

**CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM****8****8. River Manager's Report****Matters for Report****8.1 Administration**

The River Manager attended a meeting of the Anglian Region Paddlesports Group on 14<sup>th</sup> January, Peterborough. Canoe England's Paddleability Officer, Clarisse Smith, gave a presentation on Access for All. The Group and the Agency's Waterways Engineer are developing a document containing standard designs for canoe portage facilities. The Group's Chairman has advised that the Agency has been forced to restructure its national recreational function; as a result, recreation officer posts have been cut. At the second meeting of the quarter (6<sup>th</sup> April), the Group discussed its future given the dissolving of the Agency's Regional Fisheries Ecology Recreation and Angling Committee (RFERAC). The Agency's Regional Director is keen for the Paddlesports Group to continue. The Group may ask to merge with the Regional Navigation Group in the future; the latter presently provides a forum for discussing navigational issues centred around motorboating interests.

The River Manager attended a meeting of the Anglian Regional Navigation Group on 10<sup>th</sup> February, EA offices, Brampton. Samples of killer shrimp (*Dikerogammarus villosus*) were collected from Grafham Water, killed prior to leaving the site, and shown to the Group members. A presentation about the shrimp was provided by Dr Ian Hirst, Team Leader, Technical (Fisheries), for Central Area. Specially designed traps are to be deployed in the Great Ouse catchment for monitoring. No captures have been reported beyond the 3 sites identified to date (one in England, two in South Wales). The River Manager delivered a verbal report on the Conservancy powered craft licensing consultation. The Group was informed about the Agency's new national agreements for unpowered craft (block licences agreed with British Rowing, Canoe England and British Stand Up Paddlers). These block licence agreement do not extend to Conservancy waters. From 1<sup>st</sup> April, all Agency boats are being registered through the Reading office and Aqua House, Peterborough, will no longer be able to accept registration applications. The River Manager has exchanged staff contact details with the licensing team in Reading for enforcement purposes. Conservancy staff have been advised of these changes and the two respective authorities have been conferring on enforcement issues already.

8.1.1 Archiving: Files stored in the Old Workshop at Clayhithe (ex-Ely) have been transferred to Baits Bite offices. Shelving remains to be purchased.

8.1.2 Business Plan: Conservators are reminded that the current Business Plan runs to 31 March 2013 and time will need to be spent in the next year drafting the new 5-year Plan. Mr Macnaghten (Director of Scudamore's) has offered some comments on the Conservancy's contracting works for the City Council (Bishop's Mill) and Agency (weed-cutting off Conservancy Waters) which will be brought to the next business plan sub-committee group meeting.

8.1.3 AINA/BW: The River Manager attended a meeting of the AINA Executive Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> February, London. Defra has confirmed that with the change of government last year's 'Waterways for Everyone' document will not be introduced as a policy statement. The Committee is concerned that this important document should not be lost from the public domain given the considerable public consultation that went into its creation. AINA has been assured funding by the 'big 3' (Agency, British Waterways and Broads Authority) for a further year. Adrian Clarke, Senior Waterways & Recreation Officer, has replaced Trudi Wakelin as the Broads Authority's representative on the Committee. AINA's Volunteering report has been approved for final publication. It is available on the AINA website (contact River Manager for login details). BW's lawyers have made some further, final changes to the 2010 AINA report 'Residential Use on Waterways'. AINA's projects on the collection of waterways data and surviving harsh economic conditions are to continue into 2011/12. John Gibson, National Trust (River Wey & Godalming Navigations) has been nominated to serve as AINA Vice Chairman in place of Iain Smith (Middle Level Commissioners). Apologies have been tendered to the Avon Navigation Trust, hosts of AINA's meeting and annual site tour on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May. It is possible that a Conservator may attend in place of the River Manager who is booked on annual leave that week. AINA has provided assistance in providing names of possible consultants for the River Cam Navigation Benefits' Assessment as well as sample contract documents. The AINA subscription is due for renewal 1<sup>st</sup> April. Their invoice is awaited.

The River Manager was invited to a stakeholder meeting by the Waterways Minister, Richard Benyon MP, to discuss the future of British Waterways and the upcoming public consultation on 28<sup>th</sup> February, Westminster. A second invitation to the launch of Defra's consultation 'Moving British Waterways to Civil Society', 30<sup>th</sup> March, London was declined (the River Manager was staffing the office single-handed, Mr Wakefield being away on annual leave).

