

Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall meeting, Wednesday, 20 January 2010

MINUTES

Approximately 30 people were in attendance at the Baptist Church Centre, Fisher's Lane, Cherry Hinton.

1. Welcome / introduction

Group Chair Bob Daines welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from David Wilson and Robert Dryden.

2. Minutes and matters arising from 21 October meeting

Copies of minutes from the previous meeting were available. The minutes were agreed. Matters arising:

- Bob Hall: The duck pond temporary path has been put in – discussion on this is covered in item 4.

3. Election of replacement committee member to replace Debbie Stannard

As no one expressed a great desire to join the Committee as a general committee member to replace Debbie who has moved house, it was decided to leave this position open until the AGM.

4. Feedback on interim surface works by Duck Pond, Announcements

a. Matters arising from works

Bob Hall:

The duck pond temporary path has been put in place for the next 18 months or so, whilst the plans for the future of the propagation centre are finalised. The causeway in place is designed to allow access to the water edge, even during periods of heavy rain. However, this isn't a permanent solution. The City Council has also fenced off an area immediately to the south of the pond in an attempt to let the grass re-establish itself and prevent City Council staff from driving over the grass each time they wish to empty the dog bins.

Anthony French, Cambridge City Council Green Space Officer:

Anthony was welcomed to the meeting and gave a brief introduction; he joined Cambridge City Council 13 years ago after completing a degree in horticulture. He is very familiar with Cherry Hinton Hall and is appreciative of the particular history and character of the Hall and grounds. Within Active Communities, there is a -

Technical Team, dealing with maintenance, repairs, play equipment, etc

Soft Area Team, which deals with the grounds, trees, shrubs, etc, with

Although Anthony is part of the latter team, he works extensively with the technical team and can be relied on to facilitate repairs and improvements in this area too.

Anthony explained that he had been liaising with Bob Daines and Bob Hall regarding the temporary surface by the duck pond. Although what's there isn't ideal, the technical guys recommended not using the brown hoggin as a temporary surface but instead to use the paving in place. This needs raising in height to ensure it remains dry but Anthony will ensure that this additional work is undertaken.

Paul Holmes mentioned that in addition to raising the height of the temporary path, it also needs a proper camber. *Anthony mentioned that Declan O'Haloran, one of Cambridge City Council's Technical Officers, would get this seen to.*

Bob Daines:

Should we consider a tarmac surface?

Anthony French:

There are different views. Obviously, there is a tarmac path just nearby which runs behind the Hall. But the hoggin surface is more natural. However, for maintenance and an ability to last longer, something other than hoggin perhaps should be considered.

Bob Hall:

There are also potential issues with tarmac insofar as leaching of carcinogens etc. In this case, alternatives may be preferable for the wildlife.

Mention was made of the very poor state also from the edge of the duck pond area running through to the Daws Lane gate by the bridge. This is in very real need of attention.

Paul Holmes / Stuart Newbold:

The fenced off area needs to be widened as it does not cover all of the damaged area. Left over posts should also be collected before they all end up in the duck pond.

b. Other groups/organisations events and announcements

1. The Wildlife Trust, who own and manage Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits Nature Reserve, would like to consult local users, residents and stakeholders about what they would like to see incorporated at the site – this could be special events, interpretation boards, information accessible by mobile phone, guided walks, and so on. The consultation will feed into The Wildlife Trust's plans for the Chalk Pits for the next five years. Two consultation meetings have been arranged at Cherry Hinton Village Centre; on Tuesday, 2 February from 10.00 am – noon, and on Monday, 8 February, from 6.00-8.00 pm. There is also a brief online survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L9TBMLG>. More information is also available from Claire Adler at claireadler@btinternet.com or on (01223) 411555.

2. Cambridge City Council Children's Team (ChYpps) has organised a family fun day at Cherry Hinton Hall, from 2.00 – 5.00 pm on Wednesday, 17 February, during half term week. The event coincides with National Bird Nesting week and includes a marquee where there will be an opportunity to try building bird boxes. Email chypps@cambridge.gov.uk or call (01223) 457873.

3. Victoria Zeitlyn, secretary of Save our Green Spaces (SOS), mentioned that SOS is setting up a Green Networking Forum - lots of Friends groups in Cambridge will be

involved. The first meeting is an ‘Umbrella Forum’ on Wednesday, 3 March, at the Cambridge Union Society, 9a Bridge Street.

