

Dear Members

Please find enclosed the following papers;

- AGM Agenda for our meeting at 7:30 pm on Thursday 2nd April 2020 at Copthorne Social Club
- Application form for membership 2020 / 21.

***** PLEASE NOTE THAT A PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPH WILL BE REQUIRED FOR ALL MEMBERS NEXT SEASON TO BE APPLIED TO MEMBERSHIP CARDS. PLEASE INCLUDE WHEN RETURNING YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM *****

I am delighted to report that the works at Little Rowfant lakes have been highly successful, with the two channels on the Wilderness excavated & new swims constructed. We now have an additional 10 swims offering the ability to fish across to the far-bank if you wish. Further selective stocking combined with these works has seen catches improve markedly, with match weights exceeding 100lbs. Members may have seen the keep-net weight limit notice on the web-site whereby this is restricted to 60lbs in the interest of fish welfare & the intention to see this made a rule per the AGM Agenda item. Our thanks to Les Eggleton, Maintenance Secretary & the small team who have supported him over the past couple of years to deliver a fantastic job. Les & his team are always keen to accept offers of support – please contact Les directly on 07746 960209 if you are able to help, even if only some occasional grass-cutting or bush clipping – it all helps to keep the waters in good condition.

At Rowfant Mill Pond, Gavin Hobbs & his team have maintained & looked to gradually improve the swims & access throughout the year. This has been a labour intensive task given the restricted access to the banks, but the results are excellent. We aim to further focus upon this fishery in 2020, especially the lilies which need regular work to keep them in check & the swims open. Carp in excess of 20lbs have been caught on a regular basis from this fishery in 2019.

I am pleased to report that our long-standing relationship with the Ouse Angling Preservation Society (OAPS) continues. This gives our members access to all OAPS waters on the River Ouse at no extra cost. This river, particularly the tidal stretch below Barcombe Mills, continues to produce specimen chub, barbel, perch, carp and pike.

Piltdown Pond continues to provide consistent and excellent sport on all baits and methods. Carp to 25lbs, pike to 20lbs, tench and bream to 5lbs and notably a resurgence of perch to 4lbs+. Eels up to 5lbs have also been reported. We have also run some informal competitions & seen winning weights in excess of 50lbs with again good backing weights recorded. If you haven't fished this water – it is well worth a visit.

Turning to the AGM, I would encourage as many Members as possible to attend. Your Committee will be updating you further on the above developments, and some of our plans for the future. For all those who can attend, we will be running the usual raffle, & any prizes you are able to donate will be gratefully received on the night. Moving forward, your Committee encourage all members to regularly review the Society's web-site www.copthorneangling.co.uk for updates & news.

Looking further ahead, in order to reduce paper & save money, we will be aiming to move toward the distribution of the annual newsletter, AGM papers & the following years' membership application form by way of e-mail. To this end, can I please request that all members clearly insert an e-mail address onto all future membership applications so that we can build up our database.

I would also like to record our thanks to John at The Tackle Warehouse in Crawley for his support. Members will note his sponsorship of our 2020 / 21 membership cards when they are issued, & also for supporting the Society by agreeing to issue Guest Permits. Please ensure Guest Permits are purchased in advance of fishing. Members may wish to take advantage of the discount available at The Tackle Warehouse upon production of membership cards. Guest Permits can also be obtained from Jack Frost Tackle in Crawley.

On behalf of the Committee may I finish by saying we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM, but if not, then on the bank-side throughout the next season.

Paul Whitfield, General Secretary on behalf of the Committee