Defra is seeking views on the proposed New Waterways Charity and the consultation documents can be found on Defra's website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/waterways-1103/> (consultation letter, consultation document, impact assessment). The consultation will run for 3 months and responses must be received no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 (e-mails to [NWCresponses@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:NWCresponses@defra.gsi.gov.uk)).

Another AINA member, Driffeld Navigation Trust, approached the River Manager about the Conservancy's byelaws and the byelaw drafting process. Driffeld Navigation was also created in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The Secretary to the Commissioners was advised to make contact with Middle Level Commissioner's CE who is well versed in the law. MLC are giving consideration to the drafting of navigational byelaws, possibly using the draft model byelaws produced by Ian White Associates for AINA (a Defra-commissioned project).

8.1.4 Insurance: Mr Hallam's fees for conducting the 2010 reinstatement assessment of the Conservators' properties have been paid (£411). Mr Cooke, broker for Towergate Risk Solutions, visited Baits Bite offices 21<sup>st</sup> January to review the portfolio of insurances ahead of their renewal. The renewal premium for 2011/2012 for all policies will be £19,021.30 (as compared to £18,493.75 the previous year). The main policy has been transferred from Royal & Sun Alliance to Allianz. The fee increase in part reflects the increase in Insurance Premium Tax from 5% to 6% and VAT increase from 15% to 20%. Mr Cooke has secured insurance for the reinstatement of Jesus and Baits Bite Locks (£1.5M apiece). Professional Liability has been renewed with a £250k limit of indemnity for any one claim and in the aggregate in any one period of insurance. Directors and Officers insurance has a limit of indemnity of £1M for any

one claim and in the aggregate in any one period of insurance. Mr Cooke has advised that should the Conservators seek to raise the level of professional indemnity to £1M, the premium will increase by a further £800. The sums insured have been re-confirmed and insurance cover has been arranged for the hired outboard engine (see 8.3.2, below). Photographs of the Conservancy's barges have been passed on to the insurers. The insurers were notified of the break-in at Clayhithe Depot (8.2.4, below); a claim will not be pursued. The River Manager enquired about extension of insurance cover for the hire of the Conservancy barges to third parties resulting from an enquiry from Cambs County Council (Clayhithe under-bridge inspection).

The expert inspector from Allianz visited Clayhithe 4<sup>th</sup> March to inspect items of lifting equipment. Only one minor fault required corrective action (re-marking the safe working load on the work platform attachment used on the tractor for tree pollarding works). Compliance with the LOLER regulations has improved markedly since the Allianz-nominated expert took on the inspections.

8.1.5 Office supplies: Bulk supplies of postage stamps were purchased ahead of the 1<sup>st</sup> April increase in postal charges.

8.1.7 Staff: The River Manager took annual leave 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> January inclusive; Mr Wakefield took annual leave late March. The River Foreman and River Bailiff have submitted summer leave requests; early notification greatly assists the drafting of the weekend duty roster. Staff annual appraisals were held 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> March at Baits Bite. Each member of staff has agreed a list of future priorities; progress will be reviewed each quarter.

8.1.8 Licensing Act: Nothing to report.

8.1.9 Grant applications: £24k has been received from the Environment Agency for the River Cam Water Framework Directive habitat enhancement project. The EA lead officer, Lesley Saint, visited the Conservancy Area to discuss the project logistics on 4<sup>th</sup> February. Both parties have signed a contractual letter of agreement. A risk assessment and method statement has been submitted to the EA for their approval. Materials (coir-filled rolls and wooden stakes) have been ordered leaving some surplus monies for the purchase of special grass mix.

## 8.2 Property management

8.2.1 Jesus Lock Keeper's House: Rentals have been forthcoming. One of the tenants made an overpayment towards the Council Tax; this has been refunded. The City Council has issued a new bill for 2011/12 showing the property's exemption from charges (student occupation). A new washing machine has been purchased and installed (cost £245). The gutters have been cleared (cost £210). The downstairs bathroom radiator has been replaced (corroded). A member of Jesus Green Association has approached the offices about a potential lease of the building to the Landmark Trust. A meeting is to be convened at the end of April to discuss the relative merits of this proposal.

