Agenda item 0224.163 Alconbury Brook Flood Group

Many of our projects not mentioned, but here's a flavour of what we've done during February 2024

Hydro-planters (large drained soakaways which also filter water) now installed at two strategic locations in the villages:

- **Memorial Hall** the Emergency Refuge for village, flooded in 2020 with water from overflowing ditch, carpark, adjacent hill, and Alconbury Weald Enterprise Zone.
- Community groups will use planters
- Tested recently with 20mm rain and worked superbly, no flooding on car-park.
- **Sports and Social Club** access to sports areas inaccessible
- Drain outlet shows scheme working well. Puddles rather than a lake.
- In part re-seeded with our own hard wearing special deep-rooted grass mix.
- Many thanks to Anglian Water for funding these projects, SilverFern Agri for working so conscientiously on the excavation, the trustees of both establishments and at least 25 excellent volunteers over 2 week-ends
- Work on two ***more*** strategically placed Hydro-planters in Alconbury Weston under way.

Alconbury Weston and other ponds

- Target for the Sallows Farm Pond commencement remains March 11th weather permitting
- Defra Funding bid for £191,000 has not been successful, however we are hopeful that other regional and local funding to fill the gap can be found fairly quickly.

Partnership Agreement with Natural England

Work has started on these projects including using some of the funding to purchase a phone app for farmers called 'Soil Mentor' This helps farmers to improve productivity and soil health. Healthy soil helps rain infiltration.

Farmers and community members will be invited to 'farm walks' starting at the end of April to have a tour of some of the innovative work we are doing on Cowpasture Farm. (Many thanks to T H Branson and Son)

Environment Agency Flood Alleviation Scheme

- The model of how the brook behaves has now finally been signed off.
- The cost of 'doing nothing' is being calculated on a property-by-property basis. This gives a base-line cost of flooding.
- Thorough work at this stage is essential for a solid business case.

Other projects

- The subsided bank in Alconbury Village is now filled, needs topsoil, and will be netted and seeded this week.
- Members have been collecting soil samples for the sediment provenance project
- The accuracy of our soil carbon measurements are being verified by a national laboratory
- New rain and soil moisture sensors have arrived for distribution around the catchment. These are being tested at present. Thanks to the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation.
- The Flood Group has bid for funding this month from the HDC community ecology fund to help with the Sallows Farm Pond biodiversity improvement and Alconbury Parish Council for safe use of herbicides near water

Contact us to volunteer at info@alconburybrookfloodgroup.uk

Donate if you can to www.justgiving.com/thealconburybrookfloodgroup

Agenda item 0224.164

Cllr Gardener report Alconbury Parish Council Meeting – February 2024

Regarding the development at Alconbury Hill I have been informed by HDC enforcement, that a planning application was submitted under 23/02390/FUL in December but is awaiting validation.

From the 12th February all major planning applications must be accompanied with a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment. HDC is also consulting on the proposed revisions to the Planning Validation Guidance and Checklists for Planning Applications, this consultation runs until the 31 March 24.

I have arranged a meeting with Alan Trille from National Highways, the Parish Council, and the Flood Group to discuss the Alconbury Brook, High Street situation on 13th March at 2pm on Teams

With the Police & Crime Commissioner Elections this year and almost certainly a General Election. The District Council's Elections Team need to increase their pool of polling station staff and staff for the counting of ballot papers. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact us at elections@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

At the recent HDC budget meeting the Council agreed to increase its Council Tax by £5.00 per annum and impose the Green Bin Tax (Subscription Charge) this will come into effect from the 01 April 24 / The cost will be £57.50 per annum. The cost for a second Green Bin will be £30.00. Even though the Conservative amendment to the Budget would have seen the Green Bins continued to be collected free of charge.

Residents will still be able to take their Garden Waste to the Alconbury Household Waste Collection Centre and dispose of free of charge.

Civil Parking Enforcement - HDC is working with Cambridgeshire County Council to implement a legislative change in relation to on street parking enforcement. This change will come into effect early in 2025 and will give HDC the ability to enforce several on street parking offences.

Community Litter Picks, HDC are proud to recognise and support the large number of parishes, community groups, schools and businesses that carry out litter picks in their local area. To support this HDC will loan parishes, community groups etc with the equipment you need i.e. grabbers and bags and will pick up the litter free of charge.

The Combined Authority (Labour Mayor) is increasing its Council Tax by £24.00 to £36.00 per annum.

The Crime and Police Commissioner is increasing its Council Tax by £12.96 per annum. Therefore, a Band D property would go up from £272.52 to £285.48.

The County Council has agreed a 4.99% increase in Council tax for 24/25 with a total of 2% of this dedicated to Adult Social Care Services. The Conservative amendment would have seen more money put into Highways for repairs.

The County Council Lib Dem/Labour/ Independent administration has agreed to reverse its decision to stop weeding killing on our roads and footpaths as it has led to greater maintenance costs, made it difficult for the visibly impaired to see the kerb edge, when trying to cross the road. I am delighted that they have reversed this decision following pressure from councillors and Parish Councils.

The County Council Highways Department has undergone a reorganisation. New Divisions have been created these being: - Carriageway Maintenance, Highways repairs, Drainage & Green Divisions.

Carriageway maintenance, i.e. resurfacing, white lines etc - Contacts are Steve Alexander and Sharon Middleton

The Highways Team looks after potholes etc – Contacts are Karen Southwell and Steve Nicolson.

The Drainage Team looks after drains, gullies etc – Contacts are David Crowther & Julie Skinner

The Green Team looks after Public Rights of Way etc - Contacts Dan Wiggs PROW Officer and Emma Stannard Manager

The County Council have reopened applications for 20mph zones. Parishes need to apply by 5pm on Friday 15th March.

The Combined Authority (Mayor) following pressure from local Councillors is looking to make the Ting Service a Rural service, which will take Rural residents into the Towns of St Neots and Huntingdon and such other places as the Hospital, Railway stations, Doctors surgeries etc. Which will mean it's available for residents in our rural villages to book rather than being used as a taxi service in St Neots which already has bus services unlike our villages.

The footpath adjacent to Maritime is to be repaired with bollards to prevent HGV parking.

The Fire Authority are proposing the closure of 3 On Call Fire Stations one of which is Kimbolton in my Division, the other two being at Manea & Sutton respectively.

A meeting for all Parish Councils is being held on Tuesday 19th March at 7pm at the Mandeville Hall in Kimbolton. I would urge all Parish Councils to this meeting to hear the Fire authorities' proposals and make comments.

Following this meeting and the Fire Authorities' briefing meetings with FA Councillors, District & County Councillors an update on possible proposals will be provide to FA members.

Cllr Ian Gardener

County & District Councillor for Alconbury

Alconbury Parish Council

Prepared by: Alison Brown (Clerk & RFO) Date: 8th February 2024

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: Cllr Tracy Gilbert (Chair) Date: 27th February 2024

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/01/2024			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023			68,389.00
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2023 - 31/01/2024			47,380.14
				115,769.14
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2023 - 31/01/2024			37,189.91
A	**Cash in Hand 31/01/2024** (per Cash Book)			**78,579.23**
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	31/01/2024	0.00	
	Unity Trust Bank Current T1	31/01/2024	43,825.58	
	Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	31/01/2024	35,953.65	
				79,779.23
	Less unpresented payments			1,200.00
				78,579.23
	Plus unpresented receipts			
B	**Adjusted Bank Balance**			**78,579.23**
	A = B Checks out OK			

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