

Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall meeting, Wednesday, 9 September, 2009

MINUTES

Approximately 40 people were in attendance at St Philip Howard Catholic Church on Walpole Road. Apologies were received from Judy Webb and Robert Dryden.

1. Welcome / introduction

Group Chair Bob Daines welcomed everyone to the meeting and also introduced the draft constitution which had been handed out and would be discussed later.

2. Introduction and endorsement of committee

The chair also introduced current committee members and asked those present if they were happy to re-endorse the committee by vote. The following Officers were duly endorsed:

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

3. Introduction and ratification of constitution

Copies of a draft constitution were circulated. An initial comment on the constitution from Stuart Newbold was that it is recommended that the constitution includes reference to an equalities policy or statement. Bob Hall mentioned that an electronic copy would be available on the Website. Members are asked to provide feedback on the constitution's content via the Website or by email, or failing this to bring amendments and suggestions to the October meeting. A ratified constitution is imperative if we are to move things forward as a group.

4. Amendments to group 'mission statement'

Paul Holmes suggested an amendment to the group's mission statement – that the 'group structure' should instead read "members of the management committee to be elected by all members of the committee". This was agreed.

Concern was expressed about there not being a specific reference to the wildlife in the mission statement. A short debate ensued. It was agreed to retain the statement without a specific reference to wildlife. Paul Holmes suggested that the word "*most*" should be removed from the statement – this suggestion was agreed unanimously.

“The Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall is a group that is concerned about the usage, environment, welfare and future of the Cherry Hinton Hall grounds for the benefit of those who use it.”

5. Details of bank account and potential funding opportunities

David Wilson told the meeting that an account has been opened with HSBC. Further signatures are required from Bob Daines and Stuart Newbold to complete the bank account registration process. This would be done in the coming weeks.

A question was raised as to whether the group should be registered as a charity? Michelle Bullivant replied that as long as The Friends had a bank account, constitution, and elected committee, then there really was no need or great benefit.

6. Update on repair work undertaken since 2009 Folk Festival

Stuart Newbold reported that various discussions had taken place with members of the City Council’s Active Communities Team – in particular Alistair Wilson, who had also undertaken another site visit with Stuart to inspect the damage and agree repair work. In addition to the aeration, drilling and re-seeding work so far done, Alistair has also agreed to purchase 20 tonnes of topsoil, the majority of which will be used to raise and repair the heavily-used grass areas, with some being used at Netherhall School.

7. Discussion on group & grounds-maintenance priorities

It was intended to use this part of the meeting as a ‘break out’ session, but time was limited and it was instead suggested that *group members* take copies of the Excel spreadsheet prepared by Stuart and *annotate / make additional comments and also rank the suggestions in priority*. The spreadsheet is also available on the Website. Michelle Bullivant suggested that members could return forms at the Local History tent at the Cherry Hinton Festival on 19 September. Alternatively, please use the group email system to provide feedback.

A number of comments were made on repairs and improvements throughout the evening:

- There should be some sort of temporary surface put down near the duck pond, whilst a decision on the propagation centre site is arrived at

Michelle Bullivant mentioned that the area of Cherry Hinton Hall and its surroundings was known as “Springfield” up to the mid 18th century – and it ran all the way to past where the meeting was taking place on Walpole Road, and was extremely boggy. It was when John Okes, a surgeon at Addenbrooke’s Hospital who acquired the land in the 1830s, the Cambridge University and Town Water Works Company decided to drain the site and put in place the pumping station on Cherry Hinton Road that things changed. Only then did the area become properly navigable on foot.

- Dr Study (Principal, Cambridge International School) volunteered that the school would be keen to do something with the propagation centre area such as bringing it into school use as a 'Victorian Garden'.

Bob Daines commented that many suggestions have been put forward for the propagation centre, but the important thing is with the establishment of this Group, we will be engaged in the consultation process.

- Anne Mashapure suggested we should also consider doing something to help both the school children (St Bede's, Cambridge International & Netherhall) and the elderly people in the sheltered housing on Walpole Road – both of whom would benefit from a pelican crossing from the park entrance
- In addition, the paths when you enter from Walpole Road by Fernwood are so rounded, and have potholes, that anyone with a walking frame can't access the park safely - this has been a perennial problem
- Kevin and Debbie Stannard mentioned that much more needs to be done about the five or six moped / motorcycle riders who are intimidating residents living near the Walpole Road shop, using the area to ride aggressively on most evenings, creating a great deal of noise, engaging in antisocial riding in the Hall grounds very late each evening, and possibly drinking and riding. Residents would particularly appreciate a shop camera being linked to the City Council's CCTV system
- There was some concern about a newly-appeared notice for a planning application for a 'temporary log cabin' – especially what constituted *temporary*
- A suggestion was made for an audit of any endangered species. Bob Hall mentioned that he had received an email from John Shanklin, a local eminent scientist who we might use if the Wildlife Trusts are unable to help
- Signage could be introduced to reinforce the message that dogs should be on a lead when they are near the duck pond area
- Signage by the duck pond could be put in place to discourage bread feeding to the birds
- The provision of a grit bin by the duck pond

It was commented that the ducks were introduced in 1982 and a further restocking exercise took place some time in the 1990s. But since this time no one has actively managed the birdlife. During some of this time the City Council also used a feed additive to reduce breeding. It may be that this aspect of wildlife management could be looked into.