8.2.2 Baits Bite Cottages: Rentals have been forthcoming from both sets of tenants. Tenants in No. 1 Cottage kindly agreed for the rowers' starting poles to be stored in their garden during the

Lent Bumps. The Gun Shed cannot be secured and it was subjected to an arson attack in February which required attendance by Cambs Fire & Rescue. No. 1 tenants have arranged for the garden lawns to be cut by a contractor at personal expense. The tenants in No. 2 Cottages reported damp in the bathroom in January (damp had also been affecting No. 1 Cottage owing to the cold weather). The ceiling has been redecorated subsequently. Mr & Mrs Clarke have also asked for the smoke alarm to be re-located, being too sensitive for its present location. A heating engineer visited the property in March in response to a problem with the boiler. Carter Jonas recommended a rental adjustment for the new tenancy period in No. 2 Cottage in line with the RPI. A slightly lower figure was agreed in view of the property's condition and to prevent too great a differential developing between the two adjoining properties. The No. 2 tenants, the Clarks, have renewed their tenancy as of 8<sup>th</sup> April 2011 for a further year.

8.2.3 Baits Bite Office: The larger of the two store rooms at the rear of the building has been renovated with the Chairman's agreement (cost £1,700), providing storage and rudimentary office space. The 2011 Census form has been completed for the building indicating that it is not a residential address. Drainage expert A J Lee is due to repair the broken well cap near the building week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> April. Water has been ponding in the car park for a number of months.

8.2.4 Clayhithe House and Depot/Workshop: A periodic inspection of the fixed wiring of the Conservators' House was carried out by Gas Elec in February. The overall condition was graded 'unsatisfactory' and a number of items have been identified for improvement. The company has quoted for the necessary remedial works and these will be undertaken before Easter. The next inspection will then be due in 5 years' time (February 2015). SCDC's Historic Buildings Team was consulted and they confirmed that Listed Building Consent would not be required for these particular remedial works.

The cess pit serving the House and Depot has been pumped out by Veolia Environmental Services (cost £294).

The Old Workshop was broken-into on evening of 8<sup>th</sup> March at dusk. The burglars had forced the lock on the doors. The alarm was activated. The Foreman attended and believed that the burglars escaped on foot 1-2 minutes before he arrived. It did not appear that anything was taken. The river crew have improved security of the building and items stored therein.

8.2.5 Jesus Lock: River water level monitoring data on the Agency's webpages had not been refreshed for Jesus Lock since December. A note was sent to the EA asking if the link could be re-established. The CUCBC uses the trend plot as an early warning system before declaring yellow or red flag conditions for their members.

EA operatives were unable to gain access to the Sluices via the Victoria Avenue field gate because of incorrect usage of various padlocks. The River Manager asked the City's officers to ensure that their staff and contractors were aware of the EA's need for constant access.

The Jesus Green Association garden volunteers helped clear weeds from the flowerbeds on 17<sup>th</sup> March and the workboat was used to haul out an overgrown shrub from the middle bed. Some of the perennial plants part-purchased with Grassroots Funding in 2010 did not survive the cold winter; these will need to be restocked. JGA's committee has offered formal thanks to the volunteers and River Manager for their efforts to improve the garden's visual amenity.

The City Council's contractors unwittingly planted a specimen tree on the lawned area adjacent to the right-hand v-door in early March. A tree in this location could cause considerable problems for future maintenance of the v-doors should a crane lift be required. A formal letter was sent to the City Council's Tree Team requesting removal of the tree from the Conservators' property lest they should incur the costs of its removal. This request was heeded in early April. Officers cited a misunderstanding on the part of their contractors.

The river crew have emplaced some temporary paving stones at the head of the island to improve footfall for the Bailiff when embarking/disembarking his punt.

8.2.6 Baits Bite Lock: R J Marriott, contracting engineers, carried out the biannual service of the lift gate and v-doors, 8<sup>th</sup> March. They also fitted a gate in the safety fencing adjacent to the guillotine gate to improve access during works. A suspension of navigation notice was issued in advance of these works. Invoices received to date from George Shuttleworth in respect of the revamp of the Baits Bite downstream landing stage and of the Clayhithe frontage amount to £25,839. The garden suffered during the long cold period before Christmas and a number of perennial plants have died. New plants have been purchased for planting-out by the garden volunteers, Mr & Mrs Russell. Horningsea Parish Council has asked if there are plans to improve the design of the footbridge at Baits Bite. They claim that even able-bodied cyclists struggle to get their bikes up and down the steps using the metal guttering. An improvement project would require the backing of the County Council and the private landowner on the Horningsea bank.

