

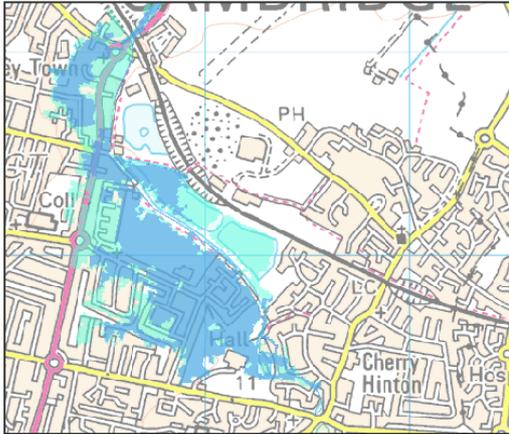
# Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook: Occasional Titbits, No. 19, June 2011

www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Chairman: John Collins      Secretary: Holly Anderson

*Please forward or print out and pass on to anyone else who may be interested. If you have items suitable for inclusion please let me have them as they arise. If you wish to be taken off this group email list please let me know.*

**1. AGM 1 June 2011** We were very grateful to Simon Bunn, Cambridge City Sustainable Drainage Engineer, who described for us the background to the Environment Agency's new flood probability map of the Cherry Hinton Brook catchment which can be found at <http://bit.ly/kAPBpI>



The map shows that the dark blue area (e.g. Birdwood and Walpole Roads and St. Bede's) has a 1% annual chance of serious flooding. There was significant flooding here in 2001. The green/blue areas have a 0.1% annual chance of flooding. However, Simon did emphasise that the mathematical modelling on which the map is based did not take into account all the factors which influence the behaviour of water, so the map is in need of refinement. The undoubted vulnerability of the area is due to the low-lying nature of the land which was marshy before any houses were built in the area, a legacy of the Ice Age. The ditch between Dawes Lane and the grounds of Cherry Hinton Hall is part of a drainage system which is not always capable of preventing flooding.

Members at the AGM took advantage of Simon Bunn's extensive knowledge of the area to discuss and raise questions about a wide range of varied topics including house insurance; the Japanese knotweed near Sainsbury; the relative altitudes of the Brook and the lakes, and the ownership of the lakes; issues relating to the need to maintain the flow of the Brook; the problems presented by Sainsbury and the implications of their major development for which planning permission has been granted.



**2. Nature notes (fauna).** In spite of the disruption whilst installing the new cycle bridge at Burnside the wildlife seems to have recovered. Fish (mainly small chubb) can be seen and a mallard managed to raise 4 of her 14 ducklings. In early May 12 brown and 2 yellow chicks took advantage of the slope down from the bridge to get in and out of the brook, but inevitably rats and, possibly, magpies and crows predated the chicks when very small. The remaining 4, although still with their mother, are now large enough to fend for themselves and should survive to adulthood. Moorhen chicks too are seen daily in the reeds close to the bridge, which being much wider than the one it replaced, seems to provide a social function for humans too. There have been several casual gatherings of people chatting and watching the wildlife and one enterprising local family in the hot weather in May sold home-made lemonade to passers-by.

It is a shame that the new anti-trespass fence which borders the TA land is so visible and out of keeping with the rest of the environment. It is hoped the fence can be partly disguised by the planting of some native climbers (such as honeysuckle and wild clematis) in the autumn. **(Holly Anderson, 14 June)**

**3. Nature notes (flora).** Despite the dry spring the riverside vegetation has grown rapidly and is lush and green. The big white funnels of the large bindweed are everywhere while also scrambling through the hedges and over the fence are white bryony, with greenish flowers, sticky goosegrass and, of course, brambles, which are just coming into flower. Along the stream the tall figwort, with its strange purplish flowers and winged square stem, has shot up, as has the meadowsweet, with its frothy creamy white flowers. In the water the large greater pond-sedge, has produced fat spikelets of female flowers with narrower spikelets of dark male flowers above. There is lots more growing along the banks, including plenty of horsetail, which is not a flowering plant at all. **(Monica Frisch, 14 June)**

**4.** A report at <http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/democracy/mgConvert2Pdf.aspx?ID=2532&T=9> has concluded that it would **not be feasible to locate a City Farm in the grounds of Cherry Hinton Hall.**

**5.** The proposed extension (including **Burnside and Brookfields**) to the proposed enlargement of the **Mill Road Conservation area** was approved (unanimously) at the City Council Environment Scrutiny Committee on 21 June.

David Brooks, 27 June 2011