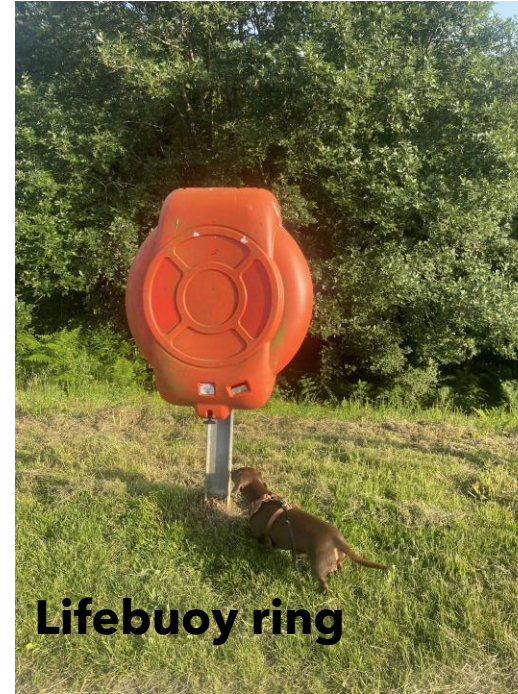
It is also a place where memories are shared and where people honour loved ones they once walked through life with.

Taking a moment to show our respect, pausing in silence to appreciate those we hold close today.



Ralphy makes checks with the safety measures in place.

Spotting two life-saving rings, easily accessible for the public in case of emergency.





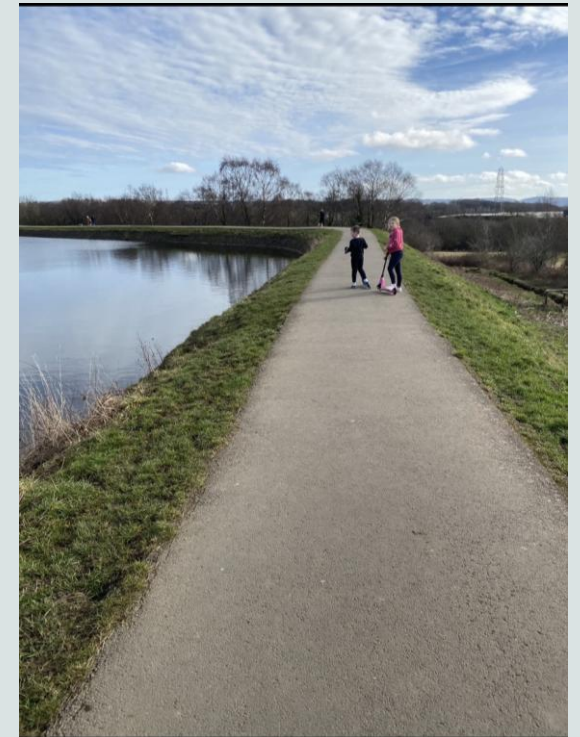
Sea Buckthorn Tree

The path is flat and accessible for disabled visitors.



Hawthorn

Children would say its scooter friendly.



Spotting those different flowers.

Not the ones you see in supermarkets.

Wild flowers that can be explored.

Watch out, you need to dodge the Bees
and flies that hover all around them.



AND A BEE!!!



Fox Gloves



Fern



Blackberry bush



Eastern Thorns

Exploring around the pond is fun but what about the pond itself?

How deep is it?

Are there any fish living beneath the surface?

Is the water cold?

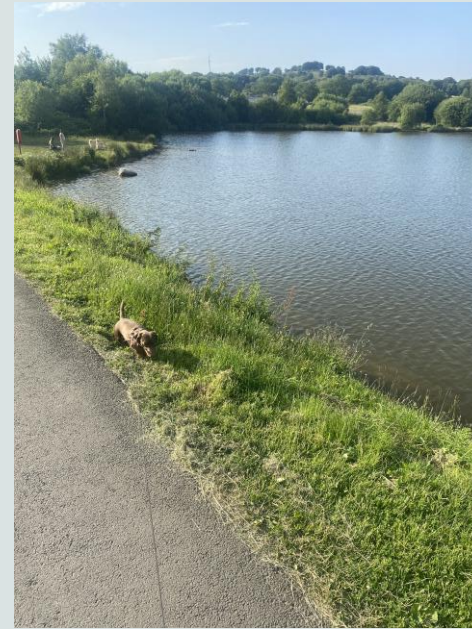
Is it too dirty to go in?

How long is the pond?

Could it fill a swimming pool—or maybe several?

Is it salty like the sea?

And just what might be hiding at the bottom?



RUBBISH



There are Memories shared over the years.

