

# United Utilities WPM AMC Report

5<sup>th</sup> July 2011

## General Update

- Good Friday in Rivington was busy but relatively uneventful. Several thousand people walked up to the Pike that day, United Utilities (UU) Rangers, local Police and Bolton Mountain Rescue were all in the area in the event of any issues occurring. UU hired porta loos and a skip for the weekend and undertook a large scale litter pick throughout the Rivington area on the Saturday.



- John Grimshaw, one of the part time Rangers is organising the next newsletter, he is in the process of writing articles and getting all the relevant pictures and information that will be needed.

- There was a substantial moorland fire across Anglezarke Moor which started on the 29 April, the dry and windy weather conditions created an environment where the fire spread very quickly across an extensive area of moor and has burnt Pike Stones Plantation. UU worked closely with the fire brigade to help bring the fire under control and ultimately extinguish it.



There were over 20 fire pumps on site for over a week as the fire continued to burn. UU staff were out in two argocats with fire fogging units assisting.

- Bolton Conservation Volunteers (BCV) have undertaken two days of work in Rivington, the first continuing their work on the wall located between Go Ape and Lower Rivington Reservoir, they have completed a further 20m here and again the top stones will be cemented into position.
- BCV have also worked just outside of the Terraced Gardens removing rhododendron.
- Ironman is going to be run this year on 31 July, although they are not intending to use UU land this year there will be disruption in the area due to road closures and additional people in the area.
- Fly tipping continues to be a problem with numerous tyres and rubbish dumped around our estates; the Police have been kept informed.

- Our Woodland plans that have been agreed with the Forestry Commission, will endeavour to reduce the non native conifer elements within our plantation and to promote native broadleaves and natural regeneration where possible.
- Our Wildlife Warden Ian Harper has included this update:

Following on from the fires in early May measures will be undertaken during late summer and early autumn to improve fire breaks and create natural wet areas as barriers to rapid fire spread. Despite the bad timing of the fires some birds have still managed to get broods away, especially curlew and lapwing.

Repairs and renewals to dry stone walls will continue throughout the area with approx 375m currently scheduled for 2011-12 in the Roddlesworth, Belmont and Rivington areas.

Bolton Conservation Volunteers have a range of tasks scheduled for the year, and we are working with BTCV on the HLF pilot project to remove Himalayan Balsam from the River Yarrow corridor. Work is scheduled for the next three years on land around Upper Rivington reservoir. This is in addition to the work funded from the revenue programme targeting both knotweed and balsam.

Contributions to the brown hare project have continued this year with over 20 kilometre square quadrat surveys having been completed across West Pennines and the ad hoc sightings being added to the project website are on the increase this year. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for water vole sightings. The adder sightings at the Haslingden site have returned a maximum of three females on one occasion which is excellent news after last year's nil returns.

Photograph. Work undertaken last year at Belmont Reservoir to cut a trench making the island gull roost less vulnerable to predation has paid dividends this season. Although the bulk of the work on the spillway was completed, the finishing off and slow refilling of the reservoir has seen the water level maintained lower than would be the norm. The water level has been held at a level keeping the trench filled and the gull roost a true island through out the breeding season. This year we have employed an aerial photographic census to be more accurate with the colony count. The count of 6,738 makes this one of the largest ( if not the largest this year), black headed gull colonies in Britain.



On a more worrying note there has been an escalation in the number of fish poaching incidents in the North Turton area. The latest incident on 26 June at Wayoh allegedly involved the discharge of a firearm.

- SCAMP 2 (Sustainable Catchment Management Programme) is still ongoing with 10 farms now signed up to the scheme. Scamp will deliver improved grant income into the farm whilst improving raw water quality, moorland restoration and numerous biodiversity gains on catchments



- A new part-time Ranger, Andrew Ryding, started working for United Utilities on 15 June 2011. He will be working mostly weekends and bank holidays and will be covering all our estates, as required.
- The current work programmes and capital programmes for the West Pennine Moors are attached with this report.

Neville Kidd  
United Utilities