

Agenda item: 0823.051.

Alconbury Brook Flood Group Report August 2023

EA flood alleviation scheme. Good news that the long-awaited model has been released by the modelling company. Once its checked, the options and combination of options will be tested. We hope to have more information about the model in the next edition including how closely it matches the lived experience of our communities. The option modelling will last until January.



Green-Blue Rainwater Garden Project: A visit from a member of the GreenBlue team was very beneficial. We have a better understanding of what needs to be done, how it will be done and who will do the work. We also, now understand the process to set this project in motion. It is likely that work will not be able to start until early Autumn but planning is in hand. (photo of meeting →)



Alconbury Weston Pond: Planning permission has been granted but conditional on a full scale archaeological survey. This will be an expensive addition and will cause delays. Planning permission has taken 10 months and the archaeology condition was added at the last moment. To say we are disappointed would be an understatement however resilience is a necessary attribute for flood groups! If you know a reasonably priced chartered archaeologist, let us know!!

Harts Pond: Outline and costing approved by the Hunts and Beds Wildlife Trust. Next steps are farmer and landowner consent. We hope this work will take place mid-October. We will need help from volunteers to clear on 2 sides of the pond before work can commence.



Meander adaption- EA officer (thanks to him) appointed to help us with the application is now satisfied that our pre-submission is satisfactory and meets the necessary requirements. Work on this is likely in November and will have to be done entirely by hand. Debbie will be asking for volunteers.

Charity Registration: The Flood Group Charity is now registered which gives us the advantage of being a legal entity. Our Charity number is 1204246.

Nitrate measurement: Volunteers have been collecting water samples from the brook to measure various chemicals. This will allow us to track water flow and sediment from upstream. Currently, nitrate levels are nearly three times higher at Alconbury Ford compared to Hamerton and Gidding.

Debris in the brook at **Hinchingbrooke Country Park** is still there despite our request that it be removed. A campaign of letter writing will commence shortly.

Herbal Ley Project: Excellent progress, first areas will be seeded with deep rooted plants in September at Cowpastures Farm in Gidding and on an allotment in Alconbury. Progress will be recorded on a YouTube channel. Testing of the plots has already been going on for some time, but there will be an opportunity for volunteers to do some soil measurements in the autumn. Soil moisture and rainfall will be measured automatically using our sensor system.

Sensor Project: The FG has applied for funding from the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation to support the purchase of additional sensors and the dissemination of the information collected to the Community. The real time data will help people make accurate predictions about flood risk and times.

Mill Road Drains Following a FG request to Cambs County Council the 3 gullies in Mill Road/Brookside bend area were jetted and suctioned. It was noted at the time that there was likely to be a blockage in the pipes running underground to the brook. This has been reported to CCC and our County Councillor for follow up and further action.

Brampton Cross is a new possible new development to the south of Alconbury. The FG are keen to understand the scale and detail of the scheme to that we can evaluate flood risks and the measures which will be required to mitigate them. We have a meeting later this week with the developers to discuss the information that will help us.

Fallen Willow: Thanks to FG members who removed a Willow Tree which had fallen across the brook downstream of Alconbury Weston ford. This would have been a problem if we had experienced heavy rain.

Contact us at: info@alconburyfloodgroup.uk

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Cllr Gardener report - Alconbury Parish Council Meeting – August 2023

I can inform you that HDC's Joint administration Cabinet, made up of Lib Dem, Independent, Labour, and Green councillors, unanimously agreed to introduce the Green Bin tax, at its meeting on Tuesday 24th August.

This followed the Call in by the Conservative members of the Overview and Scrutiny panels. The Lib Dem, Independent, Labour members all voted in favour of the proposal of the Green Bin Tax and not to put it to the Full Council.

The cost of the Green Bin tax will be £57.50 per annum and £30.00 per annum for each additional bin up to 4.

From the 01 April 24 you will be required to put all food waste into your Grey Bin, as HDC cannot charge to collect, you can also put Green waste in the Grey bin as some residents already do.

This will lead to more waste going to landfill and thus higher Methane emissions, more vehicles on the roads leading to more pollution and congestion at HWRC's. It may also lead to greater fly tipping and more bonfires. Which flies in the face of the Council's decision, to call a Climate Emergency. HDC will also have to pay higher costs for the disposal of the waste, due to the increased quantities going for disposal

This is a regressive tax on residents as no account is taken of the ability to pay. This tax will affect the poorest, those living in lower band properties, the elderly and resident's living alone to a greater extent.

Residents will also be able to save money by one resident paying for five bins and then distributing to 4 neighbours. The total cost per household would then be £35.50. Each household would then pay their neighbour £35.50 instead of paying £57.50 each. On Bin collection day the bins would need to be put outside the property that was paying for the bins.

Regarding, HDC's Local Plan Update, I can inform the PC that Full Consultation on the sites submitted and HDC's assessment will form part of the Further Issues and Options Engagement which is scheduled for spring/summer next year. It is anticipated Parish Councils along with all other interested parties will be given 10 weeks to consider these, thus giving plenty of time for full engagement.

The Greater Cambridge Partnership have now come up with their revised proposals for the Congestion charge in Cambridge following the consultation.

The proposals are that the: -

Congestion Charge will operate between the hours of 7am and 10am and the 3pm to 6pm Monday to Friday, The cost will be £5.00 for cars, £10.00 for vans and £50 for HGV's.

Motorists will get 50 free days per annum; however, this means drivers/ commuters will still pay in excess of £1000 to commute into Cambridge on a daily basis.

There will also be a 50% discount for locally owned small to medium businesses using HGV's and vans. It's not yet known whether this is just for Cambridge City businesses or for all businesses in Cambridgeshire.

There will also be a 50% discount for people on low incomes, this however will still mean that these residents will have to find in excess of £500 to commute into Cambridge per annum

There will also be exemptions for most people who have, to travel to Addenbrookes, the Royal Papworth and Rosie Maternity Hospitals, as these hospitals will remain in the zone. As, yet we don't know how this will operate and who will not be exempt. There will also be exemptions for those in receipt of Carer benefits and personal mobility benefits.

Also, motorbikes will be exempt from the charge.

I understand that CCC have now cut the public footpaths.

With regard the large amount of weeds along the edges of our roads, if this is an issue for the PC as Cambridgeshire County Council are no longer carrying out annual /cyclic weeding due to it being cut from the budget. I would suggest that the PC circulates the petition to show the Cllrs in charge that this is an important issue The link to the petition is <https://shorturl.at/dkFTZ>

I would also ask that the PC consider writing to object to this policy and request that it is reversed.

With regard, to next year's Local Highways Improvement Bids Parishes will be able to submit applications from Friday 27th October 23 until noon on Friday 12th January 24. The County Council will undertake feasibility studies between February and May.

The LHI Panel meetings will be in June /July 24. With the report to Committee in September 24.

Cllr Ian Gardener

County & District Councillor for Alconbury

Alconbury Parish Council

Prepared by: Alison Brown (Clerk & RFO)
Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Date: 9th August 2023

Approved by: Cllr Tracy Gilbert (Chair)
Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

Date: 29th August 2023

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/07/2023		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		68,389.00
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2023 - 31/07/2023		25,162.46
			93,551.46
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2023 - 31/07/2023		18,181.22
A	Cash in Hand 31/07/2023 (per Cash Book)		75,370.24
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	31/07/2023	0.00
	Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	31/07/2023	35,465.28
	Unity Trust Bank Current T1	31/07/2023	41,904.96
			77,370.24
	Less unrepresented payments		2,000.00
			75,370.24
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		75,370.24
	A = B Checks out OK		