

Langstone Mill Pond

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The term Langstone Mill is probably seen by many as a reference to the old black structure of the windmill. Less obvious is that Langstone is possibly unique with its combination of both a windmill and a water mill on the same site. Tucked away behind the mill is the mill pond, a destination well known to bird watchers, local families, and the many passing walkers on the coast path.

According to a recent report by engineers Royal HaskoningDHV, part of the sea wall at Langstone between the mill pond and Wade Lane collapsed in 2022. The twin green lines in the picture are the collapsed wall. The path on top of the wall is expected to fail in 2025, while other parts of the wall are also crumbling. This stretch of wall is important as it keeps the level of water in the mill pond at a suitable height for the water mill. It is within the AONB and is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).



A petition was started in August that year to raise awareness of the need to save the footpath and the mill pond. The petition said that without urgent action by the relevant authorities, the path would be gone and the mill pond abandoned to become a tidal swamp, changing the shoreline forever and destroying this unique environment. The original aim of the petition was that all the sea walls should be repaired.

Although a complete re-build of the old Victorian walls has not been feasible, in January it was announced that a compromise has been settled between the many agencies involved: Havant Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Chichester Harbour Conservancy,

Natural England and the Environment Agency This compromise will see the repair and maintenance of most of the sea walls for at least the next 25 years, thereby saving the mill pond for the next generation. Where the walls have failed a new footbridge will be erected to retain the footpath in its current coastal position.



Intrigued by this we went to have a look, and took some photographs, which are used in this article. Confusingly, the collapse of the sea wall is beyond the mill pond, while the path between the mill and the pond seems to be in good condition.

Search **Langstone Mill Pond** for more information.

About the mills: Built around 1800, the water mill operated two ten foot wheels set at different heights. The higher of the two was near the downstream end so it could be used for longer as the tide came in, before both wheels were submerged. The water mill is built across a creek and is associated with a sea-wall with sluices. The more distinctive black windmill is an earlier structure, dating from 1720-1740. Both mills are now private houses.

