

COFTON LAKE CONSERVATION LIMITED

MINUTES OF 4TH A.G.M. HELD ON SUNDAY 26TH APRIL 2009
AT COFTON HACKETT VILLAGE HALL

Present: Diane Carr – Secretary/Director
Sue Garvey – Treasurer/Director
Colin Jones – Director
John Owen – Director
Simon Munn – Web-Site Co-ordinator
Kate Bradley
Paul Whitby
Graham Herbert – Accountant
Dave Townshend – Director/White Swan Piscatorials
Ray Burn – White Swan Piscatorials
25 members of Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd were also present

Apologies: Ian Marson – White Swan Piscatorials
Mark Bradley – Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd
8 member of Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd had also sent their
Apologies but had requested copies of the minutes.

1) Introduction – Diane Carr - For the benefit of new members the committee were introduced including Paul Whitby who had been co-opted onto the committee since the last AGM.

The whole committee were disappointed that the water level has, once again, had to be reduced. This is due to the problems British Waterways are having with the lower sluice, the pipe through the dam wall is leaking. Secretary is in constant contact with British Waterways and is kept up dated on their progress. Members can be assured that all is being done to ensure that this work is carried out as soon as possible. It is a shame that just as the boardwalk and the bridge have been completed this problem has occurred. An up date of when this work might be carried out will be posted on the web site.

We hope everyone received the Newsletter sent out in November. If anyone does change their e-mail address perhaps they will let us know.

As was mentioned in the Newsletter, now that the bridge and boardwalk are complete, more time and money can be spent on maintenance. The whole area has been sadly neglected for many years. Many trees need to be thinned out and pathways kept clear. We are always looking for volunteers to help. Anyone willing to offer assistance please do get in touch. The first working party is scheduled for Sunday 14th June starting at 10.00 am in the car park area.

More benches are planned for this year. We have had offers of benches donated by members. If anyone else would like to donate a bench do please let us know.

Unfortunately due to the reduction in interest rates our income has been drastically reduced for year end 2010. This interest, together with the annual subscription is used to pay for our Public Liability Insurance cover, grass cutting and general maintenance. We do hope no one has any

objection to putting up the annual subscription from £10 to £12 per annum. We would like, at this point, to thank all members who contributed more - and we assure you that this extra money is much appreciated and very well spent.

2) Financial Report – Sue Garvey – We ended last year with just over £14,968 held in the Cofton Lake Conservation account at LloydsTSB. Subscriptions for the year were £1723 plus interest of £496. Unfortunately, with the low interest rates payable at present, plus the fact that we have used some of our capital, the projected interest for 2009 I am afraid, will be between £12 and £13 for the whole year! These funds, as you know, are to cover the cost of ground and boundary maintenance etc., and also our annual insurance and anything else that may unexpectedly crop up in the future. The cost of grass cutting has gone up for this year (£2.00) The construction of the boardwalk has now been completed at a cost of just over £10,500. The subscription payments received so far are coming in considerably better than last year, although we are still outstanding several payments. This makes very hard work out of something which should be so simple. Finally I would like to thank all of those who gave donations in addition to the £10 maintenance subscription.

3) Resignation and Reinstatement of Directors and Committee Members: John Owen – As called for in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company, the Directors and Committee members are required to resign from office. All were willing to stand for a further term. It was therefore proposed that the current Directors and Committee continue for another year. As there were no objections from the floor, this was passed and accepted. It was pointed out that any member interested in joining the Committee as a committee member or a Director to get in touch with the Secretary.

4) Trees and hedgerows – Colin Jones: Colin reported on the water level. The committee had written to British Waterways stating that not only were the fish under threat if the level was reduced even further, but so were the islands and some of the surrounding trees and bog plants. An e-mail had been received that morning from British Waterways which is as follows:

“There are four tasks to be undertaken on the reservoir:

- 1 – Reline the pipe from the lower sluice to the outfall to seal the leak through the displaced joint.
- 2 - Replace the bent section of the sluice rod of the lower sluice.
- 3 - Reline the pipe from the upper sluice to the outfall to seal the leak through the cast iron pipe joint.
- 4 - Replace the weak sluice operating rod from the lid of the sluice to the paddle stand.

The upper sluice is used to take water to feed the canal for the normal operating range of weir level to -4.0m approx. The lower sluice is only required if we need to completely empty the reservoir. The issue with leaks through the pipes is the risk of erosion to the dam: under the terms of the reservoirs act we have been instructed to hold the water level at a maximum of -1.5m until the repairs are completed and certified by a Reservoir Panel Engineer. We will need to reduce the water level to -4.0m in order to replace the sluice rods and reline the upper sluice pipe.

With regard to the lower sluice pipe, our preferred method is to reline the pipe without emptying the reservoir; we do not yet know if this is possible, it will depend on the level of leakage through the pipe once the water level is at -4.0m.

In terms of using the reservoir to feed the canal this year, this will depend on resources and rainfall. If we experience a draught there is every possibility that we will use the reservoir along with Upper Bittell, Rotton Park and Earlswood to feed the canal. We would only look to use the reservoir to normal operating range so this should not cause any problems with the fish.

This work is currently being scoped, once we have an agreed programme I will contact you to arrange a meeting”

Colin reported that as soon as a decision is made by British Waterways a notice will be posted on the web site.

Colin then reported on the maintenance and pointed out that it would be easier for maintenance parties to keep their machinery on site. Discussions had taken place regarding the positioning of a locked metal container to be housed adjacent to the car park area hidden in the hedgerow alongside the stocken. This could be painted green and foliage planted. Objections were raised regarding the size of such a container but it was agreed that a smaller container could be erected by the Fishing Club as long as it was camouflaged as much as possible.

5 – Web Site – Simon Munn – Simon had worked on a new format for the web site and the floor were shown around the site. The Committee thanked him for all his hard work.

6 – Fishing Club Report – Dave Townshend – Dave reported on the state of the islands but said that no work on these islands would be carried out until British Waterways had completed their work and the water level was back to normal. The Fishing Club had agreed that Colin Jones could ‘adopt’ one of the islands – Colin to work on this island during the summer season. Dave also said how disappointed they were on the water level. He estimated that the lake now held over £20,000 worth of fish. If the level does have to be reduced further it would mean the fish would have to be removed. The fish cannot be removed from April until October. Removal of the fish is a costly business and not all the fish will survive the move.

There then followed an open forum.

The meeting was closed by the Secretary who pointed out that this lake and surrounding area was originally purchased in order to preserve it for future generations. Cofton Lake Conservation Limited is a registered Limited company and as such needs to hold regular minuted meetings, a strict record kept of expenditure and annual returns submitted to Companies House. Thanks were expressed to all Directors, Committee Members, Treasurer and our Accountant all of whom do this work in their own time for free in the common interest of all our members. Thank you all for coming and your continued support.

Date of next A.G.M. - Date to be confirmed.