

Friends of Poynton Pool

The following press release has been sent to all of the local media

FRIENDS OF POYNTON POOL STRIVING TO SAVE OVER A HECTARE OF TREES

Cheshire East Council plans to fell the trees which run along more than half a kilometre of Poynton Park

POYNTON, CHESHIRE: Residents of Poynton are taking action to prevent a proposal by Cheshire East Council to fell over half a kilometre of trees alongside the A523 boundary of Poynton Park.

The controversial proposal has been met with forceful opposition by local group Friends of Poynton Pool, who are planning an awareness raising walk on 12th February 2023. The decision to fell the trees, some of which date back to the 1700s when the landscaping around the lake was completed, has come off the back of an inspection that assesses the park's resilience against a 1 in 10,000 year flood event (part of the 1975 Reservoirs Act).

Following pockets of flooding in recent years, residents of the town are aware of the importance of flood resilience, but after research and investigation into Poynton Park, it seems that felling the trees is actually the most environmentally-damaging but cheapest option that Cheshire East have favoured. This has naturally angered the local community, who not only have concerns aesthetically-speaking, but also when it comes to the local biodiversity around the lake.

Furthermore, it appears that Cheshire East Council have not been willing to engage with either Poynton Town Council or residents on this matter, which has led to the local group taking action. Instead of engaging, Cheshire East has chosen to instead release heavily redacted reports to Freedom Of Information requests.

Local resident and member of Friends of Poynton Pool Mike Ellison said: "The impacts of the proposal have been ill-considered and importantly have not accounted for the loss of the immense value that the trees represent. When the trees have been removed, they will not be replaced. Instead, the affected area will be maintained as grass and Cheshire East have suggested that they could plant trees six kilometres away in Millennium Wood to the south of Disley, a recently planted woodland that is already adequately stocked."

Concerned about the approach taken by Cheshire East Council, Poynton Town Council has commissioned an independent tree survey and a valuation of the affected trees by specialist tree consultants. This valuation, which took place in January, returned a value of just under £3 million for the proposed trees.

With current concerns over climate change significantly influencing how the flood risk at Poynton Pool will be mitigated, Friends of Poynton Pool feel that the value of the trees themselves has not been adequately considered by Cheshire East. More than a hectare in area, the trees themselves contribute to flood mitigation, act as a carbon sink, and are an important link in a local habitat networks extending from Lyme Park in the east to Bramhall Park and beyond in the west.

The local community and local council are calling for Cheshire East to adopt a less environmentally destructive alternative, so that flood resilience can be managed whilst protecting the very special landscape of Poynton Pool.

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