

**Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall AGM, 7.30 pm, Wednesday, 17 July 2013**

Cherry Hinton Village Church Centre, Colville Road, Cherry Hinton

*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*

17 people were in attendance at the Village Centre, Cherry Hinton. There were apologies from Mark Ashton, Bob Daines, Sheila Manton, Barbara Oxley, Catherine Mills and Tony Fuller.

1. David Taylor, Chair, welcomed everyone to the AGM. Minutes of the 2012 AGM and 15 May meetings were agreed.

Matters arising:

The Wildlife Officer from the City Council will again be present at the Festival this year. We also have a timetable for before, during, and after this year's Festival.

2. Election of Committee for 2013/14

The following were elected to serve as Committee members for the next 12 months:

Chair	David Taylor
Secretary	Stuart Newbold
Treasurer	Ian Simmons
Historical Officer	Michelle Bullivant
Publicity & Events Officer	Sandra Day
Membership Secretary	Sandra Day
Website Editor	Emily Poyser
Principal Liaison Officer, City Council	Stuart Newbold
General Committee	Judy Webb

3. Guest Speaker: Simon Bunn, Sustainable Drainage Engineer, Cambridge City Council

Simon is responsible for promoting and overseeing sustainable drainage in Cambridge, especially in any new developments. He also is responsible for the strategic flood risk management of Cambridge (there are a high proportion of watercourses in the city), and via an act of Parliament the City Council via him has responsibility for keeping all watercourses in the city clean. Cherry Hinton Hall and Cherry Hinton Brook fall under Simon's remit. Simon works very closely with Guy Belcher, Nature Conservation Officer for Cambridge City Council.

Simon had brought a handout with a number of Cherry Hinton maps. The first map, from 1870, shows that much of the watercourses in the Hall grounds were

man-made, cut to facilitate drainage. The first O/S map of 1888 shows very little change in the watercourses between the two dates.

Issues:

When the watercourses were first dug, they would have all been spring-fed and very healthy. There have been springs in Cambridge, used in various ways, for over 100 years. But the numbers have started to diminish – due to water abstraction, urbanisation, and other reasons. And in Cherry Hinton Hall as elsewhere, the watercourses were designed for the flow conditions at the time, and with less water are not as fit for purpose today.

The watercourses have also silted-up over time due to leaf fall. This is difficult and expensive to remove. The tree cover has also lessened the amount of in-channel vegetation, which reduces the amount of wildlife, and (due to a wider channel) lessens the water-flow.

Options:

- Reduce the width e.g. by use of coir coils, deflectors, small islands, etc.
- Remove silt via a) sloughing-out (onto the bank); b) vacuuming out (into a settling-tank where the hard residue can then be taken to a tip). Interestingly, the Environment Agency treats any liquid as hazardous, so disposal of any liquid locally is desirable.
- The silt problem can also be addressed by speeding up the flow. This will remove it gradually over time. What Guy has done with the Brook recently has already character and quality of the Brook (including new sitings of water voles).
- Letting in more light to the stream and brook and stream is very desirable.

Simon was asked about the pond and rear lake.

The flow is so minimal in the main body to the rear that it can be considered a lake. There are issues with trying to re-establish the flow, including possible silting-up of the Brook. It would be desirable to create the bog area near the lake as suggested by Guy, by dredging the lake. Then we could look at additional watercourse measures including flow management.

Introducing more light, low vegetation, and oxygenating plants is very desirable.

It was agreed that the easiest and most cost-efficient way of improving the area, especially to the wildlife habitat, is to drain the silt from the lake and create an adjacent boggy area.

Of course, all work options require funding. Simon suggested that often voluntary groups such as FCHH have more access to funding grants than the likes of the City Council. Together we should draw up plans and apply for funding from:

- The Environment Agency
  - Catchment Restoration Fund
  - Landfill Tax grants
- Section 106 Developer Contributions
- Heritage Lottery Fund

Simon mentioned the *Water Framework Directive*, which allocates water status. We need to try and get ours to a ‘good’ rating (almost all Cambridge watercourses are ‘poor’ or ‘moderate’). If ours is ‘poor’ or ‘moderate’, this may help us get some funding.

*Simon agreed to put together a rough Programme of Works for FCHH so we could use the elements as templates for grant funding applications.*

#### 4. 2013 Folk Festival

David Taylor reported that we would have a stall this year, after missing out in 2012 when there was the issue with the Sky Arts Recording Studio. We need people to volunteer for 1- or 2-hour slots on Saturday and Sunday. Passes will be provided.

Sandra Day reported that we had met with Council Officer at the Mill Road Depot, and had discussed the issue of a memorial to Ken Woolard. The City Council were receptive to the idea at the meeting – suggestions included a bench, a metal tree with musical notes as leaves, etc. We will use our stall to start a consultation exercise and seek ideas!

Meanwhile Anthony French will talk to the Public Art Officer, Nadine Black, and Eddie Barcan agreed to contact Ken’s widow, Joan.

#### 5. Maintenance issues

Sandra Day reported that the slide had been upgraded, together with new rubber matting. Sandra has met Declan O’Halloran to discuss other options for the younger children’s play equipment etc. The swings will be removed and two replacements put in place in the autumn, together with a new play-house. The surrounding fence will be pulled back to create a larger children’s play area.

Doug suggested the play area could do with additional seats.

#### 6. Future meetings and events

We have organised a dog photo competition for the FCHH Community Groups Fair on 14 September (“It’s a Dog’s Life”).

The next meeting is will take place at 7.30 p.m., on Wednesday 18 September, at Cherry Hinton Village Centre. The guest this time is Harvey Levison, who will be talking about first aid.