

**Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall AGM, 7.30 pm, Wednesday, 18 July 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*

42 people were in attendance at the Village Centre, Cherry Hinton. There were apologies from Mark Ashton, Robert Dryden and Judy Webb.

1. Bob Daines, Chair, welcomed everyone to the AGM. Minutes of the 2011 AGM and 16 May meetings were agreed. There were no matters arising.
2. Election of Committee for 2012/13

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

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

3. Cherry Hinton PCSOs, Laura Parkinson & Marie Bailey

Bob introduced our Police Community Support Officers, Laura and Marie.

The PCSOs are always present, walking around, keeping up with the children and young people; we visit the youth clubs, etc., and are there to provide a bridge between the Police and the community. Our hours are 8.00 a.m. – midnight, with a ten-hour shift patterns. Although nominally part of the South Sector Team (Cherry Hinton, Trumpington and Queen Edith's), our focus is on Cherry Hinton. We also have Special Constables to call upon.

We know that Cherry Hinton Hall is a trouble-spot, particularly in respect to music being played in the car park at night and weekends, mopeds being used in the grounds, and other elements of antisocial behaviour. We have spoken to some boys and issued 'Section 59 Notices' (if the moped riding is causing nuisance or inconvenience to others, they receive a warning that lasts for 12 months. If at any point within that 12 month they are caught riding in a similar manner then the moped will be seized, with a £200 penalty to get it back).

There are also issues with youths taking things from the allotments, and also of course the issue of illegal access to the bottom chalk pit. Sometimes people come with an angle-grinder in order to cut a gap in the fencing.

Questions:

A member asked about the problems with trespassing into the lakes and whether the PCSOs supported open access, which might prevent antisocial behaviour if more of the public was about.

Unfortunately with trespass law it is down to the land owner to take action, so there is little the Police can do. It may well be that greater public use will discourage antisocial behaviour.

Stuart asked about CCTV and other measures to combat antisocial behaviour in the Hall grounds.

Use of mobile CCTV equipment may be a good idea and provide a deterrent effect, esp. as cameras can be moved around. The PCSOs would be happy to submit a request from on behalf of FCHH if we decided to try this out if problems were sufficient. We / the City Council are also within our rights to include signs such as 'CCTV in Operation' (including with dummy cameras) to try and discourage antisocial behaviour.

It is really important for the Police to know what is going on and to use the information to decide Policing priorities and understand where hotspots / problems are. It may seem as though it isn't worthwhile, but please continue to report things even if it is the same thing again and again.

Please use the non-emergency number: 101

Email Cherry Hinton Police at [ecops.cherryhinton@cambs.pnn.police.uk](mailto:ecops.cherryhinton@cambs.pnn.police.uk)

For emergencies always use the 999 number.

Bob Daines asked if we should call 999 if we see for example a Staffordshire bull terrier in the pond attacking the ducks.

Yes, 999 can be used as this is endangering wildlife.

#### 4. Response to City Council Consultation on new Local Plan

Stuart summarised the raft response to the Local Plan Consultation from the Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook, and in particular the section on "*Romsey Lakes*". Sue Wells from FCHB was present also to answer questions. Do we agree with the general thrust of the FCHB response, and in what ways should we as a group make alterations before submitting our reply?

It was agreed that access was desirable, as the area represents a really important green corridor which can let the city breathe and not become urban sprawl. Opening to the public is fine, but only for wildlife, walking, and so forth. No

intensive recreational use should be permitted. The following specific points were also made:

- The access issue is possibly the most crucial. There should strictly be no access available from the areas of the Spinney School, across the Blacklands Allotments or from Daws Lane, or Snakey Path/upper Burnside, and measures should be put in place to prevent unauthorised access in this manner.
- Appropriate access is via the Tins Cycleway and the car park area at the David Lloyd Sports Centre / Holiday Inn.
- A ownership/management model on the format of Milton Country Park would be desirable.
- Appropriate long-term measures should also be in place to mitigate against antisocial behaviour, including in the areas around the Spinney School.

Stuart said he would submit a response along these lines before the Friday deadline. Congratulations were also offered to FCHB and Sue Wells in particular for such an excellent piece of work to start us off.

