

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook

Occasional Titbits, Issue 76, February 2025

www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Annual General Meeting – Monday 3rd March

Please join us for our AGM on Monday 3rd March, 7 - 9.15 pm, at East Barnwell Community Centre, Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8RS. Following the AGM itself, Guy Belcher, City Council Biodiversity Officer, will give us an “Update on the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, with special reference to Cherry Hinton and Coldhams Brooks”. The event will be a good opportunity to discuss future plans for, and associated issues relating to, both Brooks. Refreshments will be served afterwards. All welcome.

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook expansion

Cherry Hinton Brook is only the upper part of the chalk stream flowing from Giant’s Grave to the River Cam, the lower part (from the culvert under Barnwell Road), being Coldhams Brook. With funding from the River Cam CAN (Climate Action through Nature) project, the charity Abbey People is running volunteer activities here, including litter picks and restoration work. We are therefore putting a motion to the AGM to expand the remit of FCHB to include these activities. This should make management of the entire water course more efficient and cost-effective, with a single committee and constitution. We hope everyone will welcome the proposed new Friends of Cherry Hinton and Coldham’s Brooks!

Sue Wells

Spring litterpick – 23rd March

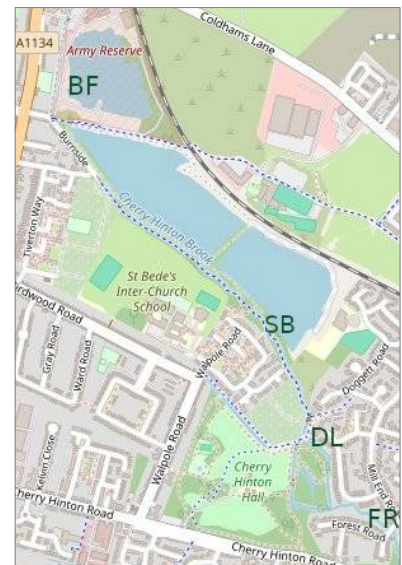
Our next litterpick is 10.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. on Sunday 23rd March 2025. If you would like to help, we will meet in the dentists’ car park at 97 Burnside. We provide litter pickers, gloves, rubbish sacks etc. but please wear appropriate clothing. All welcome.

Water level gauges

With a small grant from the Cam Valley Forum, FCHB bought four water level gauges to enable us to collect data on how the water level in the Brook fluctuates (see *Titbits* 75). These have now been installed with the help of Cambridge City Council. They provide a visual indication of the water level, and will be calibrated following a topographical survey of the Brook that will be done as part of the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project.

We are creating a team of volunteer water level monitors to record the levels on each gauge at regular intervals. No great skill is required: the information can be sent to us as a photo. The detailed monitoring system is still being finalised, but if you would like to take part, please email water@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk and we will send you full instructions.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Forest Road [FR] | Adjacent to Forest Road bridge over the Brook. |
| Daws Lane [DL] | By the allotments where the bank slopes down to the water. |
| St Bede’s [SB] | Opposite the road leading into the St Bede’s Crescent housing. |
| Brookfields [BF] | On the footpath towards Sainsbury’s, along from Brookfields. |



Monica Frisch

The Mural and merchandise – the project ends!

Our project to produce a mural for Sainsbury's, with merchandise based on the design, evolved into something much larger than expected. As it comes to an end this month, we want to say a big thank you to everyone involved. Rowan, a charity for adults with learning disabilities, has been a wonderful partner, from the artist and students who developed the mural, to their retail and communications staff who designed and organised the merchandise and helped with publicity.

The mural has triggered a lot of interest and contributed to the growing awareness of the importance of the City's chalk streams and their wildlife. The students visited the Brook while working on the mural and were clearly inspired. Passers-by now regularly stop to look at the mural - I watched somebody having shopped at Sainsburys, stopping at the mural and working out which animals they had seen themselves on the Brook! Rowan publicised it on its stalls at the 2023 Mill Road Winter Fair and, in 2024, at the Botanic Gardens and Open Studios.

We are also very grateful to the City Council for the primary source of funding, and to Sainsbury's for the additional grant.

Do support Rowan, and spread the word about Cherry Hinton Brook, by buying some of the gifts now available: greetings cards (eight designs), a jigsaw (500 or 1000 pieces), a poster, a memory game and tea towels (two designs). These are on sale in the Rowan shop or online:

<https://www.rowanhumberstone.org.uk/product-category/wildlife-of-cherry-hinton-brook/> .

Emmy Smart, project coordinator

Wildlife along the Brook, Winter 2024/25



Signs of spring are already beginning to appear, with sweet violets along the edge of the path near St Bede's Gardens. These are very early-flowering – I've seen them in flower at New Year – and probably a garden escape. Soon the bright yellow flowers of coltsfoot will be appearing along with catkins on the alders and willows. Geoff Oliver took this lovely photo of the Little Egret at the beginning of January. He reported "*A lot of life along the Brook on Friday, I've seen several shoals of fish, some quite large. The Robins are starting to search for nesting sites and pairing up and I've seen the Little Egrets fishing in it, but the holidays have*

seen more people about so I've not been able to photograph one feeding yet. The Swans were along the Brook a lot, I think they are beginning to look toward establishing their territory." Please do send reports of water voles – one was seen recently from the path to Sainsbury's – and other wildlife sightings to wildlife@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk so we can monitor what is using the Brook and the areas alongside it.

Monica Frisch

Data protection To ensure that we comply with the General Data Protection Regulations, we inform you that you are able to withdraw your consent to be on the Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook mailing list should you wish. Your email address and contact details are currently held in our database to receive our email newsletter and other occasional messages about our activities and your membership. We do not sell or share your details with anyone outside the committee of Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook. Should you have any concerns whatsoever about the way we use your data, or wish to withdraw from our database, please let us know.

JOIN US! See www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk for our aims and activities.

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/FriendsOfCherryHintonBrook and follow us on Twitter/X @cambridgeFCHB

To be taken off our email list, please email membership@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Monica Frisch (editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

19th February 2025