

The Hoosletter 15th March 2021



Figure 1 Down checking for frozen pipe damage.

Gday Hoodelites

Tis March. And this time last year Covid stopped the use of the Hoo. Too many restrictions, changes and variables mean the Hoo had to close for the year. In that time though theres been a bit of organised maintenance and local news. Heres some updates. (Photos have been taken in covid friendly conditions and part of organised risk assessed maintenance visits)

Planning permission was approved to bring order to the Killykeegan carpark and expand parking at McGarths Cottage at the top of the laneway. Work started in January I think. Theres anecdotal talk of a tearoom to be operated here. Hooray if you like tea and scones, not so hooray when more and more randomers wander down the road to the Hoo. As of last week it was still a construction site. And height barriers have been installed into the car park, though this doesn't affect traffic to the Hoo. Lets hope the council -who maintain this site now -actually keep the toilet block open. It had been sporadically opened by rangers from Marble Arch during summertimes.



if you're really bothered you can check the plans out at this link
<http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q3QEOWSV30000>



Figure 2 new car parking at McGraths Cottage/killykeegan nature reserve.

Talking of the laneway. There's a new cattle grid at McGraths which is one less gate to open, but then a new fenceline and gate was installed further up the track, sometimes this new gate is open sometimes not, leave it as you find it. We -the cavers- have err procured gravel to fill in the potholes from the second gateway to the Hoo. This seems to be working a treat what with heavier rock

subbase in the potholes. (One particularly harsh summer downpour had washed a lot of road gravel down to the hoo resulting in a temporary beach. But Miner and Crusty Eoin wheelbarrowed it all back up the hill, throwing in a few bricks into the ruts along the way).



Figure 3 view from the Hoo Loo.

The thunderbox has had more weather proofing done to it, resulting in less gusty breezes, snow and rain entering the throne room. The long drop toilet has been found to be self regulating. I think back in September 2019 we thought we'd need to dig a new pit. But it appears all the bugs and badgers have reduced the muck in it. How and ever itd still be fun to hire or get the use of a minidigger some weekend in the summer to dig a new pit and do other landscaping round the place. Talking of which the area behind the hoo is now almost filled in and levelled off, allowing for more tent pitching space.



Figure 4 new fire place fully functioning (and now with new hearth) as are the upstairs radiators.(tis an old photo, looksa lot better now, with a new hearth)

The fireplace has been installed in all its technicolor glory and is heating the upstairs radiators well, so much so the rooms upstairs are now warmer that the living room. One night I recorded a balmy 20oc upstairs in the middle of the room, that was during that last big snow dump.



Figure 5 TV licensing inspectors are in the area.

Agnahoo was the scene of an ICRO communications check using the new trailer mounted telescopic antenna. It worked well with clear signals from there to a hand held radio at the Claddagh Glen depot.

Kitchen wise the new gas cooker with grill and oven is working well. We now have a surplus of mugs , and also 2 supersized industrial cooking pots. A heap of new sponges were chucked out as mice had phished and pooped throughout them. No sign of mice at the moment –as theres no opened food stuffs down there for them to smell.

I haven't visually confirmed it, but I believe the cradle caves entrance have been cleared of the Game of Throne prequel filmset. It was all packed up and helicoptered away. Supposedly the trial audiences didn't like it –all about children of the forests or such nonsense. I think they may be making a less twee more gorey prequel- just not on Marlbank.



Figure 6 Ewok village found on Marlbank



Figure 7 moss stapled onto artifical Ewok walkways

Other stuff.... the big shed was tidied up.

A Work bench built installed in big shed, very handy for hammering stuff.

The outdoor gas shower is a bit ballixed and wants to keep cavers dirty.

A welly boot drying rack has been built.

Front porch insulating started and maybe wee side windows get reinstalled here.

A forth radiator is to be installed upstairs, though that probably wouldn't be until warmer wedder.

Blacklion chippy is operating covid hours I think its wednesday to Sunday 4-830PM?? Something like that.

Robot garage in Blacklion is now open selling diesel and petrol.

Theres a store selling fire logs and coal on the corner in Belcoo. "doubles" sized coal definitely works well in the new back boiler fireplace. "Eco, smokeless or everbrite/everglow " so called coal is crap. Go for doubles and if you want the heat to stay in the radiators over night bring a bucket of "singles" sized coal and fill the grate with that before ya go to bed.

WANTS LIST

As ever, concrete paving slabs.

A big solar panel with matched controller.

Car batterys

12v-230v power inverter. Bigger the better.

If you like the Hoo then like the Hoo on facepuke <https://www.facebook.com/thehoocavershouse>

or email thehoocavershut@gmail.com though I don't really look at it much. Better to hail me via facebook.

REMEMBER THE HOO IS CLOSED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE DUE TO COVID HYGIENE RESTRICTIONS. Follow on facepuke for updates to this.