8.2.7 The Halingway: The River Manager met with a member of the public who had expressed an interest in paying for a memorial bench to be installed beside the river, 19<sup>th</sup> January.

Padlock access codes to the bollards at Baits Bite and field gate at Chesterton have been changed as part of a security audit.

Contracting to Cambs County Council, the river crew has applied herbicide to the margins of the cyclepath between Chesterton and Clayhithe Bridge; an invoice for £499 has been issued.

Wet weather in February caused standing water to remain in the paddocks adjacent to the Halingway near the A14 road bridge for over a month. Chesterton Fen is low-lying with almost nil drainage gradient; the soils are naturally prone to waterlogging. Development along Fen Road and capping of the soil infiltration capacity by the building of numerous hardstandings, without any consideration towards drainage capacity of the existing infrastructure, has exacerbated these problems, to the detriment of long-standing residents and graziers of the Fen. Mr Heffernan, Environmental Protection Team Leader, SCDC, is in the process of fixing a meeting with various authority representatives, including the Conservancy, to discuss the ongoing issues of the ditch at Grassy Corner. SCDC enforcement officers organised clearance of rubbish from the ditch in March as part of a wider rubbish clearance campaign in Chesterton Fen.

Large piles of horse droppings were left on the towpath on a succession of occasions in February. The culprits were not caught. Ecops were notified; the droppings constituted a hazard to cyclists.

Mr Stephen, Town Bumps Secretary, has been making early enquiries about access to the towpath via Grassy Corner for the event in July.

The river crew have fitted reflective discs and tape to the Bumps noticeboard next to the Penny Ferry car park (materials provided by the County Council's Cycling Officer). Rowing coaches have noted that because the frame is painted black, it is difficult to see at night and constitutes a hazard.

Arsonists set fire to a log stack downstream of the A14 road bridge, 22/23 March. Several veteran willow trees had also been set alight along the towpath.

A backpacker set up his tent beside the towpath overnight, 23<sup>rd</sup> March. He left the following morning.

8.2.8 Lease of Fishing Rights: A copy of the Fisheries Survey Report of the downstream River Cam', conducted 26<sup>th</sup> July to 11<sup>th</sup> August 2010, has been received at the offices. The fishery improved from a class 'E' in 2009 to class 'C' in 2010 under the EA Fisheries Classification Scheme. Roach, juveniles in particular, dominate both standing crop and density (70%). Bleak are sub-dominant (20%), followed by perch (4% of total population sampled). At Fen Ditton (Long Reach), the team recorded the highest standing crop and density since the temporal surveys began in 2002 (2900 individuals caught). The EA has reviewed its National Monitoring Programme and the survey of these 5 sites will be moved to a 3-year rolling programme; the four lower Cam sites are next due to be surveyed in 2013.

A member of the public enquired about American signal crayfish trapping. He was advised to approach the EA for a Licence.

8.2.9 Grazing 0.704 ha. (1.74 acres) Fen Road: nothing to report.

8.2.10 Grazing 1.898 ha. (4.69 acres) Fen Road: nothing to report.

8.2.11 Clayhithe Field 4.57 ha. (11.3 acres): A 'keep wash down' sign has been installed in the southern corner of the field (an area fenced off for the storage of weed cuttings by the river crew). Bank erosion by boat and wind-induced wave chop is a particular problem in the Horningsea area.

### 8.3 Plant and equipment

8.3.1 Computer: There was some service disruption to e-mails in early February; a backlog of messages arrived in one batch. The reason for the delay in receipt could not be identified to either of the providers (BT, Fast Hosts). The River Manager has asked AKM, IT support team, to provide a quotation for an additional desktop computer for Baits Bite and upgrading to a wireless router so that the River Bailiff can use his laptop in the rear of the building without the need for additional cabling.

8.3.2 Conservators' Boats: The Bailiff's Punt 'Ted Gambie' was taken off the water during the cold weather. The river crew have attended to cleaning it up ahead of the new season. Scudamore's has generously provided new vinyl lettering to identify this workboat without charge. An annual hire agreement has been entered into with A C Outboards. The company has supplied a 9.8hp Tomahatsu engine for the open boat 'Fred Young' (the old Mariner outboard was found to be corroded and beyond repair).

