

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO CHERRY HINTON HALL GROUNDS

MEETING NOTES

Cherry Hinton Village Centre

11th January 12:30 – 4pm

Present: Chair - Debbie Kaye (Head Of Active Communities CCC), Alistair Wilson (Green Space Manager CCC), Anthony French (Green Space Officer CCC), Ian Ross (Recreation Services Manager CCC), Declan O'Halloran (Technical Officer CCC), Stuart Newbold (Ward Councillor – Cherry Hinton), Phil Back (Phil Back Associates), Guy Belcher (Conservation Officer CCC), Kenny McGregor (Aboricultural Officer CCC), Susan Smith (Conservation & Design Officer CCC), Joanna Gilbert-Wooldridge (Senior Planning Officer CCC), Judy Webb (Friends Of Cherry Hinton), Bob Daines (Friends Of Cherry Hinton), Bob Hall (Friends Of Cherry Hinton), Vicky Hatherell (ChYPPS Team CCC), Eddie Barchan (Events Manager – Folk Festival CCC), Harriet Sturdy (Cambridge International School) Gary Quilter (Streetscene CCC).

The following are summary notes of the meeting, they have been based on roundtable stakeholder discussion as well as the specific group exercise undertaken at the meeting to look at the perceptions of likes, dislikes and potential improvement opportunities to Cherry Hinton Hall Grounds.

- After introductions Phil Back gave an informative presentation which summarised the public consultation exercise which had recently been carried out.
- Stakeholders were split into three groups to discuss their likes & dislikes of the park and to make suggestions as to what areas could be enhanced.

Likes of park:

- Wildlife and woodland
- Wider community benefit
- Play areas & paddling pool
- Sense of heritage
- Cottage/House/Hall buildings
- Wide-open space
- Opportunities to explore
- Natural feel/beauty/wildlife
- Boundary enclose – Destination rather than open space, security of fence, relationship with other features.
- Wildlife corridor
- Versatility of the site/events encouraging different/varied usage
- Parterre/Front garden layout

- Landscape and amenity benefit
- Different feel to other city parks
- Restful place to go

Common reoccurring themes from groups:

- 1. Wildlife**
- 2. Heritage/Character**
- 3. Purpose and significance (of park)**

Dislikes of park:

- Current toilet provision – urgent need for new/current placement, is it correct
- Paths, material/placement, some are not used, other areas have desire lines showing heavy use and possible requirement for new path? About the right number overall though.
- Drainage – some bad areas on site waterlogged and unusable for long periods.
- Pond looks unkempt – rubbish/silt rarely cleared
- Poor state of toilets on regular basis
- Pond looks sterile
- Street furniture looks old and some is in poor state of repair
- Hard surface near duck pond is in poor state of repair
- Play area needs repairs including new slide recently vandalised
- Paddling pool is a bit run down
- Vehicle movement into and around site
- Dog mess/uncontrolled dogs
- No on site presence (Park warden)
- Lack of provision for food/snacks/drinks
- Entranceway uninviting and narrow
- Cycle provision is in random positions and difficult to locate

Common – reoccurring themes from groups:

- 1. Toilet provision**
- 2. Pond condition**
- 3. Basic maintenance issues**

Key message from stakeholders:

“To maintain current assets of park by sympathetic enhancement of existing features rather than lots of new”

Possible ideas for improvement/development

- Ecological assessment of pond – Ecological improvements
- New toilet/kiosk – near to paddling pool/play?
- Community café facility – where old propagation centre was located?
- Nursery/growing facility (external groups showing interest to run)
- To ensure any newly constructed buildings are in keeping with existing hall building in terms of materials/appearances.
- Central area currently divides park – would like to encourage people into centre and link paths together
- Arts/performance space? Amphitheatre?
- Meadow areas? – Chalk grasslands in keeping with local area
- Use of hedges as barriers
- Removal of existing Leylandii hedge to rear of building
- Better path surfaces than those currently provided, aligned to desire lines
- Tree corridor to extend wildlife area near pond
- Access to play area during folk festival
- Programme to dredge pond (Outcome/recommendations of Ecological Survey?)
- Retain Ice cream concession or similar only – is fixed café commercially viable?
- Management of woodland near pond – create new habitat by removing non native trees and replacing with native/under canopy flora
- Manage site sympathetically to encourage/enhance wildlife
- MUGA – Raised but with a consensus of uncertainty of requirement/suitability of this feature – possible change of park character if installed
- Need to consider facilities for older children and teenagers – Views needed from this group as currently missing
- Folk festival impact –consider constraints to new layouts
- Improve play provision but within existing footprint
- Consideration/re-configuration of pathways – removing some which have limited use and formalising some heavily used routes which have desire lines – ultimately to retain around the same.
- Consideration of circular path route?
- Concrete hard standing rationalised/considered – not keen on more areas
- Extension of Playground area for school utilising small area of old propagation centre
- More benches and bins sympathetically placed across site.

AW highlighted three areas not raised by groups:

1. Current recycling centre in car park
2. Lighting
3. Signage

Key action points:

- To undertake site visit with Robert Myers Associates at the earliest opportunity to set context and discuss the comments **AF/AW**
- Consider feedback from meeting and draft masterplan options for review by stakeholders **AF/RM Associates**
- To continue dialogue with Friends group on day-to-day issues **AF/AW** as main contact points. A representative from Active Communities will attend the next Friends meeting on 20th January 2010
- To make Phil Back full consultation report available **AF**
- Arrange next stakeholder meeting pending draft of masterplans **DK/AF**

Revised timetable

- Scoping of master plan – Robert Myers associates February 2009
- Review/consultation of master plan with stakeholders March 2010
- Review revised master plan with stakeholders – agree in principle April 2010
- South Area Committee consultation 13th May 2010
- Community services scrutiny June/July 2010 (Date TBC) for approval
- Submission of projects for funding to Improve Neighbourhood Scheme autumn 2010
- Full project appraisal Jan/March 2011