

I thought after 13 years the Conservation Group who have been looking after Warren Copse would be looking at an easier life. We are on the 12<sup>th</sup> of the 12 Hazel Coupes (areas we have been coppicing around Warren Copse) which should have been done last year but we missed a year because of Covid. It is the first time the Hazel has been coppiced in over 80 years and the hazel has been quite large and difficult, but over the next 12 years it will be easier as we will be cutting bean stick size. But now we have Ash Dieback which is spreading throughout the Copse, but thankfully unlike other woods where they are incurring great expense we have Andrew Kitcher and Andy Sheppard who are doing it free of charge.

A large area of predominately Ash had to be felled behind Moat Close and has left it quite bare, with 43 large Ash trees having to be felled, fortunately I have secured a grant from the Tree Council and we will be planting 45 trees this month, a mixture of Oak, Beech, Hornbeam, Hazel and Field Maple in keeping with the rest of the Copse.

We are constantly having to repair the Owl and Acorn signs, 9 two years ago and 8 last year, it is demoralizing for Colin Ager who has been repairing them, in September he put an Owl Wing in the post and went home to get some preservative, came back an hour later and it had been broken off again with the one the other side also.

There has been no sign of HCC Highways to come and remove the pipe from the Park Lane ditch to help stop the road from being flooded. The longer they delay it the road will deteriorate and they will have to resurface it again. It is a shame that they will not admit it is theirs and the Planning Authorities fault that the surface water from the local estates has been piped into Warren Copse and the Manor Park that is the cause of the problems. The problem with the excessive weed in the Main Pond is caused by the storm water from Larkspur Close and Limekiln Lane which is pipe into the pond. When I first started looking after the pond in 1983 when I first joined the Council, which was before the building of the estates there was not a weed problem, the water was murky, stirred up by the bottom feeding Tench. When the estates were built the flow of water passing through changed the water quality and the clear water was a godsend to the Canadian pondweed. It is a shame that these problems were not considered in the planning stage.

We have had some fish die during the cold spell which froze the pond for the first time in a number of years, I think this may have been due to the lack of oxygen due to the large amount of weed which only oxygenates during daylight and is suppressed under the ice, so more weed needs to be removed.

Eddie Holtham

Chairman, Warren Copse and Holbury Manor Conservation Group