8.3.3 Vehicles: The battery was stolen off the Massey Ferguson tractor when it was parked overnight at Baits Bite Lock. The river crew were mid-way through their seasonal tree pollarding works along the Halingway and had left it there for convenience because trying to join the northward-bound traffic on the A10 at Milton is highly hazardous during rush hour given the

tractor's speed limitations. The theft was reported to the Police. A replacement battery cost £100. The river crew will remove the battery in future if the vehicle is not returned to Clayhithe overnight.

8.3.4 Mobile phones: Reception has been very poor since the New Year in various places including Clayhithe Depot. There is some speculation that the phone providers may have reduced the transmission output from their local masts.

8.3.5 Portable Appliance Testing: Elecheck (EST) Ltd conducted portable appliance tests (PAT) to electrical equipment at Clayhithe, Baits Bite and Jesus Lock in February 2011 (cost £305).

8.3.6 Tools: C Mayne, contracted to refurbish the rear offices at Baits Bite, offered a number of hand and power-tools to the Conservancy which were surplus to his requirements.

#### 8.4 River Work

8.4.1 Bishop's Mill SLA with Cambridge City Council: The invoice for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 has been issued; payment has been received. The invoice for the final quarter has been issued. The River Foreman's inspection on 20<sup>th</sup> January noted that No. 3 gate was not functioning. This was reported to the City officers and they were due to instruct contractors to attend to repairs. The gate has remained inoperable since January; this was reported to the City Council again in February and early April. Lighting at the site continues to be a safety issue for staff attending night-time emergency callouts. The City Council has arranged for contracting electricians to visit the sluices and prepare a quotation; the works remain to be commissioned. A Periodic Inspection Report for the fixed electrical installation has been completed, rating 'satisfactory'. Cambs Fire & Rescue Services requested use of the area around the sluices for water safety training in February and March, both during daytime and in the hours of darkness. The training organiser is always on the look-out for suitable training areas and he asked about ownership of the disused cement pits in Cherry Hinton. He was referred to the City Council for further information about access.

8.4.2 EA Memorandum of Understanding (SLA): The invoice for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 has been issued and payment has been received. The invoice for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 has been issued to the EA. Cllr Williamson contacted the offices, 28<sup>th</sup> March, seeking confirmation that the Conservancy was paid by the EA for maintaining land drainage.

8.4.3 Towpath - grass cutting: Quotations will be sought from external contractors for the full cut of the riverbanks, spring 2011. The river crew will attend to the closer cutting of the Clayhithe visitor moorings and Baits Bite landing stages, as per the norm.

8.4.4 Miscellaneous Applications: S15 licences have been issued to St John's College for scaffolding to be erected to the rear of 33 Bridge Street (payment of £2624 has been received) and S Bentley for works to restore the riverbank at Capstan Island (payment of £200 received).

Comments have been returned on the following EA Flood Defence Consent applications: works to prevent erosion and stabilise the river bank at 8 Capstan Close (L11/C/001); installation a cattle ramp at Midsummer Common (L11/C/007); erection of temporary scaffolding at 33 Bridge Street (L11/C/006).

The River Manager wrote to the MD of Green Tide Turbines asking if he might reveal the 'secret location' for testing of their prototype since no objects may be anchored in Conservancy waters or be placed on the riverbed without prior permission. He contacted the offices assuring the River Manager that the tests were being undertaken outside the Conservancy Area.

Cambs County Council undertook decking repairs to the walkway between Quayside and Thompson's Lane in February. Advice was sought on the licensing of these works; the position remains indeterminate.

A reminder has been sent to Mr Stinton, County Council, about their outstanding fee payment for works to the riverbank at Riverside (environmental improvements project).

Cambs County Council is preparing its winter work programme of repairs to bridges. Their consulting engineer enquired about the next period of river lowering. The dates have been provided to him.

Scudamore's has presented their tally of film permits issued over the last financial year. An invoice has been raised; payment remains to be received.

The River Manager met with Mr Thorburn, Maintenance Supervisor, St John's College, 14<sup>th</sup> March, to discuss a proposed programme of desilting the punt pool and part of Bin Brook in 2012. Mr Thorburn was advised to make early contact with the EA regarding the necessary consent. Dredgings will need to be removed from the pool using a land-based excavator.