Carolin Göhler, Chief Executive of Cambridge Past, Present and Future (formerly Cambridge Preservation Society) are liaising with the City Council, including the Department of Planning, to arrange for the upkeep and maintenance of a number of old buildings in Cambridge such as the old Leper Chapel on Newmarket Road, plus other buildings of historical significance. CPPF is also working with local schools on this project. CPPF also has as a priority, the improvement of the quality of green spaces in Cambridge and elsewhere, and thought it worthwhile to introduce themselves to the Friends. Bob Hall agreed to link the Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall Website to CPPF (<http://www.cambridgeppf.org/>), which includes a great deal of information including many events month-to-month

5. Cherry Hinton Hall deed of covenant

Stuart Newbold introduced the deed and thanked Anthony French for organising for a copy to be sent to the Friends. The deed was drawn up for the transfer of ownership from John Oakes to the then Cambridge University and Town Waterworks Company in 1872. A key section is contained on page 3, which concerns the uses to which Cherry Hinton Hall grounds may be put, and which reads –

"2 The Vendors hereby acknowledge the right of the Corporation to production of the documents mentioned in the schedule thereto and to delivery of copies thereof and hereby undertake for the safe custody thereof.

3 The Corporation hereby covenant with the Vendors that they the Corporation will as soon as reasonably practicable after the execution of these presents and to the satisfaction of the surveyors of the Vendors fence off the property hereby conveyed on the western boundary thereof with an unclimbable wrought iron fence five feet in height and will forever thereafter maintain said fence in good repair and condition.

4 The Corporation do hereby covenant with the Vendors that the property hereby conveyed shall be reserved as a public open space under the Cambridge and District Town Planning Scheme and that no buildings or erections shall be set up upon the said property or on any part thereof except such buildings or erections as shall be required for or incidental to the maintenance of such property as public open space in accordance with the provisions of the said scheme provided always that nothing herein contained shall prevent the erection upon the said property of buildings for horticultural purposes lodge and or cottages for occupation by persons employed on or about such property shelters conveniences refreshment houses bandstands and other buildings of a similar character.

Witnesses whereof the Vendors and the Corporation have caused their respective commercials to be received hereunto affixed the day and year first before written.

The Schedule hereinbefore referred to

19 th June 1872	<i>Indenture of Conveyance</i>	<i>1 Issued Deed</i>
4 th October 1900	<i>Indenture of Conveyance</i>	<i>2 Cambridge University and Town Waterworks Company William Henry Wiekham</i>

There was discussion as to the implications of the use specification included in the document, for instance whether the Folk Festival or even the use of the Hall as a school was appropriate. However, most agreed that the uses specified tallied neatly with the aims and vision of the Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall, that its existence was to be welcomed and that the Friends would seek to see its contents adhered to.

6. S106 projects for parks and open spaces

Stuart Newbold introduced a summary table of already-identified section 106 (so-called planning gain monies) projects, which have been agreed in principle by Cambridge City Council, some specifying Cherry Hinton Hall itself (such as money already allocated for a café / kiosk), and others identified as to be spent in the wider Cherry Hinton area. *This list is available on the Friends Website.*

Stuart mentioned that this list is not exhaustive and that greater funding has already been agreed for use in whatever stakeholders agree as a preferred future use of the propagation centre area, plus other improvements to the Hall grounds beyond this and that if these schemes go ahead they will form part of the wider improvement plans.

7. Review of stakeholder meeting on 11 January

Bob Daines introduced a review of the stakeholder meeting, which was held on 11 January at the Village Centre to look at the report by consultant Phil Back and consider afresh what interested parties would like to see happen to the former propagation centre area, plus changes and improvements to the wider environment.

Anthony French from Cambridge City Council, was kind enough to take notes of the meeting, and a copy is available both as an appendix to these minutes and as a document itself on the Friends Website.

Bob Daines: There were 18 round the table, and it was a good, productive meeting. It was made very clear that there's all to play for with the future of the propagation centre - it was emphasised that we are starting with a 'blank sheet of paper', with the exception being that the City Council's Arts & Entertainments Department would like to retain some hard-stand area for siting equipment for the Folk Festival. There was also a desire for Cambridge Regional College to keep the workshop area they occupy to the rear of the Hall. This means that in reality approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the area will be available to revamp as agreed.

NB Stuart Newbold mentioned a meeting he had had with Jas Lally, Head of Environmental Services at Cambridge City Council, the previous lunchtime. Jas announced that Cambridge City Council is entering into a partnership with South

Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire councils to provide an out-of-hours dog warden service. One of the consequences of this is the need to provide an expanded dog compound, and Jas announced that he intended to submit a planning application for a larger compound behind the Hall in the former propagation centre area.

