

## **Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall meeting, Wednesday, 29 July, 2009**

### **MINUTES**

Approximately 55 people were crammed into the room on the north side of the Red Lion Public House on Mill End Road, Cherry Hinton. A number of apologies were also received.

#### 1. Welcome / introduction

Bob Daines opened proceedings by wishing everyone a very warm welcome and thanking them for their attendance.

Those present agreed that, at this inaugural meeting, Officers would be elected, and that following agreement and adoption of a constitution at the next Friends meeting, the election of said Officers would be subject to another endorsing vote and that other Friends members would be invited to put their names forward. The group must be absolutely democratic in nature.

The following Officers were duly elected.

Chair:	Bob Daines
Secretary:	Stuart Newbold
Membership Secretary:	Bob Hall
Treasurer:	David Wilson
Press Officer:	Robert Dryden
Committee:	Michelle Bullivant
Committee:	Judy Webb
Committee:	Debbie Stannard

#### 2. General discussion on Park issues and feedback following Park walk with Ian Ross and Debbie Kaye on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July

BD: Debbie Kaye heads the Active Communities department at the City Council, the department responsible for all aspects of Hall maintenance and changes, including the installation of the new 'natural play area' behind the duck pond. There have been a number of email exchanges. I believe a park is a park. One email indicates there is further work planned in the natural area behind the pond area. There is a need for the Friends group to be consulted on doing anything at all in this sensitive area before it happens.

BD: It is also Debbie Kaye's opinion that the Cherry Hinton Hall grounds are 'for the city as it is a city park' and that any needs that the city may have, which could be basketball, a skatepark, etc, can therefore be sited here.

BD: There is also a 53 page report from January 2009, "Understanding usage, needs, and improvements at Cherry Hinton Hall" by consultant Phil Back. This was commissioned by the City Council to look at options for the propagation centre site and its remit was subsequently widened and it discusses some of the issues and makes recommendations for improvements across the whole grounds. A copy will be posted on the Friends Website.

There was general agreement in keeping the park as a park, and that local people with local knowledge and a keen interest in the park should be viewed as highly significant stakeholders.

MB: The City Council are owners of the site, including the Hall, having purchased it from Cambridge Water Company some years ago.

There was general agreement that other areas of the park are important and that the Friends group should not focus primarily on one area/aspect.

DS: There is also concern by local people about the acts of vandalism and especially arson, and also whether the park gates should be locked each evening as used to happen.

There was agreement that it would be useful if a single person could be contacted by Friends members to report issues. *Debbie Stannard volunteered to do this along with her husband Kevin. Contact details: 139, Walpole Road, CB1 3UD, (01223) 578227. A general council email can be used too, which is [parks@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:parks@cambridge.gov.uk).*

There was also a feeling that it would make sense to agree the areas where ChYpPS (Children & Young People's Participation Service) activities should be taking place so everyone was happy.

There was a proposal to engage Natural England (<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>), who offer practical advice on sustainable stewardship, to undertake an audit of the natural areas of the park and make recommendations. There was concern that some of the works may have contravened environment law, and Natural England would be able to catalogue species and advise.

There was agreement that the new natural play area was badly located in terms of the impact on wildlife and badly timed in its construction schedule. It was stated that not only did it cost £37,000 of Lottery Fund money (not City Council money), but the workmen engaged to erect it came all the way from Wales (not environmentally-friendly). Lottery funding stipulated that it must not be 'play apparatus'.

BD: An enquiry was made as to whether planning permission was needed for the natural play area. The City Council response was that it was not a requirement.

RD: Parts of the propagation centre were listed buildings, yet the City Council chose to demolish them.

### 3. Notification to members about new way of emailing from the central Website

BH: There are two elements to the electronic side of things –

- Website <http://www.cherryhintonhall.com>
- Group email courtesy of Google Groups

We have been finding our way with the group email system. Changes mean that when group members now send an email to the group it will not go to everyone's email inbox as had previously happened but will instead post to a group email area and

members will receive instead a single 'daily digest' email. We will leave only committee members (BH, SN, BD at present) with the ability to send emails to all members. It will be arranged for all committee members to have this 'administrator' access. There is also a link to a Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall Face Book page on the Website.

#### 4. Actions

MB: Will set up a suggestions box in Cherry Hinton Library for those not on email.

MB: To arrange for us to have a section of the Cherry Hinton History Society tent at the Cherry Hinton Festival on 19 September (cost will be £10.00).

RD: To publicise the group more widely in the Cambridge News.

BH: To put the draft constitution on the Website for members to comment on prior to the next meeting.

BH: To put Phil Back's report on the Website.

BH: To organise administrator email access for committee members.

*Date and venue of next meeting – 7.30 pm, Wednesday, 9 September, St Philip Howard Church Hall on Walpole Road.*

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.