

A damp and flood-prone part of Central Park is going to be turned in to a new 'wetland' complex.

A network of ponds and natural surface run-offs are planned for the area near the pond at the Barn Park Road entrance, turning this corner into a home for wildlife as well somewhere for people to stop at rather than walk past or jump the giant puddles that form in the Winter.

Planning permission has this week been granted for the scheme which will see two new ponds created, the old pond cleared of dank and dreary vegetation and new plants brought in. The scheme intends to use nature to help reduce localised flooding by digging a swale - a shallow ditch to capture water run-off. There will also be repairs to drains and paths.

A new wildflower meadow is also planned for the old Reservoir Field, while the sports pitches to the north west of Barn Park entrance will also benefit from drainage improvements, so they can be used all year round.

Councillor Sue Dann, Cabinet Member for Street Scene and the Environment said: "We are making nature work with us to resolve some of the ongoing flooding problems in the park and we are making this rather dark corner of our incredible Central Park lighter and brighter.

The scheme is using what is known as a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) approach to deliver run-off drainage solutions.

It also improves the environment for wildlife and aims to increase biodiversity, safeguard historic and ecologically important trees, and create opportunities for education and engagement to learn about water and wildlife.

The project will start in early spring 2021 with the aim of completion by summer 2021.

It will be delivered as part of the Green Minds project led by Plymouth City Council, with support from community volunteers, Devon Wildlife Trust, University of Plymouth and Plymouth College of Arts.