**8.4.5 Rubbish Clearance (City):** Members of Jesus Green Association took part in Keep Britain Tidy's national litter survey on 17<sup>th</sup> February. The list of items collected extended onto two sides of A4 paper, in spite of the City Council's daily morning litter clearance of the Green. The River Bailiff found a half-filled funerary urn floating inside Jesus Lock, 8<sup>th</sup> April.

**8.4.6 Third Party Rechargeable:** S Hedges has paid £90 following minor de-silting of a mooring at Wildfowl Cottage. His narrowboat had been stranded a number of times on the bottom of the river with water level fluctuations in January.

**8.4.7 Tree Pollarding:** Contractors have reduced 21 trees between Clayhithe and Baits Bite Lock (cost £6,552) and a further 15 trees between Baits Bite Lock and Clayhithe (cost £6,630). Chippings have been left beside the towpath for members of the public to take away for use as garden mulch. Smaller trees in the Chesterton area upstream of the railway bridge have been pollarded by the river crew. Ms Richardson, SCDC Trees & Landscape Officer, had secured 22 trees under the Parish Planting Scheme for a suitable site beside the towpath. The area upstream of Clayhithe Bridge was chosen given the number of gaps there, high amenity value of the area (close to the moorings) and relative ease of access for the contractor's delivery truck. The trees – a mixture of willow, ash, oak and hawthorn - were planted 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> March.

Horningsea Parish Council is giving consideration to applying for an allocation of trees to be planted in celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne in 2012. The PC invited interest from neighbouring Fen Ditton parish and the Conservancy. The River Manager has expressed interest in the restocking of the Halingway, there being no specific budget to purchase trees.

The Trustees of Milton Parochial Charities met on 30<sup>th</sup> March and they discussed the merits of becoming involved in the transfer of £627 from Eversheds Solicitors to the Conservancy for the purchase of trees to re-stock the numerous gaps that have opened-up between Baits Bite and Fen Road, Milton. The Trustees have indicated that they do not want to participate in this scheme, citing a conflict of interest with their charitable aims.

8.4.8 Weed cutting: Dr Block, Cambridge Canoe Club, has reported that there is a sizeable island of floating pennywort starting to grow in Grantchester Mill pool. The EA has been alerted to this.

8.4.9 Bank Maintenance: Minor bank repairs have been undertaken near the A14 road-bridge and along Long Reach using plastic sheet piles provided in previous years by the Environment Agency. Approximately 120 metres of riverbank downstream of the A14 road bridge requires attention this year. Like-for-like replacement of wooden stakes is envisaged and quotations for materials are being sought.

Bidwells, agents on behalf of Gonville & Caius College, owners of Ditton Meadows, has been coordinating a programme of drain clearance and habitat restoration work agreed by Natural England. The Parish Clerk confirmed that the project (2010-16) will comprise coppicing bankside trees, creating a cattle drinking bay, ditch restoration, hedgerow laying, scrub management and wet scrape creation. New permissive access will be given to the public across the Meadow.

Ms Hawksley, the Wildlife Trust's Water for Wildlife Officer visited the Conservancy Area to see the new soft revetment installed in the Horningsea area, 2009-10. She was delighted to discover signs of water vole activity in the area.

## 8.5 Acts / Byelaws

8.5.1 Breaches of mooring policy: The river crew have re-instated the chain in front of Clare College ditch adjacent to the navigation channel to prevent trespass across College lands by punt operators. Operators have been congregating there prior to picking up tours from Garret Hostel Lane.

8.5.2 Incidents: Cambs Police contacted the offices seeking information about a Riverside moorer who had allegedly verbally abused and threatened a member of the public. Information was provided about the presumed vessel owner and tenant. See also Note 6 (H&S/incidents). Narrowboat 'Vianna' left the Conservancy Area 9<sup>th</sup> March. The proclaimed owner contacted the offices seeking its whereabouts; the registered owner for 2010/11 had decided to move the vessel without his consent. The Police were called and attended Bottisham Lock and attempted to mediate the rather heated discussion between the 'owners'. The vessel was allowed to proceed, there being no evidence to substantiate any allegations of theft. The EA's River Inspector was alerted to the vessel moving onto its waters.

8.5.3 Overloading: Photographic evidence was provided to the offices showing a single commercial punt bearing 6 passengers plus the owner/operator as chauffeur, in contravention of the Code of Practice. A warning letter was sent to the registered owner.