5. Guest Speaker: Laura Osborne, Community Conservation Officer, The Wildlife Trust

“*Ready, Steady, Glow!*”

The Wildlife Trusts bought East Pit in 2008. There were some big issues to address, including erection of the boundary safety fence, re-profiling some of the steepest slopes, putting in steps and removal of huge quantities (still going) of buddleia. But there were also great benefit from the work – as the compacted chalk was churned-up, releasing native seeds which had lain trapped for many, many years, and which now started to grow. Gradually East Pit started to look less like a lunar landscape, and more green. Prominent native species include wild thyme and trefoil.

Yet one of the most interesting characteristics of East Pit is that after dark the area starts to light up in a special way. The effect is caused by glow worms – part of the *Lampyridae* family, which includes fireflies and glow-worm beetles. There are about 200 species in the *Lampyridae* family, most in the tropics. Only two are in this country, the *European Glow Worm*, and the *Lesser Glow Worm*, the latter last seen in the 1990s and which might now be extinct in the UK.

Different glow worm and firefly species are very specific in how they glow, but they all glow to attract a mate. The oldest record found is from a fossil from around 300 million years ago, and they haven't changed much since then. However – if you can remember only one thing from tonight – then please remember that they are not really worms at all, but *beetles!*

Glow worms start their life in the autumn as eggs of about 1mm in size. The eggs are usually laid under a rock or some wood. About 1 month later they hatch into larvae, at which point they are about 5mm long. In the next two years they will

grow to approximately 2cm or more. The worms are most active at night – they don't much like the hot or dry day weather.

When the glow worm reaches adulthood, it does not eat at all – as it has no mouth! This means glow worms spend most of their life as larvae – and their main prey are slugs and snails. Larvae can travel about 5 metres in an hour. They have poor eyesight and so rely on other senses, meandering until they come across a slug or snail trail, at which point they follow it. When a worm finds a snail it will climb on the shell and attack it using very sharp mandibles which inject an enzyme into the snail. The enzyme induces paralysis and also digests the tissue, creating a sort of snail or slug soup which the glow worm sucks up. Luckily, the glow worm also has a set of tentacles or hooks, which it can use to stop itself getting stuck in the soup/mucus – it uses these to climb out; it can also use them to clean itself or to climb rocks etc.

The glow worm will hibernate over the first winter, then there will be another year of feeding, then hibernate once more, then they will emerge and start eating again until summer, when they will pupate into adults. And as the adult glow worm has no mouth, it now becomes a race against time to find a mate.

The male glow worm isn't particularly impressive – in reality it is a black flying beetle with wings. The female has armoured plating, but cannot fly. Instead, she attracts the male by glowing. The female tends to stay put in the same place each night, trying to attract the male with her glow. If no male glow worms spot the female, the light will just get dimmer and dimmer over time – quite sad.

The protein that causes the glow is called *luciferase*, a bioluminescent enzyme which releases light as energy from the reaction of adenosine triphosphate and oxygen. The glow worm will produce a glow each night for about 2 hours. If no male appears, then she will try again the following night.

Threats to glow worms include shrews, mice, spiders, centipedes, and larger beetles. One of the biggest problems is light pollution – males think they can see a female when in fact it is the lights e.g. at Cambridge Airport – they fly off, and that is that. Finally there is loss of habitat – glow worms are now reduced to small pockets/colonies e.g. in local nature reserves, etc., as the females need tall grass stems for visibility to the males. But existing in small colonies also brings difficulties insofar as each group then becomes isolated and vulnerable. Places where you can find glow worms include Fineshade Wood near Stamford and Peterborough, Brampton, and East Pit. The most seen by Laura in one night at East Pit was 36, although it's difficult to know whether numbers are increasing or decreasing.

More information:

*Glow Worms* by John Tyler

Wildlife Trusts Website [www.wildlifetrusts.org/](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/)

Specialist websites such as <http://www.glowworms.org.uk/>

## 6. 2012 Folk Festival Issues

### Sky Arts Recording Studio

Bob Daines gave a précis of what had happened insofar as there was a pre-Festival walk-about with Council Officers arranged with members of the Coimmittee, and at this point it was mentioned that

There would be a recording studio over the lake

The path running from Daws Lane along the brook would be completely closed to the public for the first time

Bob emailed Anthony French immediately after this to ask what was the structure, and why had there been no mention or consultation beforehand. The reply was that it was a recording studio for music and interviews, with subdued lighting, and that it had strong political backing. It was part of Sky's sponsorship, and had been agreed. Bob then contacted the Cambridge News to try and raise awareness and see if whether the public at large also felt the siting of the studio over the water and by the wildlife area was inappropriate, as he did. The overwhelming number of responses, both Friends and non-Friends were opposed to the structure, although some were also content to see the studio be tried.

