

Meeting	Full Council
Date	20 th January 2026
Report Title	Safety Measures at Mouldon Hill Lake & Associated Watercourses
Agenda Reference	14
Author/Proper Second	Councillor V Manro Councillor L Stevenson

Recommendations to Full Council

For Haydon Wick Parish Council:

1. To install up to ten information points around Mouldon Hill Lake as part of the previously agreed QR code trail trial, using existing posts, bins, or other suitable infrastructure where possible, and incorporating water safety warnings and QR codes linking to further information on the Parish Council website relating to water features and watercourses.
2. To ensure that all Parish-installed signage, QR-linked content, and relevant website pages clearly set out the respective responsibilities of the Parish Council and Swindon Borough Council in relation to Mouldon Hill Lake and other watercourses within Mouldon Hill.
3. To review and maintain Parish Council website content supporting the signage, ensuring information is clear, accurate, and accessible.
4. To identify and assess locations around the lake and along watercourses that may present a higher safety risk, including proximity to footpaths, depth, water flow, visibility, drainage features, and flood behaviour.
5. To write formally to the Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council, enclosing this resolution and requesting the actions set out below, using the draft letter in Appendix A.
6. To review Swindon Borough Council's response, and any actions proposed or undertaken, at the February Full Council meeting.

To request Swindon Borough Council:

1. To review storm drains, culverts, and other relevant drainage features associated with Mouldon Hill Lake and watercourses within Mouldon Hill, including confirmation of which assets fall within Swindon Borough Council ownership, and ensure that they meet current safety standards in line with national guidance and best practice.
2. Provides an initial written response to the Parish Council within 14 days of receipt of this resolution, setting out ownership, responsibility, the findings of any review, and proposed next steps, or confirming if further assessment is required.
3. To request that any measures implemented by Swindon Borough Council are proportionate, do not unreasonably restrict access, maintain the open character of the site, and do not increase flood risk.



Background

Council notes with sadness the loss of a dog, Rae, in late December and formally records its sympathy with the owners. This incident has highlighted concerns about water safety around Mouldon Hill Lake and other watercourses within Mouldon Hill, particularly where water features and drainage infrastructure are close to public footpaths and areas of regular use.

In February 2025, the Parish Council was contacted by Ross Savage MP for South Cotswolds regarding a water safety concern at Mouldon Hill relating to a storm drain. The information provided at that time related to a drainage feature; however, it was not clear what the exact location of the incident was within Mouldon Hill. In response, the Parish Council confirmed that responsibility for Mouldon Hill Lake and associated water features sits with Swindon Borough Council. No further response or follow-up was received after this confirmation.

Following the loss of Rae, the Parish Council subsequently became aware of a further historical incident reported to have occurred in or around 2017 or 2018, also involving the loss of a dog in proximity to a water feature within Mouldon Hill.

Taken together, this information indicates that water safety concerns relating to lakes, watercourses, and drainage features within Mouldon Hill have arisen at different points over time, and that clarity around locations, risks, and responsibilities has not always been clear. This reinforces the need for proportionate preventative measures, clearer public information, and confirmation of responsibilities between the Parish Council and Swindon Borough Council.

Mouldon Hill is a valued and well-used open space. Where lakes, watercourses, and drainage features are located close to public access routes, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall, there is a need for improved awareness and carefully considered safety measures to reduce avoidable risk. This approach is focused on prevention and learning, rather than fault or restriction of responsible use.

Council recognises that clarity over responsibility is essential for effective safety management. Responsibilities for Mouldon Hill Lake and other watercourses within Mouldon Hill are shared between the Parish Council and Swindon Borough Council, depending on land ownership and the nature of the asset or intervention. Clear communication of these responsibilities must therefore form part of any safety measures.

Council supports the use of clear, visible information as a proportionate and effective safety intervention. The Parish Council has previously agreed to trial a QR code trail at Mouldon Hill. Installing up to ten information points around Mouldon Hill Lake will form part of this agreed trial. Where appropriate, existing posts, bins, or other suitable street furniture should be used to host signage and QR codes to minimise visual clutter and additional infrastructure. These information points will incorporate water safety warnings alongside QR codes linking to the Parish Council website for further safety information relating specifically to water features.