Bob Daines, and Stuart Newbold, summarised some of the likes and dislikes agreed at the meeting (see meeting notes for full list) –

Likes / desires	Dislikes
Wildlife	MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)
Improved toilet facilities	Toilets need improving
Kiosk / café	Pond, wildlife area needs improving
Bigger tree corridor to extend the wildlife area near pond	Remove non native trees (esp. conifer hedge) and replant with more appropriate species
Nursery or a community growing area	Paths – and ‘desire lines’ where children cycle etc
More play provision within existing footprint	Lack of seats, dog and litter bins
Raised bank / landscaping e.g. for theatre productions, listening by the bandstand	Drainage

Anthony French mentioned that the key message, it was thought from the meeting, was that Stakeholders wanted “*to maintain current assets of park by sympathetic enhancement of existing features rather than lots of new*”.

Questions / comments

Carolin Göhler: Have we studied the history of the site in order to put back what was there?

Michelle Bullivant: It was formerly a Victorian garden - which could be brought back as it was mentioned. Indeed, the school has shown an interest in doing so. We would also be interested in replanting saffron, which used to be extensively grown in the area.

Carolin Göhler: The experience of CPPF is that the better the consensus achieved on the Masterplan, the better the likely outcome.

Many people thought that a copse area through to Daws Lane would be appropriate, if the Friends were serious about doing more for the wildlife. Again, to help the wildlife, we should consider excluding the public from part of this area. There was also a comment that the current wildlife area could be more securely fenced off for the duration of the Folk Festival, which must be an unsettling time for the wildlife.

There was also a question as to whether water is being pumped from the hall grounds, fed from the Giant’s Grave spring, by pumps installed on Lime Kiln Hill or possibly further down Cherry Hinton Road. If there are pumps available - then perhaps the amount pumped could be temporarily increased for a short period immediately before and during the Folk Festival?

Dave Hart: The Folk Festival and nature conservation are inimical. There will always be a tension between these things. For instance, if you do build bird boxes then you may find you need additional security to keep the youths away. The ponds are in

desperate need of draining. The Hall could really do with a warden - the Friends should seriously consider what we want to do with any financial resources. Why are the gates not closed at night as they used to be by the warden? It must be noted that currently a lot of the wildlife leaves the area after dusk.

Bob Daines: We can't backtrack here, but instead must try and move forward. At the moment the Folk Festival is here and we'll have to do the best we can with it in-situ over the medium term. We should avoid being nimbies - anti Folk Festival.

There was general discussion as to whether a centrally-located café would be commercially viable, with no definitive view taken, although it was thought that a café would do best in conjunction with other amenities such as the reestablishment of a plant nursery or a community garden project.

Gill Palmer: We need to think also about the children and young people.

Bob Daines: Remember there is Nightingale Recreation Ground (with recent massive investment in children's provision), Cherry Hinton Recreation Ground, St Thomas's Square Recreation Ground, Netherhall School (with £Ms of investment in new sports provision going in now).

Michelle Bullivant: 150 or so children from St Bede's School recently came with me to do an archaeological visit to Cherry Hinton Hall. The children have helped with the notice boards and proved to be very useful; as a group we need to liaise more with local schools.

Bob Daines: Involvement like this is fine but given the slide was recently burnt down twice - and still hasn't been replaced - there is no guarantee that if money is spent in certain ways that the kids that we want so see benefit will do so.

A question was asked as to why the grounds could not be secured at night with the gates being locked, as was previously the case.

Anthony French: No gates are shut anywhere across the city anymore - this service was recently removed as a budget cut.

Gill Palmer: There is a chap who comes in to open the toilets at 7.00 in the morning and again at night; it wouldn't cost any more - why doesn't the City Council use the same person to do the gates?

Paul Holmes: We should consider keeping an open area where people can sit and relax. The idea of some banking is attractive e.g. so people can sit and listen when the bandstand is in place. Other open leisure ideas could be cricket.

The idea of a putting green, as the sort of activity which could run alongside a café / kiosk was aired and discussed. It was agreed that some sort of supporting activity alongside any café could be beneficial to its viability.

Bob Daines: We should also consider a temporary kiosk; it need not be permanent. There also needs to be better roadways for the Folk Festival. The suggestion that there

needs to be permanent hardstand for use by Folk Festival vehicles as part of any outcome for the propagation centre area could also be challenged. There's no reason why provision cannot be made for a temporary hardstand to be put in place each year.

