

From: clerk@stedhamwithiping-pc.gov.uk

Subject: Himalayan Balsam Removal

Date: 3 June 2026 at 15:21

To: [REDACTED]@southdowns.gov.uk

Cc: [REDACTED]@gmail.com, Ruth Cooper ruth.cooper@stedhamwithiping-pc.gov.uk, [REDACTED]@southdowns.gov.uk



Hello Angela

Re: Proposed Training Session – 28th June

Further to South Downs' proposal to hold a training day on the removal of Himalayan Balsam along the River Rother, the Parish Council, represented by Ruth Cooper (Chair) and me, met with [REDACTED] on 27th May to discuss the purpose and objectives of the proposed session.

I would like to confirm that [REDACTED] is very willing to host an event, and the Parish Council is keen to support it. However, we do have concerns about how SDNPA sees the aims and intended outcomes of the session. Describing it as a "training" session suggests that there is already a readily available group of volunteers who understand the problems caused by Himalayan Balsam and simply need instruction. In reality, this is not the case, as very few people are even aware of the issue.

We would therefore suggest that the session should focus on education and recruitment: informing people why Himalayan Balsam needs to be removed, outlining SDNPA's strategy, and explaining why local volunteers are needed. It will therefore be important for a knowledgeable representative from either SDNPA or, possibly, the National Trust to attend and explain these issues clearly.

It is also worth noting that, within the parish of Stedham with Iping, much of the Himalayan Balsam growing along the banks of the Rother is not safely accessible from land, as the banks are steep and unstable; boats will therefore be required. Does SDNPA's strategy take this into account? Similarly, what proposals are there for dealing with the large tracts of Himalayan Balsam as on [REDACTED]'s land?

It is also important that local riparian owners, including the National Trust, are invited to the event. Will SDNPA be inviting the relevant landowners?

I would be grateful if you could clarify these points so that the purpose and structure of the session can be communicated clearly and the event can be made as effective as possible.

Please call if you have any queries, thank you.

Regards,

Morag Birch
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