

Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall meeting, 7.30 pm, Wednesday, 16 May 2012
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

20 people were in attendance at the Village Centre, Cherry Hinton. There were apologies from Sheila Manton, Robert Dryden and Jack and Maureen Sharkey.

1. Bob Daines, Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the 21 March meeting were agreed. There were no matters arising.
2. Guest Speaker: Mark Buckton

Bob welcomed Mark Buckton, Recycling Champions Coordinator for Cambridge City Council.

Mark Buckton:

Mark started his presentation by producing a plastic bottle. *“This is made from oil...laid down millions of years ago from organic matter. It might once have been a dinosaur. Remember, the laws of conservation state that matter can't be created nor destroyed. If this bottle ends up as landfill, it stays as a bottle; but if I put the bottle in my blue wheelie bin, it is given a new life!”* And, producing a plastic dinosaur from his bag, suggests it may even end up as a dinosaur again!

1. ‘THE BLUE BIN’

- So what plastic goes into the Blue Bin? **Bottles!** Not bottle tops; not tubs; not yoghurt pots; not anything else – just bottles!

The reason for this is economics – one tonne of bottles will fetch approximately £190. Bottles are easy to recycle, and bottle recycling can be done in the UK. Other plastic items are less-commonly recycled here.

Contamination: The problem comes when there are other plastics mixed in with the bottles, these other items are made of different plastics which cannot be easily combined with the bottles and made into new items. In the UK there is little value in a mixture such as this, and when our Blue Bins are emptied into the Council truck, they then are sorted and bulked-up into 40 foot lorries at the AmeyCespa recycling facility at Waterbeach. Samples are taken, and if there is more than 5-8% by volume of plastic other than bottles or other contamination, the whole truckload will be tipped into landfill. Additionally, councils have to pay a landfill tax (which comes out of the council tax levy) for every tonne of material put into landfill rather than being recycled. Currently this is £64 per tonne. And this increases year-on-year by £8.

- **But stop press!** From 30th July, all this will change: From the 30th, Cambridge residents will also be able to put **tubs, pots** and **trays** into their Blue Bin, along with plastic bottles.

So what else apart from plastic bottles goes into the Blue Bin?

- **Yes - Newspapers, magazines!** Please take plastic bags off the magazine supplements etc. *Window envelopes* are fine as the window is now made of biodegradable cornstarch. *Sellotape* on paper is fine. **Books** and **telephone directories** can also go in the Blue Bin (if your books are of valuable, you can instead put them in the *book bank in Cherry Hinton Hall*, where they go e.g. to Africa).
- **Yes - Cans!** Both *aluminium and steel*, **steel bottle** and **jar tops** from glass containers, **metal tops** from beer and wine bottles, all should go in the Blue Bin. Also **biscuit tins** and **empty sweet tins** from Quality Street etc. chocolates. To make a new aluminium can from recycled aluminium uses only 5% of the energy used to make a can from raw material bauxite. Yet we still throw away half of the 3 billion aluminium cans we use each year, whilst recyclers will pay £900 per tonne for old aluminium! Steel cans are more expensive to recycle, but again the energy needed to recycle a steel can into new steel is much less – 25% compared to starting from scratch.
- **Yes - Cardboard!** Please put this in the Blue, not Green bin, as too much cardboard in the Green Bin leads to poor quality compost. Again, sellotape and other tape is fine, there is no need to peel this off. If there is a lot of food contamination e.g. from cardboard food packaging, please put this in the Green Bin, but a small amount of dirtiness is OK.
- **Yes – Aluminium film / foil!** *The trick here is to bend the aluminium foil – if it stays bent it is aluminium! If it springs back, it is plastic film with a thin layer of metal, which is not recyclable and should not go in the Blue Bin.*
- **Yes – Glass bottles and jars!** But only bottles and jars. Please do not put broken window glass, broken drinking glasses, or Pyrex containers in the Blue Bin. However, the glass collected from Blue Bin collections is NOT recycled – there is not a very good market for mixed colour glass. Instead it is ground up and used in road surfacing (hence you see new road surfaces tend to sparkle when driving at night). *If you would like your glass jars and bottles to be remade into new bottles and jars – please take them to the recycling points such as in Cherry Hinton Hall car park.*
- **Yes – Tetra pack containers.** Improvements in technology now enable these to be recycled.

And what shouldn't go in the Blue Bin?

- **No - Shredded paper!** Because it has been shredded, the fibres are now too short for it to be recycled into new paper. This should go in the Green Bin.

- **No – Egg boxes!** These are made from ‘end-of-life’ cardboard, and are not suitable for recycling. Again, they should go in the Green Bin.
- **No – Plastic bags!** Including those wrapping Sunday magazine supplements. And no aluminium/metal-coated film.
- **No – Window glass / Pyrex / drinking glasses!** These are not recyclable in the same way glass bottles and jars are.

Batteries – a special case:

Batteries contain heavy metals and toxic chemicals and there is a very real concern about dumping batteries in landfill or elsewhere over the risks of soil contamination and water pollution. Meanwhile the UK gets through over 600m batteries each year, and as of just 2 years ago, only 2% were being recycled.

Used batteries should NOT go into ANY of the Bins, not even the Black Bin!