Carolin Göhler: *For the duck pond the Friends need to look to put in reed beds (as do the Botanic Gardens) to remove the nitrates from the water.*

Options for further consultation; timetable to approval and implementation

The External Landscape Architects will draw up a Masterplan for the site; Bob Hall will be meeting with him shortly. Once that has been done, there will be another Stakeholder meeting to see how our views have developed - probably in early March.

Bob Hall made clear that the Friends now has to continue the work of liaising with the City Council on bringing forward plans for the former propagation centre area, and to this end will set up a Web Survey for the FCHH Website, asking for views to be collated and fed back into the consultation process. Those members not online would receive printed copies of the survey to complete and return.

Following this, the next step will be to get agreement on what will happen in April. This plan will then be presented to Cambridge City Council's South Area Committee in May. There will be a further opportunity for the public to comment before City Councillors from the wards of Trumpington, Queen Edith's and Cherry Hinton give their approval. Once approved, a report will be presented to the City Council's Community Services Scrutiny Committee in June or July for their approval. This is important as it will commit s106 funding, including for new features not already approved and circulated in the table from Stuart. Finally, given Community Services Scrutiny Committee approval, the Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation will be asked for their endorsement and the works will be able to commence.

8. Anthony French / Alistair Wilson, Cambridge City Council

See section 4 above. Anthony is now the main point of contact for FCHH

9. Funding and promotion activities

a. Report from Treasurer

Stuart Newbold, on behalf of David Wilson, mentioned that there was a balance of £514.75 in the account.

b. Press work

Bob Daines and Stuart Newbold, assisted by Robert Dryden, had done a press release to the Cambridge News, highlighting that residents were prevented from accessing the children's play area and paddling pools during the Folk Festival, and that the City Council should consider changes to the boundary layout to allow access.

Stuart had also conducted an interview the previous day with Radio Cambridgeshire, highlighting the aims of the Friends and the consultation exercise that is going on into

the future of the propagation centre area, asking for people to get involved e.g. via the Website.

c. Spring newsletter, leaflet for shops etc

Stuart Newbold mentioned that the grant, from the Cambridge Community Foundation, requires spending by the end of 31 March 2010.

Stuart suggested that the Friends consider producing a newsletter sometime in March or April, delivered to homes in the wider area, including across Coleridge, Romsey and Queen Edith's.

Stuart also suggested that the Friends have a more permanent 3-fold leaflet, similar to the Giant's Grave leaflet produced by Cherry Hinton History Society, produced. This can be used long-term, in libraries, shops, schools, etc and the Friends can make use at various fairs and functions where we may have a stall, such as the Cherry Hinton Festival.

It was agreed that both ideas be followed-up.

d. Proposals for 2010 Folk Festival

Stuart Newbold raised the idea of the Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall having a small stall at this year's Folk Festival. The aim would be to promote the Friends, enhance awareness of the history, archaeology and wildlife, and hopefully increase membership. Stuart mentioned that he had initially discussed this with Alistair Wilson, senior Horticultural Officer at the City Council. Alistair had suggested something such as measuring people's carbon footprint in attending the Festival, and – in return – asking for a suitable donation e.g. for tree planting, bird and bat boxes, help with the species audit, the provision of benches, litter bins and other amenities – the list could be quite long. Stuart had also aired this suggestion at the 11th January stakeholder meeting, and all present felt it was a good idea, including Eddie Barcan who is responsible for Folk Festival organisation.

People agreed this was a good idea worth perusing, and that Stuart should see if this could be implemented in 2010.

Some comments were also made –

Paul Holmes: Perhaps the Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall should have a kiosk at the Folk Festival for selling teas?

Dave Hart: The Friends should also have people at the Festival monitoring / determining the effects on the wildlife in real time.

Judy Webb: There should be a formal arrangement whereby the Folk Festival makes a financial contribution to Cherry Hinton Hall grounds each year.

Bob Daines: The City Council say that they do provide money each year from the Folk Festival, but we are not actually sure how much / where it is spent etc. A formal arrangement may be something we should look to have in place.

10. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, 24 March, at **7.00 pm**, at the Baptist Church Centre, Fisher's Lane, Cherry Hinton (please note earlier start time).

11. Close

APPENDIX: NOTES FROM JANUARY 11TH STAKEHOLDER MEETING

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