Somerford Keynes Parish Council **SOMERFORD KEYNES VILLAGE LAKE**

**Report for AGM 9 May 2022**

The Lake subcommittee consists of 5 members: Chairman (Mike Wilding), 2 parish councillors (Graham Valentine & joined this year, Mandy Keegan), plus Lisa Willis and Nick Cartwright. We meet at regular intervals, manage the Lake and carry out monthly Lake inspections, which record the condition of various aspects of the Lake, and deal with any actions required.

1. **CALOR RURAL COMMUNITY FUND:** Due to the Covid 19 epidemic, expenditure of the £5000 grant for ecological, educational & recreational work at our Village Lake, has slowed down and we still have around £430 left in the fund, to spent next year. In addition to 2021/22 items of expenditure, this year we have purchased and installed:
2. Installed the gauge board, purchased last year, to record ground water/lake water levels, and survey to establish an Ordnance Datum level at the location, so that water level above mean sea level can be read.
3. A 6ft wooden bench opposite the pond dipping platform on the N side. This bench will be fitted with a small plaque acknowledging the financial support we have received from Calor Rural Community Fund
4. **VOLUNTEERS:** During the year we have held about 3 or 4 volunteer mornings when 10 -15 stalwarts have come along for 2-3 hours, primarily working on general maintenance such as clearing overhanging branches, undergrowth, and ivy, keeping the new Lake “vistas” free of saplings, mowing the path, installing further anti slip strips to the boardwalk, and the annual bonfire.
5. **SKPC LAKE BUDGET:** We continue to work on a SKPC Lake budget of £1050 per year. Expenditure this year has primarily been on:
6. Hedge cutting and strimming equipment
7. Cutting down of 5 trees adjacent to the Lake to bring light into the dark SE corner (branches used to delineate the new Bulb and Wildflower meadow)
8. Purchasing of 40no further anti slip strips for the boardwalk (fitted by our volunteers)
9. **LAKE SECTION ON THE NEW VILLAGE WEBSITE:** The Lake has a section on the new village website. It will mean that news, volunteer morning dates, and photos/sightings etc. can be viewed more easily. We have a blog set up so that sightings of wildlife can be recorded, including those from motion sensitive night cameras. Our little grebe is still around if very shy, so we hope she nests again this year. A whiteboard is still set up at the entrance to the Lake, especially geared at children recording what they see. Little has gone on the Village Website this year, but we now have help with the IT side of things, so we plan to improve on this information outlet next year.
10. **WILDFLOWER MEADOW:** The idea of creating a wildflower meadow was always in our 3 year plan, and in December we applied for a grant from the Lower Mill Estate section 106 fund, which is administered by CDC. After a period of 3 months negotiation, we heard we were successful in our application for £4500, and work started in November, carried out by our contractors Cotswold Estates and Gardens, who planted English daffodils. snowdrops and wildflower plugs and seed, suitable for the location. We have now seen the delightful drifts of daffodils and wait to see what the summer brings. But wildflower meadows are slow to establish so be patient!
11. **ECOLOGICAL MATTERS:** We held **a** pond dipping session in May, run by Jane Hayman and Lisa Willis, and in the late winter placed some roofing felt squares as part of a reptile survey, to see what lives around our Lake. It is pleasing to see that the snowdrops we planted near the gate in the spring of 2020 and the bluebells we planted in memory of Helen Cornwell, near the west end of the boardwalk, all showed for the first time in late winter and spring. Also the two areas of wildflowers we sowed in the “lake vistas”, rather speculatively, sprung to life spectacularly between the two weeping willows on the N side.

 **Mike Wilding** *Chairman- SKVL Management Subcommittee 25 April 2022*