

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook
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www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Please forward or print out and pass on to anyone else who may be interested.

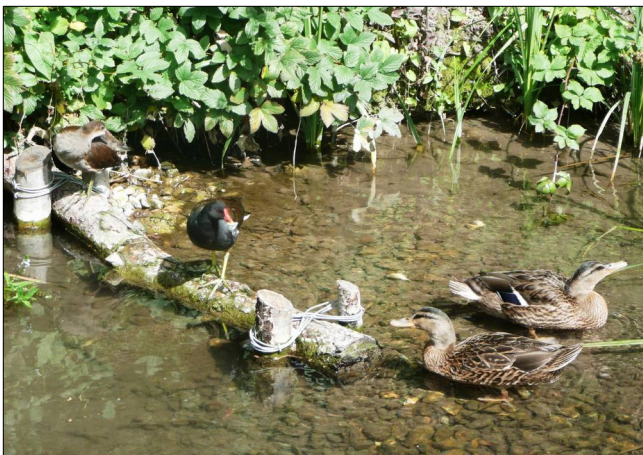
Grant from Biodiversity Partnership for further brook improvements

Following the successful installation of flow deflectors earlier this year, we have now received a grant for £8,000 worth of further improvements from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership. Many thanks to Guy Belcher of the City Council for his support in this bid.

The project will put in place the suggestions for ecological improvements made by the Wildlife Trust (in their 2012 report). It involves:

- six more flow deflectors to increase channel diversity,
- coir rolls to narrow the channel and promote fringing vegetation,
- a riffle to provide self-cleansing gravel for spawning fish,
- some scrub clearance to increase light levels and reduce silt input from leaf fall.

The work is supported by the Wildlife Trust and the City Council who will carry out some control of invasive species. We will organise 7 or 8 volunteer work parties to carry out the work between October 2015 and February 2016. If you're interested in helping, please let us know. Dates will be communicated soon, so watch this space!



The ducks seem to approve of the flow deflectors!

New nest boxes

Tuesday 8th September has been fixed for a working party to put up the nest boxes made by volunteers earlier this year. The photo above right shows committee member Wilbert Van Vliet with some of the boxes that were made. If anyone wishes to help Guy Belcher and the City Council's Mid-week Volunteers with this please meet at 10 a.m. at Sainsbury's.



An urban country park for the lakes?

Cambridge City Council has formed a small stakeholder working group to assist with the development of the proposal in the new Local Plan to create an urban country park for the lakes. Friends of Cherry Hinton Group has played an active role in the consultations to date, and is represented on the working group. The first meeting was held in July and was attended by a number of Council officers, and representatives from the Anderson Group, the angling club, police community support officers, and several of the community groups with an interest in the lakes.

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The Anderson Group is undertaking feasibility studies, and has contracted a consultant to carry out ecological surveys over the course of a year. It is anticipated that preliminary results will be available for discussion at the next meetings of the South Area Committee (5th October) and East Area Committee (29th October). Particular attention was paid to safety issues (highlighted by the frequent recent occurrences of illegal swimming) and the lack of understanding by the public of the shortage of space and dry land within the lakes area, which will make some of the activities that have been proposed very difficult to carry out. The Council agreed that guided tours of the lakes should be organised in the near future so that people can participate in the consultations with a better understanding of the area. We will keep our supporters informed about these plans.

Annual General Meeting

Over twenty people attended the Annual General Meeting of Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook on Monday 15th June 2015. They heard a report from Councillor Dave Baigent on the Lakes project, a review of our activities from Sue Wells and received the Treasurer's Report. The minutes of the AGM are on our website.

They also heard two presentations. Guy Belcher, the City Council's Conservation Officer, talked on "Flow deflectors and other restoration work on Cherry Hinton Brook – how the City Council is helping to improve our 'Green Corridor'" while Rob Martyr spoke about "RiverCare – support to FCHB and similar volunteer groups and future plans". Some of our photos of the Brook and its wildlife were on display and light refreshments were enjoyed.



Sue Wells (right) with members at the AGM

Wildlife sightings

The voles are quite active so you may well see one swimming in the Brook or feeding on the vegetation. Do let us know if you do. Here are some recent reports.

13th July *Baby water vole just spotted between lamppost 6 and 7. Sitting on some reeds eating. And another bigger one swimming upstream between lamp post 3 and 4.*

15th July *Water vole just spotted past lamppost 11. Sitting on some reeds and eating near the far bank.*

29th July 2.30 pm *Adult swimming carrying a long piece of reed - lamp post 4F*

3.00 pm. *Adult sitting on small branch in water on far side, about lamp post 4F so may have been the one seen earlier. Sat and ate a piece of reed for a long time while I watched.*

11th August *A single active water vole feeding and swimming around both at 11 AM and at 4 PM on 11/8/2015. Both sightings were at the same spot about half way along the path from Burnside to Sainsbury at the point where the stream is wide and relatively free from vegetation except at the banks. It is wonderful to be able to see the great variety of wildlife in a city (little egret, kingfisher, muntjac etc.) that the Brook provides. Thanks for all your work.*



Photo of water vole taken by Sue Ritchie

Please send us details, including date and time of sightings of voles – and of other wildlife – just email wildlife@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

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

To be taken off this email list, please email membership@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Monica Frisch (editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk) 17th August 2015