

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook
Occasional Titbits, No. 49, September 2016
www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Cherry Hinton Festival: 17th September

Once again, we will have a stall at Cherry Hinton Festival, on the Cherry Hinton Recreation Ground, on Saturday 17th September from 12 noon to 6 pm. We will have displays about our activities, some games and a photo quiz – can you match the caption to the picture? – and information about membership. It was a lovely day last year and we've got the use of a gazebo should the weather be less clement. Do come and say 'hello' if you are at the event. There'll be lots of entertainments and other stalls – see <http://www.cherryhintonfestival.org/programme/festival-day/> .

Cambridge Scouts clearing litter

The 14th Cambridge Scouts have offered their services to help keep Cherry Hinton Brook clean and will be doing a litter pick on Saturday 1st October. They will also be helping us on our stall at Cherry Hinton Festival.

Support from Sainsbury's

As the Sainsbury's store on Coldham's Lane is adjacent to Cherry Hinton Brook we have been working with them for several years to encourage them and their staff to support us and help look after the Brook and its wildlife. They have funded the noticeboard near their entrance and put up bird boxes and bee hotels.

Recently, one of our committee members, Emmy Smart (right) picked up a cheque from Sainsbury's which will provide welcome funds towards a project to create a mural on the side of the store alongside the Brook. We have found an artist who will be helping with the design which will feature images of wildlife along the Brook in winter and summer. We are planning to involve our supporters in the project, and will keep you posted. The priority at the moment is to raise the remaining funds required and we will be applying to various grant-making bodies.



Sue Wells

'Not just water vole' walks

On Saturday 9 July, Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook collaborated with Sustrans (the national sustainable transport charity) on two nature walks along the Brook. In between dodging cyclists and runners, two of our members helped people enjoy the plant life. We also spotted some animals – including two sightings of voles. We are hoping to repeat these walks at other times of the year. We have a formal risk assessment and willing volunteer walk leaders so let us know if you'd like to help us organise further walks. And come along when we advertise these!

More on the next page...

AGM

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook held its 2016 AGM on June 16, which was well attended. After the formal business and an update on our activities over the last year, we had two very good speakers. Callum Nightingale, a student at Cambridge University Technical College (UTC) presented the results of the work that he and other students had undertaken this year as part of the UTC Water Challenge Project. They had looked at the water quality of the Brook and compared sites near the new flow deflectors with sites elsewhere. Even after the relatively short time that the flow deflectors had been installed, a distinct improvement was noticeable, and overall the water quality of the Brook is considered good. Victoria Wilkinson from Anglian Water then gave a related talk on more general aspects of pollution, with particular reference to sewage and how the public can help to report incidents. Many thanks to both of them. The minutes of the AGM are on our website. Sue Wells

Riverfly monitoring

With lots of hard work underway to manage vegetation and improve habitats along the Brook it is important to know if efforts are working and benefiting the unique chalk stream wildlife, as well as keep track of any possible pollution events. Counting the critters that live in the gravel and plants in the Brook can help! Surveying the presence or absence of invertebrates (insects and creepy crawlies in the Brook itself) is a means of monitoring the health of rivers. We use species such as the mayfly, which are very sensitive to pollution and changes in water quality.

With this in mind committee members Berry Mulligan and Emmy Smart went down to the River Granta on 12th July to join a training course on Riverfly Monitoring, kindly coordinated by Rob Martyr at RiverCare and delivered by Jane Herbert of the Essex Wildlife Trust. The citizen science approach established by the The Riverfly Partnership allows anglers, conservationists and interested members of the public to monitor water quality, using invertebrates as the ‘canaries of our rivers’.



Photo (right) shows Jane Herbert demonstrating kick sampling of riverflies in the river Granta.

A good starting point was the study by the students of University Technical College (see above), and Local Nature Reserves Officer Victoria Smith and her group of active volunteers have started using the riverfly monitoring technique in the area near Sainsbury's. We hope to add to these efforts and use the technique to monitor changes in the Brook's bottom-dwelling inhabitants. Berry Mulligan & Emmy Smart

Rivercare

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook is part of the RiverCare and BeachCare network. The RiverCare project, funded by Anglian Water and delivered by Keep Britain Tidy, was established in 2001. It brings together friends groups such as ours, canoe clubs, residents associations and neighbourhoods with a common goal of improving their local river. Through RiverCare we get a lot of support, including the loan of litter-picking and other equipment, insurance for events and much support and encouragement for our activities, particularly from our local RiverCare Co-ordinator Rob Marty. Thanks very much, Anglian Water!

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) 14th September 2016