

# COFTON LAKE CONSERVATION LTD

## MINUTES OF FIRST AGM HELD ON SUNDAY 26TH FEB 2006 IN COFTON HACKETT VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Diane Carr - Director/Secretary and Acting Chairman  
Sue Garvey - Director/Treasurer  
Colin Jones - Director  
John Owen - Director  
David Townshend - Director/White Swan Piscatorials  
Ian Marson - Director/White Swan Piscatorials  
Geoff Smith - White Swan Piscatorials  
Katie & Mark Bradley - Cofton Lake Conservation Committee

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Diane Carr opened the meeting by saying that apologies had been received from 6 members all of whom could not be present but had no problems and were all pleased with the work so far carried out by the Committee on their behalf.

The Committee were introduced followed by a brief report on work carried out to date. Planning permission was needed for the erection of the bridge over the dam but this could not be applied for until permission was first received from British Waterways. This permission has now been granted and planning application, for the bridge and the boardwalk around the marsh area, will be put in within the next week. It is hoped that this work be completed for the coming season.

Over the last few years this area has been badly neglected and it was nice to see the pathways being cleared, dead trees felled and families enjoying walking around the lake shore once again.

The fencing on the southern boundary is almost complete and the planting of shrubs and hedges will commence in the spring. The Committee thank Mark Bradley and his brother-in-law for erecting the fence.

It was pointed out that there were still prints available of the aerial photograph of the lake if anyone was interested in purchasing at a cost of £5.00.

TREASURER'S REPORT - SUE GARVEY: It was reported that just over £25,000 was at present held at Lloyds TSB Bank in the 'Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd' account, and that these funds were needed to cover costs of ground and boundary maintenance, and also to cover anything else which may unexpectedly crop up in the future. It was noted that the cost of the structural calculations for the bridge had been met, those for the actual bridge and boardwalk had not yet been estimated.

Subscriptions of the £10.00 Annual charge to help towards the insurance were coming in but there were still 13 subscriptions outstanding. The Committee thank all those who gave donations over and above the £10 subscription.

REPORT ON TREES AND HEDGEROWS - COLIN JONES: It was reported that a few trees had died (mostly Willow) and it was his opinion that this had been due to the lack of water during the emptying of the lake and the particularly dry weather over the last few years. It is hoped that natural regeneration of the area will take place over the coming months and years, but that we may have to consider replanting in the future. Thanks were expressed to the Fishing Club for their working parties who had cleared the pathways and felled any dangerous trees. It was pointed out that this would have been an extremely expensive exercise had outside tree surgeons had to be called in. Anyone wishing to plant any trees or shrubs in the lake area are asked to consult with the Committee first as it is our intention to keep this area as natural as possible.

Colin went on to say that unfortunately cans and litter had been found around the banks and the Committee would be pleased if all members could take their litter home with them, and also to keep a look out for anyone causing this problem. Members were also reminded that dogs should be kept on a lead and dog fouling was not permitted. No 'dog' or litter bins were to be provided as this would entail employing someone to empty.

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 were to resign from office and as all were willing to stand for a further term, it was proposed that the current Directors and Committee continue for a further year. As there were no objections from the floor, this was passed and accepted. John did point out that there was a vacancy on the Board and also a vacancy on the Committee and if anyone was interested to please get in touch.

WHITE SWAN PISCATORIALS - IAN MARSON AND DAVID TOWNSEND: £12,000 had been spent on the five islands and it was hoped that this season they should show some sign of growth. It was pointed out that these islands were erected for the benefit of the fish and a problem was being encountered at the moment with the arrival of a pair of cormorants. Apparently there are 40 pairs at Barnt Green Reservoir and a careful watch is being kept to ensure more don't settle here. Although it is possible to obtain a licence to shoot them, other alternatives will be tried first. It may be necessary to erect more islands in the wider section of the water to give the fish more protection. Lilies had been introduced to the water in order to also offer protection for the fish. More fish should be introduced over the coming months but this may have to be postponed until the Cormorants have been dealt with.

WEB SITE: Simon Munn, who had kindly compiled our web-site, was introduced and he outlined briefly what he had achieved so far and asked for any photographs, history, or interesting information to be forwarded to him for inclusion. The web site address is [www.coftonlake.org.uk](http://www.coftonlake.org.uk).

THERE THEN FOLLOWED AN OPEN FORUM:

Prior to the meeting two letters had been received from members who were not happy with the Fishing Club's rules to fish the lake. Secretary had written to both parties

explaining how these rules had been compiled and before the meeting commenced the one member stated that she was now happy and a solution had been reached.

Mr. Green was present at the meeting and stated that having bought a share in the lake and having lived in the area for many years, he was under the impression that his close family members would be able to fish this lake at no extra cost.

It pointed out that the original reason for purchasing this site at the onset, was to secure the area and ensure that it stayed as a natural wildlife area for years to come. Monies were raised in and around the area in order to make this possible. Many people purchased membership shares prior to a fishing club becoming involved. They purchased shares purely to conserve the area. It was soon realised that there was a short fall in the asking price, and a fishing club was then sought and The White Swan Piscatorials joined us, therefore, the fishing aspect in this venture became a 'bonus'. Of course some members, who joined later, purchased a share purely to fish and this they have - for life. Out of the 150 shares sold the fishing club have received 30 applications to fish from members who are more than happy with their rules.

As a gesture of goodwill, for relatives of members, the fishing club are willing to waive the £75 membership fee, and only charge £92 for fishing rights which will include fishing at their other waters. It was pointed out that this area should be kept as exclusive as possible. The Fishing Club had so far spent something in the region of £70,000 on putting in the islands, and re stocking with fish and it was thought only right that some restrictions be made on who is to fish.

It was brought to the attention of the Committee that on a few occasions the main gate into the car park had been left open. This is to be locked after entry.

The meeting was closed by thanking all who had helped to ensure that this venture was a success. To Keith Newbury for his hard work at the onset of the formation of the Company. To Colin Jones for his work in strimming the pathways. To Simon Munn for his work on the web-site. To the Fishing Club and their members for their hard work, in all weathers, on the tree felling, clearing of banks and helping to generally maintain and improve this area and lastly, to the support of the Committee who have spent a lot of time and expense in ensuring that this purchase was achieved.

Thank you also, for coming and we look forward to seeing you next year.