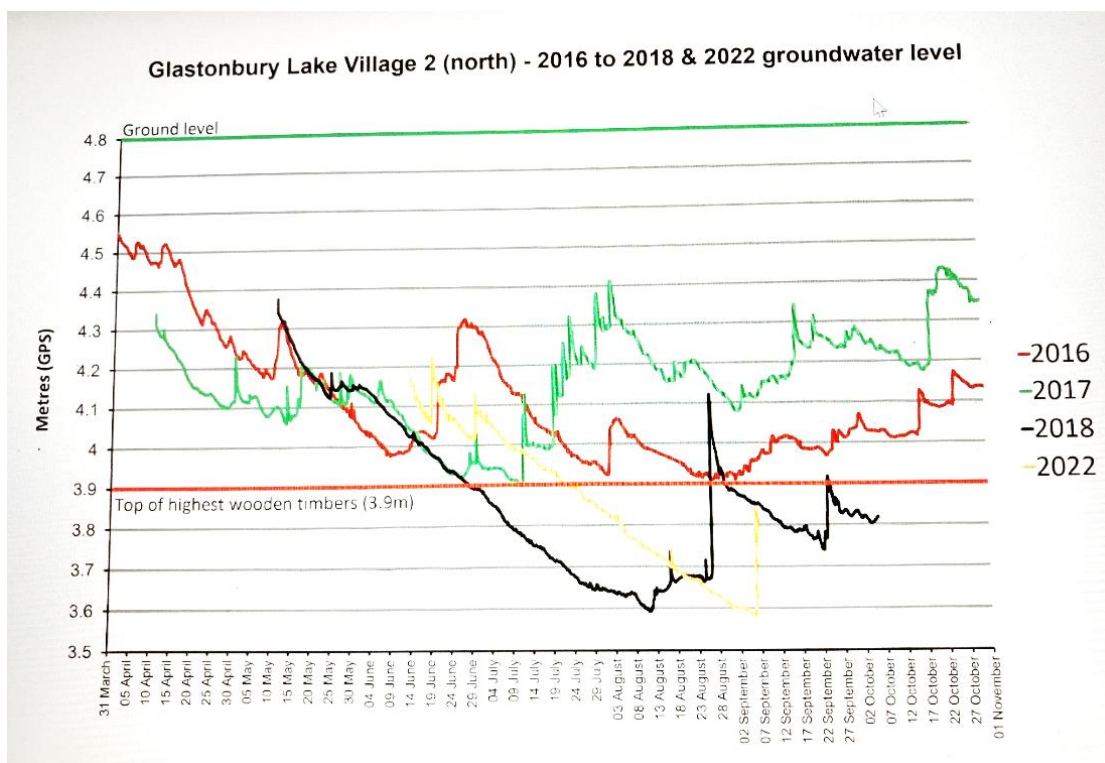


UPDATE ON THE GLASTONBURY LAKE VILLAGE FIELD December 2022

This year has been fairly dry and at times pretty hot. Hot dry weather can impact our Somerset Levels peatlands and important wetland archology. The Somerset Drainage Boards have been monitoring groundwater levels in the Glastonbury Lake Village, our most important and famous wetland ancient monument. Groundwater levels got very low during this summer's drought, as low as they did in 2018, which was also very dry. The graph below shows ground water levels for this year, and 2016-2018. There is a line on the graph that indicates the level of the highest timbers of the monument (as measured during the 2014 condition assessment, which is featured in the other photographs). The groundwater level this year (and in 2018) dropped to 300mm below this level, which is a clear indication that the timber is at significant risk of drying out during very dry years. The ditch next the site did have water all summer and the structure we installed is working well and holds the level higher than it would without. However, I don't think this make that much difference to the groundwater table in the centre of the site. I will try to make sure we repeat the groundwater monitoring next year.



There are many other wetland archaeology sites on the Levels that are also at risk, some are less well protected and closer to the surface than the Lake Village. If these sites dry out, they start to rot and are lost forever. Keeping the peat wet helps protect our irreplaceable wetland heritage sites.

Phil Brewin October 2022

November 2022 Historic England Heritage at Risk reports the Lake Village assessment condition as being generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems. Principal vulnerability: drainage/dewatering. Reference: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/33500> . In total, there are **1,379 entries** across the South West on the 2022 Heritage at Risk Register. Reference: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/har-2022-registers/sw-har-register2022/> MC