

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook

Occasional Titbits, issue 70, March 2022

www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Belated Happy New Year ... and welcome to our 70th issue! For those who don't know us very well, Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook was founded in 2009, and our first newsletter came out in August that year. We owe a big thank you to David Brooks, the first editor, and now Monica Frisch, for their dedication to producing such a regular source of Brook-related news.

Autumn litter pick

Enough volunteers attended the autumn litter pick last October to have four small groups working different sections of the Brook, enabling us to maintain social distancing. This worked well and within two hours the Brook from Sainsbury's to Cherry Hinton Hall had been cleared, with several bags of rubbish left for the council to remove.

As always the bulk of the litter was in the stretch alongside Sainsbury's, mainly near the distribution centre, where it is blown into the Brook, making it more of a challenge for the volunteers. We welcome volunteers for each litter pick and always need people who are willing to wear waders to get into the Brook.



Holly Anderson

Spring litter pick in March

Sunday 6th March: regular spring clean-up of the Brook. Please meet outside the dentist (no. 97) on Burnside (CB1 3PA) at 10.30 am. We'll aim to finish by 12.30.

Saturday 12th March: in partnership with St Bede's school and some of the students, clean-up of the school side of the fence along the Brook. Many thanks to the head teacher for his help in organising this. Meet at the entrance to St Bede's School on Birdwood Rd, 10.00 am.

Equipment will be provided but please wear suitable clothing. To help with planning, please email chair2021@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk to let us know if you want to attend and which event.

Brook restoration work

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, successfully submitted a proposal to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for funding to restore and manage our chalk streams. This resulted in £420,000 being made available for the work that is required, which is described in the report prepared by Ruth Hawksley of the Wildlife Trust and Rob Mungovan of the Wild Trout Trust which can be found at: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams>.

City Council officers are now tasked with drawing up a detailed business case, and hope to deliver about half of the projects identified in the report within the next three years. A first step will be a review of what has been done so far, including activities on Cherry Hinton Brook. In the meantime, we have a small project, led by the Wildlife Trust and with funding from the Pebble Fund, to put in some more gravel and undertake work on the banks in the stretch of Brook near Dawes Lane. This is an extension of the work carried out in spring 2021 (see Titbits 68). Once we know the dates for volunteer work parties, we will let you know.

Sue Wells

Land south of Coldham's Lane

The planning application to develop the land north of the railway line and prepare a master plan for the opening of the lakes was resubmitted, with what appear to be rather minor revisions, just before Christmas. There has been much discussion about this since then, as readers will be aware. Our response is at: <https://friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk/Newsletters.html#ConsultationResponses> We understand that, although the consultation expiry date has passed, comments can be submitted up to the committee date, which is still to be confirmed. The application, associated documents, and copies of all the responses received to date (currently 315 objections, 1 in support), are here: <https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=R45G38DX0A700>

Sue Wells

Wildlife along the Brook

The birds are already looking ahead to the spring, with many of the small birds now in song, staking a claim for their breeding territory. Even the blackbird has been heard singing a few tentative notes. Kingfishers have been seen regularly along the path near Sainsbury's and by Cherry Hinton Hall so there may be two breeding pairs on the lakes this year. However it is still very much a mid-way point between winter and spring, with the little egret, tufted ducks and black-headed gulls using the lakes as their winter habitat whereas grebes, mallard and moorhens are beginning to pair up ready to breed.

The pair of swans that has bred successfully here for several years has been checking out nesting sites on the lakes as well as spending time being fed on the ponds at Cherry Hinton Hall. The anglers have looked after the swans, feeding them delicacies such as tinned sweetcorn (a much healthier option than bread which many people give to them). Their one cygnet spent the winter along the Brook, and was quite a celebrity with many people coming daily to see it (the favourite place being by the bridge at the end of Snakey Path and Dawes Lane). We were concerned when the cygnet disappeared at the end of January, especially as the remains of one were found in the Lakes, presumably predated by a fox. However an entry on our Facebook page by Graham Porter of the Waterfowl Sanctuary in Godmanchester showed that the young swan had, in fact, been relocated to St Neots. The narrow Brook was a hazardous place for him to live and he needed to be with other juvenile swans until mature enough to breed (around the age of 4). Check out our Facebook page (Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook) and you can see a video clip of him hesitantly joining a large group of swans on the river.



Holly Anderson

Wanted: social media whizz

We could really use someone to help us be a bit more active on Facebook and Twitter. Is there anyone there who could help?

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.

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/FriendsOfCherryHintonBrook and follow us on Twitter @cambridgeFCHB

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

Monica Frisch (editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk) 26th February 2022