

# Woodland & Waterways Steering Committee

The woodland is really now starting to look like a proper woodland. The trees are getting taller and the hedges are providing an excellent habitat. We reported last year that we had started to plant an orchard on the field next to the lake but plans to continue this planting this year have had to be put on hold. We had ordered a further 30 trees which have now had to be planted nearer to the lake and also in the woodland.

We have taken part in The Great British Elm Experiment and received an *ulmus minor* sapling from a tree in Boxworth, Cambridgeshire.

Cuttings taken from mature trees that appear to have resisted Dutch elm disease for over 60 years have been skillfully micro propagated. The resulting saplings are being distributed to hundreds of schools, community groups, local authorities and private landowners who have signed up to take part in The Great British Elm Experiment.

We now need to monitor the tree and see whether it is in fact resistant to the disease.

As reported last year there are signs of ash die back so we will continue to monitor the situation over the summer to see if it has spread and the impact on Hoppit Wood. In terms of numbers we have planted, ash accounts for around 480 (out of a total of 3000 trees planted in the woodland). This gives a total of 16% of the overall planting.

The steering group have informed the Parish Council of their concerns regarding possible planning permission for a skate park near the entrance to Hoppit Wood and how it is felt that this type of facility is incompatible with what the woodland project has been trying to create for the last 16 years.

## Lake

There have been no signs of bacterial infections on the fish which all seem to be healthy.

It is really good to see so many young people out fishing and we are very pleased with how this has worked out.

Rabbits continue to be a problem and we will be carrying out further repairs to the paths this summer

## Commemorative Book

The group is currently working on a commemorative book to celebrate the first 10 years of the project. It will include photos, history and comments/anecdotes from the community.

## Good Woods Scheme

We had a visit from a woodlands advisor on 29/10/13 as part of the B&Q Good Woods scheme.

Extract from report:

Hoppit Wood (and Lake) is an outstanding example of a community woodland that has been created and managed by the local community. The hard work---raising money, purchasing the land, planting with trees, maintaining until established--- has been done and the next few years will see a steady development from a new plantation into an established woodland.

## Final Note

We are aware of the different views on how the site should be managed but we try to strike a balance. Keeping it over managed tends to reduce the wildlife value but we are conscious of it also looking unmanaged.

We would like to thank the community and volunteers for their support of the woodland and their efforts in helping to keep the place litter free and well maintained. However we are always on the lookout for new people – so if anybody wants to get involved then please contact the Steering Group for more details.

There are also vacancies on the Steering Group and we would welcome anybody willing to join.