

# The Old Mill Pond revisited.....

*It's around the early 1600s. Present day time travellers could well imagine themselves bringing their corn-laden carts across the packhorse bridge on the way to the Rising Water Corn Mill. The mill was still doing what it was designed to do up to the early 1950s when the mill house was finally converted into a private dwelling. It's a remarkable tale. The course of the old mill race can still be traced from the present gardens of the Parish Hall on its way under Millfield Road, through now private gardens, behind the current tennis courts on its way to the old mill pond on the bend of Marchburn Lane.*

The mill pond, which provided a head of water to turn the mill wheel, the remnants of which can still be seen on the wall of Mill House, was fed from the Marchburn close to the present day stepped weir. Working in partnership with the Tyne Rivers' Trust, the Parish Council has instigated a feasibility study to investigate reinstating the site of the old mill pond as a valuable village amenity, celebrating both the historical importance of the site and its ongoing value to the community today.

The plan under discussion is to reopen the leat which feeds water from the Marchburn to the old mill pond and restore the area as a minor nature wetland. A moderate amount of clearance of shrubbery and foliage would be needed to create this unique space. Our conservation experts are confident that the new pond would attract a wide range of birds, wildlife and flora and be of significant interest to ornithologists and naturalists in particular.

There is already considerable interest from the educational community in this proposed village amenity which is intended to enhance the village through what would be a unique environment.

**Would the pond be a potential hazard?** The pond would have a low water level, strictly controlled by the leat opening. Think modest, shallow wetland rather than lake, considerably less of a hazard than the Marchburn. Canoeists should point their craft towards Tyne Green!

**Would the project be properly supervised?** Without doubt. That is what the Tyne Rivers' Trust does!

**Is the intention to reinstate the mill race as a water course?**

Absolutely not! The days of the working mill are long gone, as is the need for a working water supply.

**Who would pay for the work?**

Whilst a small contribution from the Parish Council is likely, the bulk of the funding would be sought from appropriate grants with the support of the Tyne Rivers' Trust who have considerable experience with projects such as these.

**Will the residents of Riding Mill be consulted?**

The Parish Council will present the feasibility study to the people of Riding Mill for comment and discussion. Watch this space!