

Warnham Mill Pond Sluice Failure (2015) Mill News #142 (January), 22

Warnham Mill Pond Sluice Failure *Nigel Harris*

The mill pond at Warnham Watermill, Horsham, West Sussex has been undergoing some major work to its embankment.

The aim of the work is to improve the standard of the earth dam overflow to increase the reservoir's safety and to comply with the Reservoir's Act 1975.

The work involves installing steel sheet piling on the face of the dam and making the back more stable. The total project cost is £1.1 million which is jointly funded by DEFRA and Horsham District Council.

The water level in the pond can be controlled by a computerised sluice gate. Sadly, it was reported locally that on the morning of the 6 October, a fault (possibly with the alarm sensor) meant that the gate was opened a significant amount. Attempts to close the gate, including a manual override system, failed.

Within a short time the Mill Pond had been entirely drained. Wardens did all they could to save as many fish as possible, but with the additional loss of organisms and invertebrates in the top layer of silt, it is said that it will probably take at least five years for the mill pond to be self-sustaining once again.

Nigel Harris



Warnham Watermill, Horsham, West Sussex. The mill is complete, now a vet's surgery. Picture - Jim Woodward-Nutt.



The problem sluice at Warnham Mill. Picture - Nigel Harris



The drained mill pond. Picture by Neil Henry



The sheet piling of the Warnham mill dam. Picture - Nigel Harris