Agenda item: 0225.163.

The Alconbury Brook Flood Group

A little of what we have been up to during February 2025

Gidding test-pits give green light. Test pits dug earlier this month at Kings Wood have indicated that the position of the new pond will work well. We have now applied for planning consent for the pond which if successful will allow the new pond to be dug in April. The pond will help the viability of nearby trees and reduce the rate of flows into Alconbury Brook. Many thanks to the WEIF fund, Michael Trolove, the site owner and Silver Fern Agri who did the excavation.

Sediment control + temporary flood water storage: Two of the projects we are doing in March will help to control flooding and the amount of sediment in the brook:

- An in-line pond restoration in a major ditch near Great Gidding,
- An improvement to a pond which already includes a bund at one end. The bund will be upgraded and a device called a snorkel inserted. This allows sediment to settle in the pond and releases water more slowly.

Drainage snorkel

In order to measure the effectiveness of these two ponds, we have already placed sediment measuring telemetry downstream (photo left) so we can collect data before and after doing the improvement work.

Farm experiments: We have previously shown that soil rainwater porosity is closely related to how well soil particles are stuck together by gluey chemicals produced by plants roots and microbes. We now have a quick method of measuring soil particle glue with a mobile phone app. With help from 3 farms we have measurements of soil glue from several fields, some well drained and others not so good. In the last week we have extracted DNA from soil from fields with high (see picture right) and low soil glue. In the next few weeks we will be sequencing the DNA to discover which microbes occur in high and low glue fields. The next step will be finding the conditions which high glue microbes like which may then be used to improve crop yields and drainage. Many thanks to farmers Matt, Andrew and Adrian.

Farm Survey event: As members of a small group of farmers we sent a questionnaire to 24 farms in the catchment about soil problems, management and yields. We received responses from 50% which we were delighted with, thank you to all those who took part.

Our survey group will be presenting the results at a special event on Feb 26th at the Holly Lodge Café. Many thanks to Anglian Water who are funding the event.

Alconbury Village Neighbourhood plan. The parish plan is important for many reasons. From our point of view it will hopefully put some small helpful flood risk reduction constraints on the design of developments. The plan when complete will also bring additional Community Infrastructure Levy to the Parish Council to spend on projects (like ours?). The Flood Group have been playing an active role in the preparation of some sections of the plan. Parish Council invitation:

Parish Plan drop in session for all residents on Feb 28th, 7.30p.m. at the Memorial Hall.

Alconbury Parish Council

Prepared by: Alison Brown (Clerk & RFO) Date: 11th February 2025

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: Cllr Tracy Gilbert (Chair) Date: 25th February 2025

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/01/2025			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2024			70,565.60
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/01/2025			53,814.94
				124,380.54
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/01/2025			44,083.25
A	**Cash in Hand 31/01/2025** (per Cash Book)			**80,297.29**
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	31/01/2025	0.00	
	Unity Trust Bank Current T1	31/01/2025	43,350.51	
	Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	31/01/2025	36,946.78	
				80,297.29
	Less unpresented payments			
				80,297.29
	Plus unpresented receipts			
B	**Adjusted Bank Balance**			**80,297.29**
	A = B Checks out OK			

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