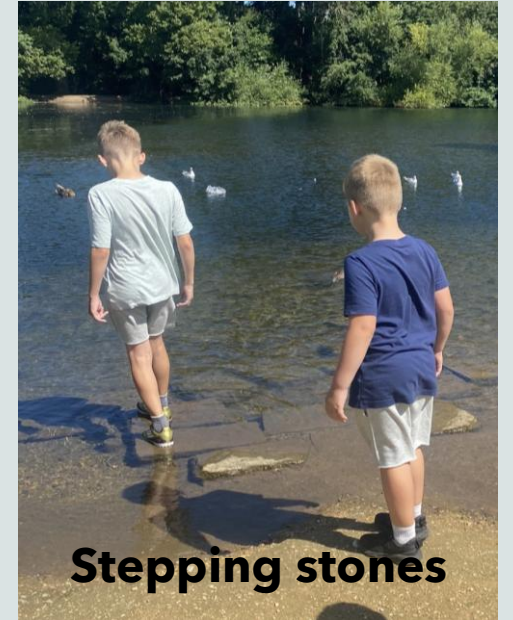
Spring Ice Cream with Bampi



The lockdown mile



Stepping stones



Date day visit



Summer pit stop



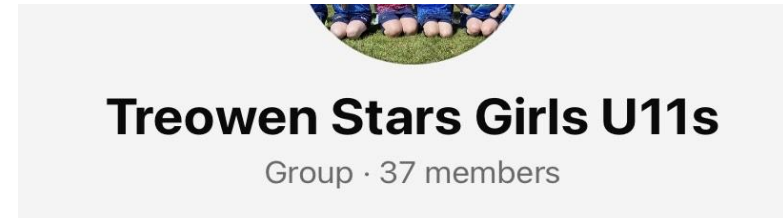
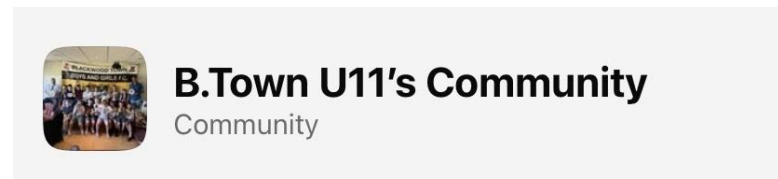
Conserve & Share

As shown in all the pictures, Pen y Fan Pond is a stunning natural environment. It brings joy, hobbies, cherished memories, and learning to people of all ages.

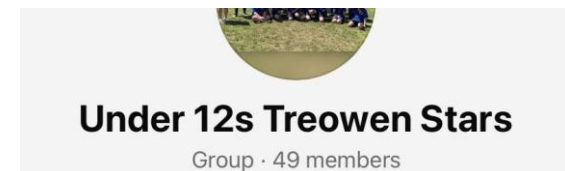
However, despite all its positives, not everyone treated it with the respect it deserves. Litter had been left behind in places, posing risks to local wildlife and diminishing the experience for other visitors.

Wanting to preserve the beauty of these free nature walks and give back to the community that gives us so much, a local litter-picking event was organised. Invitations were shared through group chats and community Facebook pages. Sharing a simple message offering a social litter-pick walk for all ages and abilities.

It was a positive step toward protecting our wildlife, big and small and keeping this treasured spot looking presentable and beautiful, just as it should be.



Cefn Fforest Community 🏠👥🌳
Public group · 16.3K members



Our Pond

We found our pond when days were grey,
When COVID swept our lives away.

A quiet path, a breath of air,
A space where we could simply share.

Ralphie trotting at my pace,
He brought me strength, and a warm embrace.
The world grew calm, and the ache would hide,
As peace returned and pain subside.

The children laughing with ice cream in hands,
Scooter racing, feet on land.

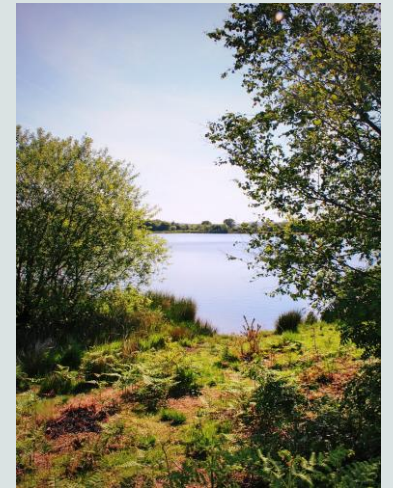
Taking Grandparents to watch the trees,
They would say they feel the whisper of the breeze.

A healing bench, a gentle nod,
A place where hearts could meet with loved ones and God.

Each duck, each reed, each sky so blue,
Reminds you of everything you have been through.

We are lucky, yes, beyond compare,
To know that peace was always there.

We treasure it, this gift so fond
Our shelter, hope... our dear old pond.



John Muir

John Muir (1838–1914) was born in Scotland and became a writer and naturalist who played a significant role in shaping modern environmental thinking. Deeply moved by the wild places he explored, he argued that nature is not simply there for human use. His passion for protecting landscapes like Yosemite helped lay the foundations for national parks across the United States.

Today, Muir's legacy lives on through the John Muir Trust, which continues to champion the value of wild spaces and encourages people to connect with and care for them. The Trust empowers individuals through the John Muir Award, inspiring them to take creative steps to protect the natural places they treasure or feel connected to.

Muir saw wild spaces as valuable simply for existing, believing that humanity is part of nature, not separate or above it. He emphasised the importance of personal experience—spending time in nature wasn't just leisure; it was essential for growth and renewal. His writing often reflected his emotional bond with the outdoors and his desire to inspire others to nurture that same connection.

