

# **Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd**

## **Newsletter December 2021**

Do hope everyone is keeping well during these troublesome times. Hopefully things will be getting back to normal in 2022.

During lockdown we have had new members and to them we say welcome. The committee and volunteers have been busy building the pathway around the newly acquired Muriel's Marsh. If anyone has any free time, we are always looking for volunteers to help in keeping the pathways clear and in the Spring we will be planting ferns, bulbs and the like around the new boardwalk and pathway. Anyone willing to help with either planting, painting preservative on benches and boardwalk and bridge, or general maintenance work please get in touch.

We must thank the volunteers who have been working on the new pathway throughout the year – in all weathers! CLCL committee members and Fishing Club members who have met each week and worked hard in diverting the river back to its original course, clearing out the silt and building bridges in order that all members can walk around this area in safety. Special thanks go to Geoff and his wife, and Adam and Tim from the Fishing Club, Linda, Milly, Ann, Paul and Brian all members, also Darren, Rosie and children for painting the new boardwalk. Please take note that this area is not yet fully completed and we ask everyone to be careful and are aware that they enter this marsh and in fact the rest of the lake area at their own risk.

We estimate that this area will be complete by mid Spring but of course there is always general maintenance work to be carried out so I reiterate, any help will be much appreciated.

We encountered a few problems along the way. Some residents had encroached into our land but we hope this will be resolved in the new year. There has also been a lot of fly tipping in the area over the years. We are having a skip delivered and hoping to remove all the rubbish very soon. Please, residents backing onto the lake, do not dispose of garden rubbish and the like into the lake area. It has been noted that some residents are doing this and we ask you to remove it. It would also be a great help if members could remove any rubbish in the lake area as they walk round. We thank all residents who have been clearing the Himalayan Balsam and have been tidying up the land to the rear of their gardens in the lake area but we must ask you keep to the rules and any trees, shrubs should not be removed without permission. We have also encountered a few houses backing onto the land with gates into the Marsh but are not intending to become members. I think you will all agree that this is unfair on all the members who have contributed and a close watch will be kept to ensure non-members do not have access. I would point out here that the residents backing onto the lake are in their minority, the majority of members do not live around the lake and come from far and wide, conservation people who agree with us that pockets of land such as this should be kept safe from development in order that our wildlife can continue to thrive and live safely.

We did encounter Japanese Knotweed in two areas but fortunately one of our members is an expert on the subject and it has been injected and removed.

I have received numerous e mails from members saying how pleased they are with the new pathway around the Marsh. For the sake of new members, I would mention that 16 years ago when we were trying to acquire the lake and land in order to ensure it was never built on, the area known as Muriel's Marsh to the west of the lake was owned by Mr Sandy. He contacted me at the time to say how pleased he was that we had won this battle to acquire this lake and land and he wanted us to have Muriel's Marsh on two conditions. It was always to be known as Muriel's Marsh after his late wife the original owner, and none of the land was to be sold or given away. Unfortunately, Mr Sandy sadly passed away before this transaction was made. Two years ago, Mr Sandy's nephew who had inherited the land contacted us to say he wanted his uncles wishes to be carried out and Muriel's Marsh has now been officially registered with the Land Registry to CLCL.

CLCL is a Limited company with a board of directors and 10 committee members. Accounts are drawn up each year and submitted to Companies House. Our Accountant, Directors and Committee Members are all volunteers and work very hard to ensure that this lake and land is preserved for generations to come.

#### Fishing Club Report – Dave Townshend

I am sure we're all pleased to see the lake full again after nearly 18 months. We managed to complete some repairs to rotting legs on some of the landing stages before the lake filled. Our night syndicate members have continued to maintain the lake area this year. A lot of effort has been put into renewing the fence along the horse field to keep out unwanted visitors and improve the general security of the lake area. There's still a little more to do, but hopefully this will be completed soon. We have also installed new fishing platforms along the Ashmead bank, which will help keep the pathways clear of our tackle and make it easier to walk around. We stocked 50 smaller carp into the lake recently too – the big fish of the future we hope! Fishing saw a surge in popularity during the lockdowns, being one of the few activities that were still permitted. Our membership numbers have increased and to avoid our fisheries becoming overcrowded, we stopped taking new members and started a waiting list – first time we have ever done so. The gate combination number will be changed on 1<sup>st</sup> March for 2022/2023.

### Financial Report – Paul Whitby

Monies held in Lloyds Bank Deposit account as at October 2021 £32,831.53. Monies held in current account as at end December 2021 £12,159.50.

Approximate expenditure on new pathway around Muriel's Marsh £6820.88. This is offset by new members who now back onto the lake buying a membership share. So far this amounts to £7000.00 but there are others who have shown an interest.

Many members have donated more than the £12 per annum towards maintenance and insurance and for this we thank you.

May we please once again point out that the subs are due in January each year. It is a huge task chasing late payers. PLEASE, PLEASE pay your subs on time as this makes the work of our treasurer and committee members so much easier. How to pay is shown at the end of this newsletter. Subs go towards paying for our public liability insurance, our annual tree inspection and any other repair and maintenance work.

### General

We are hoping to have our AGM this year but of course in these uncertain times it is difficult to plan too far ahead. However, it is always held at the Generous George pub at the Rose Hill/Groveley Lane island in their function room downstairs and all members are invited. It is normally held on the last Sunday in April at **4.00**. Please pencil in your diaries **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April AGM** – watch our face book page and web site for confirmation nearer the date.

I close by thanking the team behind the running of this company, our Directors and Committee members, Paul Whitby our Treasurer, Robert McCulloch our Accountant, Simon Munn who hosts our website, the Fishing Club and of course all our members for their continued support.

Diane Carr - Chairman

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM WITH YOUR ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

PLEASE ENSURE THIS IS IN BY END OF JANUARY

Annual subscription is £12 but the Committee would like to thank all members who pay more – they can be assured that this money is put to good use.

Name.....

Address.....

Subs to be in by end Jan. Cheques made out to Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd and sent either Paul Whitby 15 Middle Drive or the registered office 19 Cofton Lake Road, Cofton Hackett, B45 8PL or direct into our bank sort code 30-96-12 - a/c number 53186960 – if you pay direct into our bank please make sure you reference with either your name or certificate number.

According to the Memorandum and Articles of Association the subs for the lake are due from the date of the AGM until 1 January in the following year. Anyone not paying in this period may have their membership cancelled.