

## Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook: Occasional Titbits, No. 30, January 2013

[www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](http://www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

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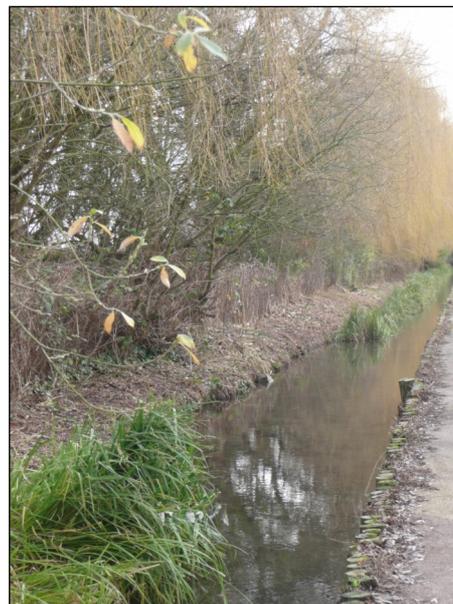
**Next litter pick: Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Meet at 10.30am outside 95 Burnside.**



**Watercourse maintenance:** Contractors for the City Council have been hard at work, up to their waists in chilly water, cutting and clearing vegetation from the Brook. This is essential to ensure that the water can flow, which helps prevent flooding, but also creates a variety of habitats for aquatic flora and fauna. The sedge is being cut to create meanders, with stretches of clear water and areas of vegetation to provide shelter for nesting birds.

*The photos show a stretch of the Brook before (left) the sedge was cut and cleared and afterwards.*

**Willows:** We are pleased to learn that the willow trees along Burnside now have Tree Preservation Orders.



**Tree works:** While the trees and shrubs along the Brook are valuable for wildlife, the plants and animals of the stream need light and so the trees need cutting back periodically. This also makes it easier for pedestrians and cyclists. As reported in *Titbits* 28, Cambridge City Council has some money available for tree work from a small grant from the Environment Agency. The trees and shrubs marked with white paint are those proposed for removal, coppicing or pollarding. Guy Belcher, the Nature Conservation Officer at the City Council, has agreed these works in principle. The aim is to enhance the chalk stream biodiversity through increasing light levels.

**Along the Brook – in winter:** Even in winter there's plenty to enjoy along the Brook. With many trees having lost their leaves one can see views that previously were obscured of the lakes to the north-east. The lakes support a wide range of water birds, such as Tufted Ducks and Grebes, many more species than on the Brook, where one mostly sees Moorhens, with their red beaks, though there are also Mallards and Swans and the elusive Water Rail was seen last year. If one is lucky one might see a Kingfisher, usually just a flash of blue disappearing, though sometimes they perch on branches. A pair of Little Egrets has also been seen near the end of Burnside, in about the same place as this time last year. In the trees and shrubs even an inexperienced birdwatcher may notice Robins with their red breast, Blackbirds, and a range of tits, including gangs of Long-tailed Tits. There are plenty of squirrels and rabbits and the first of the sweetly-scented violets are in flower near St Bede's Gardens.

**Local Plan:** The next stage in preparing the new Local Plan is the Issues and Options 2 consultation, which will run from 7 January to 18 February 2013. More details at [www.cambridge.gov.uk/options2](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/options2)

**Occasional Titbits:** In August 2009 the first issue of *Occasional Titbits* was produced and issued and here, less than four years later, is number 30. Publishing at least six newsletters a year is a great achievement for Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook and shows how well the group has become established since the inaugural meeting in June 2009. Many thanks to everyone who has helped.

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