- Reinstatement of the Hall Grounds Warden
- Build a new 'Interpretation Centre' complete with café and toilets

A question was asked about the current financial crisis, especially with respect to council funding. Stuart Newbold replied that Cherry Hinton Hall grounds has been identified as one of 5 or 6 Cambridge parks who will receive section 106 planning gain investment. This funding is already allocated and will not be withdrawn due to the recession.

8. Speakers

8.a PCSO David Jackson

Cherry Hinton PCSO David Jackson was in attendance and was invited to address the meeting. PCSO Jackson commented that he is one of two Community Support Officers for Cherry Hinton along with PCSO Sally Mitchell; but also am part of the South Neighbourhood Team, which covers Cherry Hinton, Trumpington and Queen Edith's – indeed at the time of speaking PCSO Jackson was the only south area team member on duty. Currently Police interests include some of the miscreant moped riders and drunks who are frequenting the Hall grounds at night. PCSO Jackson has recently issued three Section 59 orders – for 'antisocial riding' whereby the rider of the moped receives a warning; if the same person is caught again (regardless of the machine), then the machine is confiscated. The recovery charge is £120, plus there is a £50/day storage charge. The person in receipt of a Section 59 notice has this with them for 2 years.

Jimmy Nunn asked if the Police were patrolling the Blacklands allotments at night, as there have been a spate of break-ins and burglaries, and even a case of a lock being broken but nothing from the shed taken.

PCSO Jackson responded that they were. And on a general note, he wished to emphasise how important it is to report all crime, antisocial behaviour and suspicious behaviour. This builds a picture for the force to know where to allocate resources, and if someone is available they will proceed to an incident immediately.

Please use the low-cost number - 0345 4564564 for reporting crime etc.

PCSOs Sally Mitchell and David Jackson hold surgeries in Cherry Hinton Library on the first Wednesday of each month from 4.00-5.00 pm. Cherry Hinton Police are also looking to now hold at least some of these later in the evenings, probably at the Village Centre.

PCSO Jackson was thanked for his contribution.

8.b David Brook, Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook

David Brook, a founder of the recently-constituted Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook was in attendance and was asked to give a brief outline of the make up and objectives of this neighbouring Friends group.

The Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook have been in existence for approximately 3 months. The area of interest covers Burnside, Snakey Path and the area leading up to Sainsburys. The Group's objectives are –

- The maintenance of an attractive environment
- Keeping the area litter free
- Having an emphasis on wildlife

The Group has recently heard that the brook has been designated as a “green corridor”, forming part of a link from Lime Kiln Hill Nature Reserve to Coldham's Common.

The Group has six main interests –

- Providing interpretation boards (costs quoted are between £300 and £800!), for instance at Sainsburys. Guy Belcher, Cambridge City Council Conservation Officer, is assisting.
- Re-establishing the public right of way through the top of Sainsburys car park currently blocked by boards and padlocked at the Coldham's Lane end.
- Liaising with the City Council on the future use of St Bede's Play Area.
- Organising litter-picks. There will be one this autumn, especially towards the Sainsburys end as this is the worst effected area. Help has been given by Andrew Walters, Keep Britain Tidy, Norwich.
- Tackling the knotweed clump by the TA site.
- Monitoring 'lake events', keeping an eye on trespassers, etc.

NB There are problems along Snakey Path due to there being two fences between the path and St Bede's school, with the school / the County Council suggesting that they only have to look after the inner fence. However, the council has agreed to monitor maintenance.

Thanks were given to David Brooks for his contribution.

9. Any other business

Michelle Bullivant mentioned that she would do some talks about the history of the Cherry Hinton Hall site (130 years ago it was orchards, 150 years ago there were buildings there, 200 years ago it was used to graze sheep and pigs, 300 years ago there was a manor house). Michelle will also talk to Laura Watson from the Wildlife Trusts.

Bob Hall mentioned that the Friends group would try to put together a small leaflet to leave in local shops, etc.

10. Date and venue of next meeting

7.30 pm, WEDNESDAY, 21 OCTOBER, AT THE CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, CHERRY HINTON HALL (with thanks to Dr Sturdy)