

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook

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www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Cherry Hinton Festival – Saturday 22nd September 11 am to 5 pm

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook, along with many other local organisations, has booked a stall at the Cherry Hinton Festival Day. We will have a display of photos of Cherry Hinton Brook and its wildlife. RiverCare are providing a sculpture. Come along and see what it is, and say “hello” to us – and if you can help on our stall for a while that would be wonderful.

World Rivers Day litterpick - Sunday 23rd September

To mark World Rivers Day, Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook will be collecting litter from along the Brook. *Please come and help.* We will provide litterpicks, rubbish bags, rubber gloves. Meet outside the dentist at 97 Burnside at 10.30 am. All welcome! During the summer, people trying to reach the lakeshore have left a lot of litter in the Brook, including Ofo hire bikes (*right*). If you see any more bikes, contact Ofo on 01223 213555 or camcrew@ofobike.com.



Photo © Holly Anderson

2018 Annual General Meeting - Monday 11 June, 7.30 pm

Sue Wells gave an overview of the activities during the previous year, including three litter-picks, stalls at the Cambridge Natural History Society’s NatHistFest and Cherry Hinton Festival, and producing four newsletters. She also reported on the work done, with a grant from the Pebble Fund, to improve the Brook. Jenny Sutton resigned from the committee and Emmy Smart has moved to the USA so we need more people to join the committee and help organise our activities.

As well as the business of the AGM, the meeting included a short talk on the history of the Lakes by John McGill (*right*), based on the report he prepared for the Mill Road Local History Society on East Romsey Cement Works. Those present also heard from Cambridge and Peterborough Amphibian and Reptile Group and Anglian Water’s Keep it Clear programme, while Councillor Dave Baigent gave an update on plans to open the Lakes. There have been two open days when people could walk round the Lakes.



Photo © Jon Fairbairn

Water abstraction from the Brook

Several people have expressed concern that an allotment holder at Blacklands Allotments is using a pump (or two) to extract water from the Brook and that this might affect water levels in the Brook and upset the wildlife. We have investigated this and have discovered that this is not contravening any regulations. We understand that the Environment Agency has advised the landowner (Peterhouse) can abstract up to 20 cubic meters (4,000 gallons) per day without a licence.

Riverfly monitoring

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook is continuing to monitor river flies – invertebrates in the Brook which give an indication of how healthy the habitat is – on the last Saturday of the month. Do come along to find out more, or there may still be space on a RiverFly training workshop on 10th November at The Granta @ Hildersham Village Hall, Nr. Cambridge, CB21 6DE. The workshop is free to attend and RiverFly kits will be loaned to participants (free of charge), on the proviso that they are used regularly. This invitation is aimed at all partners and volunteers that would be interested in gaining RiverFly skills/experience, but that are also wanting to put these into practice immediately along river stretches in the catchment. If interested contact Martin Bowes (mBowes@anglianwater.co.uk).

Birds on the Brook: Where are the kingfishers?

Mid to late summer is always a quiet time along the Brook. Leaves on the trees and shrubs obscure visibility and there is little bird song now that attracting a mate and defending a territory are no longer a priority. However, the faint chirping noise made by so many recently fledged birds such as tits, dunnocks, robins and wrens can be heard and young water birds can be both seen and heard swimming along the Brook. Some mallards have made it to maturity (typically a brood of 8 is predated down to about 2) and extended families of moorhens are numerous. Juveniles from earlier clutches help both parents raise the new chicks, making it a high success rate. Colonies of jackdaws have been in the trees by St Bedes and flocks of gulls fly most evenings onto the lakes. A little egret has been sighted along the brook towards Sainsbury's. This is a first for late summer, they are usually seen in the winter.

For several months there were no reported sightings of our kingfishers. Two pairs used to be seen regularly along the Brook – one pair along Burnside and towards Sainsbury's, the other closer to Cherry Hinton. Quite why they were absent is not clear. Maybe the cold wet spring made breeding difficult, indeed one body (*right*) was found on our last litter pick. Or perhaps the very hot weather affected the fish in the Brook and therefore meant there was not enough food for the birds. Throughout the hot weather large numbers of young people have trespassed in order to swim in the lakes - noise and the considerable quantities of litter left behind may also have had a negative effect on the breeding birds.



Photo © Holly Anderson

However, over the August bank holiday weekend there have been several sightings so hopefully conditions are now right again, and new pairs will recolonise the Brook and lakes. The Brook would not be the same without these birds and we are delighted they have come back. If you do spot a kingfisher (or other wildlife), please do get in touch with us as we need to know how many pairs are making a living along the Brook.

Please email details (date, time, location, species) to Wildlife@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Cherry Hinton Hall tree trail

A new tree trail at Cherry Hinton Hall was launched at the end of June. The tree trail is designed to take approximately an hour to complete and includes over 50 different trees spread throughout the park. It's free and can be used anyone with a smartphone or handheld device – or any web browser – or more simply by following the labelled trees. See <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/tree-trails> for more information about this, and other tree trails planned for Cambridge.

Data protection

To ensure that we comply with the General Data Protection Regulations, we inform you that you are able to withdraw your consent to be on the Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook mailing list should you wish. Your email address and contact details are currently held in our database to receive our email newsletter and other occasional messages about our activities and your membership. We do not sell or share your details with anyone outside the committee of Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook. Should you have any concerns whatsoever about the way we use your data, or wish to withdraw from our database, please let us know.

JOIN US! See www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk for our aims and activities.



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Monica Frisch (editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk) 3rd September 2018