

**Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook**  
**Occasional Titbits, No. 43, May 2015**  
[www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](http://www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

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

### **Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting of Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook will take place at 7:30 pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015 in St Martin's Church Hall, Suez Road, Cambridge, CB1 3QD. There will be two presentations in addition to the business of the meeting.

**“Flow deflectors and other restoration work on Cherry Hinton Brook – how the City Council is helping to improve our 'Green Corridor’”** Guy Belcher, the City Council's Conservation Officer

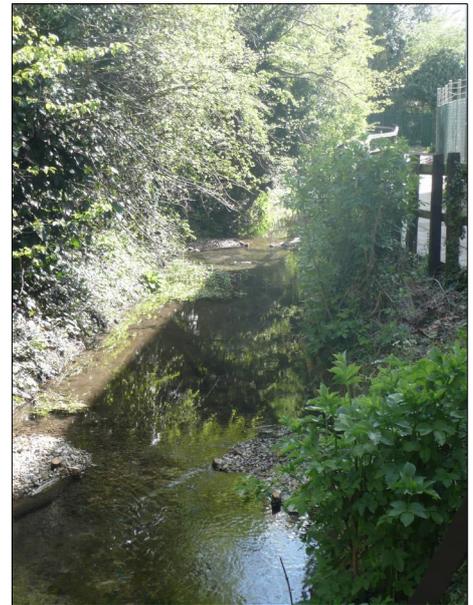
**“RiverCare – support to FCHB and similar volunteer groups and future plans”** Rob Martyr and Andrew Walters

There will be a display of some of our photos of the Brook and its wildlife. Light refreshments will be served.

The business will include:

- Minutes of AGM 2014 and matters arising
- Chairman's Report – Sue Wells
- Treasurer's Report – Monica Frisch
- Election of officers and committee members

Any proposals for new committee members and officers should reach Holly Anderson, 75 Burnside, [ha206@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ha206@cam.ac.uk), before 6<sup>th</sup> June. The agreement of those proposed should be sought before their names are submitted.



### **Litterpick report**

The turnout was fairly good for the litter pick on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March with 13 people including some new people who were keen to get in the Brook in waders! We concentrated on the stretch between the bridge at the back of Sainsbury's car park and the bridge leading to the Tins path, as well as some of the Brook along Burnside, and managed to collect another big pile of rubbish. Many thanks to everyone who helped clean up the Brook and to those who collect litter in between litterpicks.

### **Grant from Natural England funds brook improvements**

Over the last six months a number of activities have been taking place related to the Brook. We were able to carry these out thanks to a grant of £3000 that we received from Natural England. This funding allowed us to 1) install flow deflectors which we hope will help to speed up water flow in the Brook; 2) put in bird nesting boxes and insect hotels; and 3) install an extra signboard. We are also very grateful to Sainsbury's, the BCN Wildlife Trust, Guy Belcher of Cambridge City Council and the many volunteers who took part for their support and involvement in the project.

### **Flow deflectors**

The twelve flow deflectors in the Brook were installed by members of FCHB, helped by a wide range of volunteers including Natural England, the BCN Wildlife Trust, RiverCare, the City Council's volunteer working groups, members of other local RiverCare Groups, and Sainsbury's. The flow deflectors are located at intervals along the Brook from Sainsbury's to the St Bede's Crescent area. They are made of natural hard-wood logs placed on gravel which has been added, and secured with chestnut stakes, fencing wire and staples. Deeper pools are forming downstream of each deflector, while the gravel at the edges is creating new habitats.



The notice (left) explains:

"Cherry Hinton Brook is a chalk stream that flows out of the chalk in Cherry Hinton. The chalk has filtered the water making it great for wildlife. However, over the years the brook has been made very wide and become shaded by self-set trees and scrub. This means that the flow is slowed down and silt builds up on the bed. Silt does not support many of the chalk stream species and the shading means a lack of water plants, which further reduces the available habitat.

These flow deflectors have been installed as part of a plan to enhance this rare chalk stream. By narrowing the channel they increase the flow which clears silt and exposes the gravel stream bed. They also introduce oxygen to the water and the gravel provides a spawning site for fish and a home for insect larvae, including the banded demoiselle damselfly."

Many thanks to all involved, especially Guy Belcher, who helped design this scheme to improve the health of the brook.

### Homes for wildlife

Thanks to the involvement of Cambridge Woodworks, we held a bird box building workshop in Sainsbury's car park, on 25th March. Members of the public were invited to join in and over the course of an hour, 27 nest boxes (for tits, wrens and robins) and 2 insect hotels were constructed. These will be put up in suitable locations along the Brook. The funding has also allowed us to purchase swift nesting boxes (with space for six nests in total, and equipped with sound systems that play swift calls to attract the birds) from Action for Swifts. These will be installed on the roof of Sainsbury's.



### Another interpretation board

Another of our interpretation boards is now in place on Daws Lane, close to the exit from Cherry Hinton Hall. There are now four boards, at strategic positions along the Brook, explaining its value as a chalk stream and as a habitat for wildlife.



We hope that if people understand the importance of the Brook they will appreciate it more and be less likely to despoil it by dropping litter.

### 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. There are also flotillas of ducklings and moorhen chicks, some still quite tiny. Please send us details, including date and time of sightings of voles – and of other wildlife – just email [wildlife@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](mailto:wildlife@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

**JOIN US!** See our website [www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](http://www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk) for our aims and activities.

To be taken off this email list, please email [membership@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](mailto:membership@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

**Monica Frisch** ([editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](mailto:editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)) 25<sup>th</sup> May 2015