

Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd

Minutes of AGM held on Sunday 27th April 2025 at Cofton Hackett Village Hall

Present: Diane Carr – Chairman – Director

Paul Whitby – Treasurer – Director

Katie and Mark Bradley – Directors

Paul Whitehouse – Committee Member

Geoff Smith – White Swan Piscatorials Fishing Club

Ann Blackburn – Committee Member

Martin Birrell – Committee Member

Rob McCulloch – Accountant

Also 16 members present

Apologies: Dave Townshend Director and member of White Swan

Tim Walsh Director and member of White Swan

Brian Partridge – Committee member

The committee were introduced and minutes from last year's AGM signed and approved.

As called for in our Memorandum and Articles of Association, all directors and committee members to resign at the AGM and become re-elected. All are willing to stand again for a further term.

Paul Whitby gave an overall account of the finances to date but as usual on advice from our bank the figures not to be included in the written Minutes of the AGM due to the increase in recent scams.

Subscriptions so far received amount to £3,045.00 but there are still 16 annual subscriptions outstanding. £1102.43 had so far been paid out mainly on grass cutting.

Chairman's Report – Diane Carr

A few houses backing onto the lake have changed hands and new owners moved in – to them we say welcome and also welcome to the new members who have bought a share having only recently moved to the area.

Some houses backing onto the lake/marsh do not own a share but still have open access to the area via gates in their fences. I think you will all agree this is not fair on the people who have bought shares. A further letter will be sent to these houses stating that they either block up their gates, purchase a share or we will block their access for them. We will give them 6 weeks notice.

Dogs on leads: it has been noted that quite a few people walk their dogs without leads. Our lawn man who cuts the grass has complained about the dog mess on the grassed area. We are having more signs put up.

Following the gales in Jan/Feb quite a few trees had fallen. Some hanging dangerously over pathways and some up rooted and ready to fall. Our priority is to make sure our paths are safe. We put signs up and also a note on our website and our tree surgeon was called. He has walked all round the lake area and has dealt with any trees he thought to be dangerous.

We are in the process of gaining permission from Canal and River Trust to widen the pathway across the dam. Discussions have also taken place regarding a handrail. It was decided to look at this again once the path has been widened.

When residents who back onto the lake decide to sell can we remind everyone that this lake and land is owned by Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd – a Limited company limited by a £1 guarantee. This

was all drawn up by our Solicitors. 36% of memberships belong to residents backing onto the lake and land, 23% with the White Swan Piscatorials and the largest percentage of members - 41% are others – some of whom live many miles from Cofton – people who are interested in conservation, and without them we would never have been able to buy the lake in the beginning.

Concerns have recently been raised re the quality of the water in the small pool to the rear of Ten Ashes Lane and also the soak-away drain that comes from Ashmead Rise. Seven Trent were called out and also Professor Mike Angeline from Bittle Waters. Both took samples. It seems that the small pond is an Iron Oxidizing bacterium which is quite harmless, but the drain was showing signs of effluence. Bromsgrove Council have been notified and also the Environment Agency. Nadia who lives at the last house in Ashmead has kindly agreed to inform her neighbours and meet the Environment people when they attend.

As always, we are looking for volunteers. We know many of you work full time and therefore can't attend our Thursday morning sessions. We are therefore arranging a few Sunday morning clearing up days. Dates are Sunday 8 June Sunday 6th July and Sunday 31 August. If you could spare a few hours on those days, it would be appreciated.

May I remind everyone minutes of all meetings are posted on our website.

I now hand you over to Geoff Smith for the Fishing Club Report:

As already mentioned, we are intending to widen the path across the dam within the next few weeks. Fishing Club has 3 Sunday work parties booked.

Chairman

Finally, as always it just leaves me to say a few thank yous.

We thank all the people who pay more than the £12 per annum subs – especially Ted Brookfield who has sent cheques throughout the year towards maintenance. Thanks to Simon Munn who looks after the hosting of the web site. Thanks to Tim Langford Nick Sandy's solicitor for helping with the boundary issues.

And finally extra Special thanks go to the Thursday Group who have worked each and every Thursday rain or shine in making this bog area of Muriel's Marsh into the haven it now is. This also includes Linda for the tea and coffee. I am pleased to present you all with a Tee Shirt printed – Cofton Lake Conservation Ltd – Maintenance Crew! Thanks Again.

Thanks also to the fishing club, Directors and Committee members for their continued support – and many thanks to you all for attending today.

See you next year.

Signed.....Date.....