

COFTON LAKE CONSERVATION LTD NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2010



Dear Member,

Another very frustrating year! The Committee have had talks with British Waterways on numerous occasions throughout the year trying to establish exactly what they intend to do to rectify the problem with the valves. A two page letter was sent direct to the Chief Executive of British Waterways complaining about the way their Engineers had carried out the work and pointing out the complete inefficiency of the company who had been sub contracted to repair the valves. A copy of this letter was also sent to various members of their management team. We pointed out that British Waterways were wasting tax payer's money by their total mismanagement of the project and if a satisfactory solution was not found very soon we intended taking the matter further and would even get the press involved.

Within a couple of weeks a completely new Engineer was put on our case and a meeting was held with him and our points made clear. It seems that all the work and expense over the last couple of years has been a complete waste of time and the upper valve is now to be replaced completely! We have insisted that we get a two weekly report from them on their progress and so far this is happening. A new valve has been ordered and work is due to start in January. They hope that work should be finished by end of February when both valves can be closed and the lake should start to fill and the fish returned. Hoorah!! Updates of work in progress can be found on the web site.

Due to the fact that the lake has been closed for much of the year not a lot of maintenance work has been carried out. Hopefully once the lake starts to refill and the fish returned, working parties will once again be clearing the pathways and cutting back trees. Anyone willing to help with this work – please get in touch with a committee member – any help would be appreciated.

We find it extremely embarrassing to remind members that the annual subscription will be due in January when the lake has been closed for much of the year but the insurance still has to be paid and of course with the low interest rates the interest received does not cover this amount. The grass on the north bank has been kept cut all year and of course also has to be paid for. The amount due is £12 – can you please either send it to the registered office 19 Cofton Lake Road or direct to our Treasurer at 58 Ashmead Drive.

The following report is from the White Swan Piscatorials – Fishing Club:

It has been a very frustrating year (which is how I started the article last year!). I wrote to WSP Club members in July confirming the closure of the lake for the remainder of 2010. In my letter, I informed members that the works on the valves were nearing completion, and we hoped to return the fish during the autumn and reopen the lake in 2011.

Things did not go smoothly. Shortly after sending my letter, the works did indeed complete and the lake started to fill again. In August, during a routine test of the valves by BW, the upper valve rod jammed and was bent in the process of trying to close it. During subsequent inspections of the damage, BW decided that the upper valve needs to be replaced. As I write this, repairs have not been started. The valve is in the design stage, and needs to be manufactured. Timescales for completion of the works are still not confirmed but the initial view is that it will not be completed until Feb of next year.

Until the works are completed, we are not able to return the fish to the lake. Allowing time for restocking and the fish to settle in, the lake will not be open until sometime in the late spring.

We have lost a number of the carp in our storage pools, which have become a meal for hungry otters. These will be replaced and the costs past on to BW.

The WSP have refunded the fishing subscription to Cofton Lake members for 2010, but we hope that you will rejoin for 2011. If you are interested in joining the club and having access to our other great waters, then please contact me for further details. Our plans still remain to repair the floating islands and improve their anchorage, however timescales for this are not clear until the works have been completed. The club have held two working parties at the lake to improve the pathways and keep vegetation under control. This year, at the club's expense, we have engaged the contractor who cuts the grass, to also cut the grass on the lower pathways and across the dam.

There is some good news to come out of the saga at Cofton. We have come to an agreement to lease the pools where we are storing the fish. The fishery comprises of 2 pools of around 1 – 1 ½ acres each, situated at Bayton.

We had planned to open our new pools at the beginning of 2011, but due to the continued problems at Cofton, we are not able to remove the Cofton fish, so the start of the fishing here will also be delayed.

Written by Dave Towshend – Secretary White Swan Piscatorials.

The AGM is to be held on Sunday 10th April at Cofton Village Hall at 4.00. Please put this date in your diary. We hope you will all be able to attend and by that time the lake will be back to normal!

The Committee once again thank you for your continued support during 2010 and we wish you all a Merry Christmas and Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Diane Carr on behalf of Cofton Lake Conservation

Please return this slip with your payment:-

**COFTON LAKE CONSERVATION LTD
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
£12.00 per annum**

For new members please note that cheques for subscriptions should be made out to Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd and sent either to the registered office 19 Cofton Lake Road or to Sue Garvey our Treasurer at 58 Ashmead Drive. Please can you ensure that this payment is received by the end of January as it is most time consuming having to chase late payers. Will you please also note that this payment does not include permission to fish.

Name.....

Address.....