

Hoppit Chair's Report – September 2021.

With the pandemic and indoors being a risk, we have not had a meeting since last September's AGM which was held in Howard Simpson's garden. We felt that we could communicate any issues via phone and email. We need to review future meetings and whether four a year is now necessary.

The Hoppit continues to flourish and has been used more since the pandemic's first lockdown hit us on March 23 last year. There has been a noticeable increase in walkers, picnickers and people fishing too. The very wet winter meant that the lake was overflowing for a number of weeks and we even blocked the inflow for a while. The lake has maintained an unusually high level throughout the summer as a result of the wet winter and late spring.

There have been regrettable but isolated acts of vandalism this year. The otter statue has twice been upended and rolled into the lake. Kevin Voller has now secured the carving. He and Vikki have also repaired the noticeboard at the main entrance to the lake as the legs had rotted and repaired the bin in the middle of the wood by the picnic tables. Big thanks to them. Sadly there is only one table now as in August the other one was damaged beyond repair. A final decision will have to be made on whether or not it will be replaced.

In October last year (Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> to be precise) we had a working party where villagers were invited via the Parish Magazine and the village Facebook page. There was a really good turnout of nearly 20 people including committee members and yet more tree guards were removed and other jobs, including lakeside clearing were carried out. A repeat this October would be good as many things need attention. I think we need to continue to improve communication between us and the community and encourage a couple more to join the committee.

Louise Hammond approached me regarding her 'Plant for Hope' idea in October and we hurriedly agreed to allow bulb planting around the lake area, as it was too late to get Parish Council approval for planting in other public areas. Planting of mainly daffodils took place over the weekend of November 7/8 and a great turn out resulted. In the spring the daffodils looked resplendent and were admired by many. More planting is a possibility for this autumn.

In February we were informed of the Parish Council's 'Play Strategy.' The consultation document of the strategy is very thorough and is full of positive initiatives. However, included is the idea of having "a new premier play facility" in the Hoppit. This came as a bit of a shock as we weren't asked our views on this first. After canvassing the opinions of the committee, I responded to the consultation in a separate document which was agreed upon and distributed to the committee and then passed onto the PC. In brief, we felt that a large adventure play facility to be inappropriate for a number of reasons, but we would consider some trim trail equipment being installed around the outer rides. Despite the consultation ending on March 31 we have yet to see what the outcome is.

I would like to thank all the committee for their support and hope we can have a positive rest of 2021 and 2022.