There are two ways to recycle batteries –

- a) Any retailer who sells 37 kilos or more batteries per year is by law required to have a recycling point for batteries in their store. For instance you can find one in the entrance to Waitrose in Trumpington, and another in Sainsbury’s off Coldham’s Lane
- b) Batteries are collected by the City Council along with your *Green Bin* collection (there is space for a spare Bin in the Green Bin, which is used to take batteries). *Please place batteries in a plastic bag and tie this to the Green Bin handle. These will then be safely recycled.*

Plastic bags – how to recycle:

We have no real knowledge of how long it takes a plastic bag to successfully degrade, but estimates vary from 500 to 1,000 years! However, plastic bags are really easy to recycle if they are clean and free from contamination. Plastic bag collection points are at many Cambridge supermarkets – *for instance you can find three such containers near to the cash point machines outside Sainsbury’s off Coldham’s Lane.* Please ensure the bags do not have *old till receipts* still inside as this causes problems with recycling. *And please also use these receptacles to recycle other polyethylene film and foil – for instance film around toilet rolls, the wrapping for multipacks of soft drinks and baked beans, the ringed plastic which keeps four-packs of beer cans together, etc.* These can all be recycled along with plastic bags

Light bulbs:

Low energy light bulbs can be placed in the special container for them at recycling banks such as in Cherry Hinton Hall car park
Unfortunately this is not the case with old style light bulbs – these should go in the Black Bin

WEEE:

WEEE is short for ‘Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment’ and the law now states that every device or piece of equipment must be

safely recycled. Small items can be recycled at recycling banks such as the one in Cherry Hinton Hall car park. Items greater than 12"x12" will need to be taken to the waste recycling centre off the A10 near Milton

2. 'THE GREEN BIN'

So what goes into the Green Bin?

- **Yes – Garden waste, grass cuttings, etc.**
- **Yes – Food waste.** Including meat and bones, as the digestion process is high temperature, safe, and effective.
- **BUT please do not wrap food in plastic bags!** *Unfortunately, 1 in 3 lorry-loads of Cambridge Green Bin waste, instead of being used to make compost, are instead tipped into landfill!* This is all down to contamination – and by far the biggest culprit is due to people putting food waste into plastic bags, including bread bags (even if the bag says it is biodegradable, do not put it in the Green Bin). The bags are almost impossible to separate out, and the whole bin-lorry load of compost is then tipped into the ground. If you must wrap food waste up, please use newspaper!

The material from Green Bins, if it successfully passes the contamination test, is placed in an anaerobic digester. This process produces 'soil improver' (compost) in 6-7 weeks. The compost is free to people who can collect it from the Waterbeach depot.

3. 'THE BLACK BIN'

So what goes into the Black Bin? Essentially – everything else other than the above, but hopefully not much household waste is left over by now. However, there are still ways to recycle on top of the above list. For instance firms such as Cambridge Woodworks will collect decent quantities of wood to reuse or recycle depending on the condition.

3. Maintenance Issues

Bob Daines outlined some of the recent issues and progress in addressing them.

- Fences around former propagation centre

These are unlikely to come down until after the Folk Festival. After the Festival there will be a new green fence erected to secure what remains of the Council compound

- Tree planting

We have followed-up with Anthony French regarding tree planting in the main grounds (three replacements) and along the Daws Lane boundary (8 new trees). Initially the response had been they will go in in November; but now this has been brought forward and they will be in place by 31st May

- Ivy removal from trees

We will be allowed to help with this when the bird nesting season is fully over, but only on condition that the Friends has insurance cover in place

Stuart Newbold reported that Anthony had been in touch regarding group insurance for the Friends which would allow us to undertake activities such as ivy clearance as long as the Council had agreed to us doing the work (supervised activities are already covered by the Council's insurance). We would need to join the Conservation Volunteers (<http://www2.btcv.org.uk/display/groupinsurance>), who then offer insurance cover for perhaps £120 or so per year.

It was agreed that the Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall sign up and take out insurance cover, and Stuart agreed to do this for us.

- Tennis court

Bob Daines reported that the court had been cleaned and the lines re-painted. However, the old, dilapidated net is still in place

Ian Simmons mentioned that he had not heard back from Simon Bunn, Cambridge City Council Sustainable Drainage Engineer, about opening up the stagnant part of the duck pond so as to get water flowing through. A possibility was using a hydraulic connector from the northern end to let water back through into the brook. This would mean though that we would have to sacrifice some draw-off from the weir side of the lake.

Bob Daines mentioned that he thought we should do some investigation to confirm whether or not the giant redwoods in front of the Hall really had to come down. We ought to get in touch with e.g. the Botanic Garden, as people are certain to complain about any felling if it happens.

Judy Webb mentioned that we really do need new signage for the lake as soon as possible, as people are now regularly sending/encouraging their dogs into the lake.

4. Involvement in the new Cambridge Local Plan

Stuart mentioned that the City Council's Planning Department is running a Planning Workshop on Saturday, 16 June, to introduce the new Issues & Options Report which looks at potential growth options for the city, and what they might mean in terms of recreation and leisure facilities including issues such as opening up the lakes to recreational use. Ideally, as many local groups and organisations as possible should respond in the consultation phase to the Issues & Options Report, which will form the basis for a new 10 year Local Plan for Cambridge. Would someone be willing to go from the Friends?

Ian Simmons and David Taylor agreed to represent us on 16th June to help us engage and respond to the consultation exercise.

5. Diamond Jubilee Community Fair on Saturday 2 June

Sandra Day gave an update on the event, which starts at 2.00 p.m., not 1.00 p.m. as in the agenda. There will be fancy dress, a raffle, tombola, tea and cake, etc. We now have 20 stalls booked. If anyone can help with baking cakes or scones, it would be greatly appreciated.

The new Village Guide (10,000 copies, part funded by advertising, part from a City Council grant) and Website have now been produced. These will be formally launched at the Jubilee Fair.

The next meeting is the AGM and will take place at 7.30 p.m., on Wednesday 16 July 2012, at Cherry Hinton Village Centre. The guest this time will be Laura Watson, Community Conservation Officer for the Wildlife Trust. The meeting will be followed by a visit to East Pit Nature Reserve to look for glow worms.