Local observation, flood reports, and path usage indicate that some locations around the lake and along watercourses may present higher safety risks due to proximity to water, drainage features, visibility, ground conditions, and flood behaviour. Any interventions must be evidenced, proportionate, and must not increase flood risk or introduce new hazards.



Proposed actions:

For Haydon Wick Parish Council:

- 1. To install up to ten information points around Mouldon Hill Lake as part of the previously agreed QR code trail trial, using existing posts, bins, or other suitable infrastructure where possible, and incorporating water safety warnings and QR codes linking to further information on the Parish Council website relating to water features and watercourses.**
- 2. To ensure that all Parish-installed signage, QR-linked content, and relevant website pages clearly set out the respective responsibilities of the Parish Council and Swindon Borough Council in relation to Mouldon Hill Lake and other watercourses within Mouldon Hill.**
- 3. To review and maintain Parish Council website content supporting the signage, ensuring information is clear, accurate, and accessible.**
- 4. To identify and assess locations around the lake and along watercourses that may present a higher safety risk, including proximity to footpaths, depth, water flow, visibility, drainage features, and flood behaviour.**
- 5. To write formally to the Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council, enclosing this resolution and requesting the actions set out below, using the draft letter in Appendix A.**
- 6. To review Swindon Borough Council's response, and any actions proposed or undertaken, at the February Full Council meeting.**

To request Swindon Borough Council:

- 1. To review storm drains, culverts, and other relevant drainage features associated with Mouldon Hill Lake and watercourses within Mouldon Hill, including confirmation of which assets fall within Swindon Borough Council ownership, and ensure that they meet current safety standards in line with national guidance and best practice.**
- 2. Provides an initial written response to the Parish Council within 14 days of receipt of this resolution, setting out ownership, responsibility, the findings of any review, and proposed next steps, or confirming if further assessment is required.**
- 3. To request that any measures implemented by Swindon Borough Council are proportionate, do not unreasonably restrict access, maintain the open character of the site, and do not increase flood risk.**



APPENDIX A

Draft Letter for Approval by Council

Dear Chief Executive,

I am writing on behalf of Haydon Wick Parish Council following a resolution of the Council concerning water safety around Mouldon Hill Lake and other watercourses within Mouldon Hill. **Minute Reference FC X 20th January 2026.**

The Parish Council notes with sadness the loss of a dog, Rae, in late December 2025. This prompted the Council to consider water safety specifically in relation to lakes, watercourses, and drainage features within Mouldon Hill, particularly where these are close to public footpaths and areas of regular use.

In February 2025, the Parish Council was contacted by Ross Savage MP for South Cotswolds regarding a water safety concern at Mouldon Hill relating to a storm drain. At that time, the Parish Council confirmed that responsibility for Mouldon Hill Lake and associated water features sits with Swindon Borough Council.

Following the loss of Rae, the Parish Council also became aware of a further historical incident reported to have occurred in or around 2017 or 2018 involving the loss of a dog in proximity to a water feature within Mouldon Hill. While details of location vary, these matters together indicate that water safety concerns relating to water features have arisen at different points over time.

In light of this, the Parish Council formally requests that Swindon Borough Council:

- reviews storm drains, culverts, and other relevant drainage features associated with Mouldon Hill Lake and watercourses within Mouldon Hill, including confirmation of which assets fall within Swindon Borough Council ownership.
- ensures that these assets meet current safety standards in line with national guidance and best practice; and
- confirms any actions proposed or required.

The Parish Council further requests an initial written response within 14 days of receipt of this letter. This response will be reviewed by the Parish Council at its 24th February Full Council meeting.

The Parish Council is progressing proportionate measures within its own remit and is keen to work constructively with Swindon Borough Council to ensure responsibilities are clear and that appropriate, proportionate measures are in place to reduce risk around water features.

Yours sincerely,

Georgina Morgan-Denn
Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO

Haydon Wick Parish Council