Bob asked whether the Friends should consider collecting signatures to try and prevent a similar encroachment next year. It was agreed that this was appropriate.

Catherine Mills now made a statement, saying she was sorry that the building of the platform has been misunderstood and misrepresented by the Friends. Our relationship with the City Council has been very cordial, and indeed since the debacle of the Natural Play Area we have enjoyed a good relationship. It is a great pity that the siting of the Sky platform has been interpreted as scaring off the kingfishers, bats, etc. Not everyone believes that the structure will upset them, and after the Festival the wildlife will still be there.

Bob replied that the Friends' relationship with Anthony French and colleagues is better than it has ever been. But there is no relationship with the Arts part of the City Council. It's understood that Anthony French, when first hearing of the Sky Arts platform, suggested to Arts and Entertainment that they contact the Friends to let us know. However, as we know no contact was made. Because of all that has happened he will tomorrow meet with Elaine Midgley and the newly-appointed *Green Ambassador*. Because of the furore, the Arts and Entertainment people realise that there is a need to improve communication with us; they need us. It is a mistake to view this solely as a wildlife issue. The Folk Festival has been here a very long time, but last year suddenly the loss of the tennis court was sprung on us, now this year we have Sky Arts sprung on us. This is not being done in a courteous way. We now have lights and sound in this area until 11.30 p.m. too. If we really cherish the park we need to be involved.

Barbara Oxley wondered why the Folk Festival organisers thought it so essential, and noted that although they eventually returned, we lost the geese and swans for a time when the Natural Play Area was constructed. Paul Holmes said it was encouraging that the contract was only for a single year.

There was some debate as to whether the Friends should think of using a petition now, or whether to wait until we can assess the impact after the Festival has

completed. Points were raised by Bob Daines, Sandra and Paul Holmes. It was agreed to include a petition at the Festival stall but to try and ensure this is done respectfully towards the City Council and not to cause embarrassment. The Committee would try and come up with appropriate wording.

The Friends of Cherry Hinton Hall group's current position is to support the Cambridge Folk Festival at the Hall grounds. However, a discussion ensued as to whether it was still the most appropriate venue, all things considered. Sandra Day said that the event was coming to its 49<sup>th</sup> year, and 'now is the time for the baby to grow up and move'. Sandra cited the unnecessary impacts the Festival can have, such as the decision not to plant trees in particular locations along the Daws Lane boundary, just so a particular burger van can be in exactly the same position it has occupied at each event.

#### Post Festival Review

Bob Daines mentioned that this has been arranged for Monday, 6 August. Could members please send emails with any particular concerns and these will be raised with Elaine and Anthony.

#### 7. Master Plan and maintenance issues

##### Group Insurance

Stuart Newbold reported that he had signed up with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (<http://www2.btcv.org.uk>), who then offer insurance cover for perhaps £120 or so per year. The joining fee is on top of this and is £38 (Stuart included a £5 donation from the Friends). Ian Simmons agreed to fill out the forms so we could have insurance ready by the end of the bird-nesting season.

##### Removal of Conifer hedge and Hall Ivy

Bob reported that this had been agreed and would be happening shortly after the Folk Festival.

#### 8. Future meetings and events

It was agreed to try and organise a 'Pet Day' with Agility Course, RSPCA stall, etc., for May 2013.

#### 9. Membership Renewal

Sandra asked if anyone had not renewed their 2012/13 membership, could they please do so. Forms were available at the meeting and can also be dropped off with members. Currently total membership stands at 181 people, but not all have paid for the coming year and it is unfair to ask others to in effect subsidise their involvement.

The next meeting is will take place at 7.30 p.m., on Wednesday 19 September, at Cherry Hinton Village Centre. We have two guests this time – Anthony French and also Simon Bunn, Sustainable Drainage Engineer at Cambridge City Council.