

# The Hoppit Woodland & Waterways Steering Group

## Minutes of AGM on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### 1. Members Present:

Steve Robbins (Chair)	(860304)	<a href="mailto:crossgreeners@btinternet.com">crossgreeners@btinternet.com</a>
Brian Fearnley (Vice-Chair)	(861007)	
Kevin Voller (Treasurer)	(861688)	<a href="mailto:debenham.woodland@btopenworld.com">debenham.woodland@btopenworld.com</a>
Howard Simpson (Secretary)	(860138)	<a href="mailto:howard.simpson@bakerhughes.com">howard.simpson@bakerhughes.com</a>
Steve Palframan (PC Rep)		
Rhona Allen	(860990)	<a href="mailto:rhona.allen@icloud.com">rhona.allen@icloud.com</a>

### 2. Apologies

Alan Cushion (860527) [alancushions63@gmail.com](mailto:alancushions63@gmail.com)

#### Not Present

Gerry Baxter (861111) [gerrybaxter@outlook.com](mailto:gerrybaxter@outlook.com)  
Steve Giddings (860721) [sdgiddings8591@gmail.com](mailto:sdgiddings8591@gmail.com)  
Peter Richardson (860996) [peter.richardson@aspall.co.uk](mailto:peter.richardson@aspall.co.uk)  
Caroline Giddings

Noted that we need to encourage new members of the committee. **Action:** Howard to use the NextDoor App to encourage use of the lake & woodland area, and invite membership of the committee.

### 3. Minutes of Previous AGM on 11<sup>th</sup> September 23020

Outstanding actions from the previous AGM were reviewed:

Item 1: Howard to suggest to the Parish Clerk, and cc the PC Chair Jane Baldwin, that we receive a routine quarterly financial statement.

**Status:** Message was sent in September 2020, but our treasurer, Kevin, has not been routinely receiving statements.

**Action:** Steve Palframan to arrange half-yearly accounts to be sent to Kevin, prior to each meeting (see 11. Dates for Next Meetings).

Item 2: Action: Seeking guarantee for the resilience of the bridge structure. This item had been closed, but Steve R. subsequently received verbal assurance from Gladwells that the wood had Tanalith pressure treatment and should last at least 8-10 years but no firm guarantees can be made. Item closed.

Item 3: Coordination with Bernard Rose from the Mens' Shed re: bases for the wooden sculptures. Suggested that we stick with the original base, put in a French drain with a gravel sump, and pack the sculpture otter into the gravel. Cost of materials would be £50. Donation would be another £50. Committee agreed to go ahead at this cost. Action: Brian would give Bernard the go-ahead.

**Status:** Brian gave the go-ahead, but nothing happened. **Action:** Brian to remind Bernard.

#### **4. Chair's Report**

Steve R. delivered a report on the activities over the past year, reproduced here:

##### **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 10th 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.*

#### **5. Treasurer's Report:**

Kevin presented the Financial Report, with information received from the Parish Clerk. Balances are

- Current       £2823.56
- Deposit       £6369.74
- Total           £9193.30

At the end of the financial year, the balances were £6,369.74 and £1,653.40 for the deposit and current accounts, respectively. Reclaimed VAT of £1,170.16 was transferred to the current account at the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

## 6. Election of Officers & Committee

The following individuals were elected to the executive:

Chair	Steve Robbins nominated by Kevin, seconded by Brian
Vice Chair	Brian Fearnley nominated by Howard, seconded by Steve Robins
Treasurer	Kevin volunteered to continue in this role. Nominated by Brian, seconded by Rhona
Secretary	Howard volunteered to continue in the role. Nominated by Steve, seconded by Kevin

Committee Members

Rhona agreed to continue to serve.

**Action:** Howard to contact the following, to get their agreement to continue to serve on the committee

Steve Giddings

Caroline Giddings

Pete Richardson

Gerry Baxter

Alan Cushion

Steve Palframan has agreed to represent the Parish Council until a replacement councillor can be found.

### Matters arising

The webpage hosting by BT has been discontinued. **Action:** Howard to contact Deborah Sage to ask about piggy-backing onto the Debenham village website.

Steve still has 30 copies of the 10th anniversary booklet. It was suggested that we give them away or ask for donations to the remaining copies. Steve will ask Websters if they will look after them.

Appreciation for the support of the Parish Clerk was expressed. **Action:** Howard to communicate with Dina to thank her for her work

## 7. Maintenance

Hedges, rides and brambles. October maintenance to be done. **Action:** Steve R. to contact Martin Durie to cut the rides and paths. Joe Westrup has been contacted to do the flailing

Steve R. showed a map of the original paths received from Alan Cushion:



Alan Cushion had suggested mowing the old paths, to encourage people to walk through the new wood, not around. **Action:** Before cutting, Steve to ask Reg Woodard if there are areas of ground-nesting birds that should be left undisturbed.

Next working party to focus on cutting back around the lake.

## 8. Picnic Benches

One vandalised bench is still in pieces, and pieces still in situ. Bits to be removed, and bench will not be replaced.

## 9. Plant for Hope

Initiative by Louise Hammond. **Action:** Howard to contact Louise to ask for her thoughts on a date for repeat planting. Possibly English bluebells in the shady areas, and crocuses. Monetary donations could be made through this committee.

## 10. Notice Boards & Publicity

One notice board has lost its' bottom part which contains the restrictive rules. This part will not be replaced and it has been agreed to remove most of these rules from the other boards as well. greed to retain the two rules related to swimming on the notice board, and reinstall this on a new frame for near the lake.

We need to show somewhere a point-of-contact for any issues or problems, and to advertise the availability of the booklet. **Action:** Howard to draft some text for this new noticeboard, and locate it near the main entrance.

### **11. Orchard Future Plans**

In the absence of any plans by the PC to use the land to the north of the lake, there remains a desire by this committee to plant an orchard. This does not exclude the use for stock-keeping or grazing.

**Action:** Steve Palframan will bring our desire to the attention of the Parish Council.

### **12. Future Workparties and meetings**

Working Party to be scheduled on the first Sunday of every month, to clear around the lake and to remove some remaining tree guards from the mature trees. Big one is planned for the whole community on the 09:30 to lunchtime on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October. **Action:** Steve to share his email list with Howard, to enable a mail-shot to go out. **Action:** Steve will publicise the event via the Parish Magazine and village Facebook."

### **13. AOB**

Update from Steve P. on Play Strategy:

Siting a premier play facility in the vicinity of the lake makes no sense. Otherwise, the strategy has been well received. Both schools in the village have come up with designs. The first stage will be installation of basic types of facilities incl. toddler's slide. There have been 3 responses from tenderers, but nothing appropriate or affordable, due to significant supply chain problems.

The recreation ground may have a covenant on it restricting further development with larger play facilities. Steve intends to give a progress report on the strategy soon via the Parish Magazine.

### **14. Dates for Next Meetings**

Agreed that four meetings per year were unnecessary. Two is appropriate. Next one will be on Monday March 7<sup>th</sup> 2022, venue to be decided nearer the time.

Next AGM      Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022, location TBD