8.5.4 Prosecutions: Michael Judkins of Archer & Archer represented the Conservancy at a Pre Trial Review, 3<sup>rd</sup> February, at Cambridge Magistrates (Conservators vs. Mr Robin Middleton, incidents of 9 June 2010 and 26 July 2010). A Trial date could not be agreed with the Court Clerks on the day so Mr Judkins attended Cambridge Magistrates again on 28<sup>th</sup> February to fix the Trial date, now arranged for 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011. The River Manager has been asked to attend as a witness. Mr Judkins has submitted an application for admission of bad character evidence to the Court (Criminal Procedure Rules, rule 35.4(2)). This has not been opposed by Mr Middleton's legal representative.

Archer & Archer are preparing proceedings against Mr Middleton relating to an incident of aggressive and threatening behaviour towards a Darwin crew and their coach on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010. A copy of the Summonses has been received at the offices and the initial hearing has been listed at Cambridge Magistrates on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2011. Chasing statements from the College witnesses was once again protracted and frustrating. It is recommended that this task is delegated to Archer & Archer in the future because it takes up too much officer time and the solicitors can tailor the statements to remove items which might be regarded as hearsay by the defence.

8.5.5 Navigation: High flows in mid-January required almost daily attendances at Bishop's Mill Sluices by the river crew. Water levels were also high on the lower river at this time, lapping over the Boathouse hardstandings and across the downstream landing stage at Baits Bite. 'Caution, keep wash down' signs have been installed on the Conservators' field at Clayhithe (with the tenant's permission) and at Bottisham Lock to remind boaters about the erosion caused by boat wash.

Narrowboat 'Knotty' (ex-Oxford) requested permission to access the head of navigation on 21<sup>st</sup> February. The owner of narrowboat Lady Blatherwick, ex-Ely, sought information about cruising to the head of navigation. She was asked to fix a time so that commercial punt operators could be advised of her intentions. Narrowboats 'Patience' and 'Lucky Duck' requested permission to access the Backs, 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March respectively. Upon each occasion, punt operators were advised by e-mail in advance for safety reasons.

Regional navigation restriction and closure notices have been received from the EA. These have been forwarded to the staff and Camboaters for information. The EA has published its revised opening times for Hermitage Lock, 2011.

8.5.6 Obstructions/overhanging trees: Several eyewitnesses have attested to Mr Middleton deliberately navigating slowly between 7am and 9am at the time of peak rowing traffic by College crews to deliberately frustrate their progress. The traffic jam caused a flare of tempers between a sculler and College coach on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. The sculler complained to the Chairman of the CUCBC and requested greater understanding and courtesy to be practised by members of the rowing community.

A private landowner at Banhams Close engaged the services of professional tree surgeons to reduce a large willow tree overhanging the navigation. A Tree Works application had already been submitted by officers to the City Council seeking permission to undertake the works. The river crew's energies were thus spared on this occasion by the landowner's responsible actions.

A Tree Works Order for a willow tree to the rear of 48 Pretoria Road failed to reach the Conservancy's offices. The City Council has indicated that the tree now has a Preservation Order (ref. 10/265/TTPO). A breach of the TPO (i.e. unconsented works) is a criminal offence. No record of the decision taken to schedule this tree could be found on the City Council's webpages.

The River Manager has questioned the legal validity of the Order given the fact that the Conservancy was not given the opportunity to make representations. The City Council's solicitor has not provided a response. Rowers and the Riverboat Georgina cite the problems caused by the overhanging branches of this tree in summer months. It forces larger vessels into the opposite navigation lane where the river width is already constrained for the movement of 2-way traffic. A photograph taken by the River Bailiff early morning, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, showed 18 punts moored across the Mill Pit from the Scudamore's pontoon adjacent to the Anchor public house. Scudamore's have been asked to reduce the size of the fleet at this location as they obstruct navigation by other river users, in particular during the period when motorised craft may access the Backs.

The River Manager met with Dr Block (Cambridge Canoe Club) and Mr Savage (BCU Access Officer) at Bottisham Lock on 22<sup>nd</sup> March to discuss improved access arrangements for the portage of manually propelled craft around the lock. Egress is difficult on the east bank at present owing to the slope gradient and erosion. The enclosure of lands on the Waterbeach bank by Mr Smith has cut off the original route used by canoeists to access EA waters. The land is owned by the EA. The River Manager discussed this project with her Agency equivalent, Mr Arnold, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. A site meeting is to be convened with the Agency to move the project forwards.

The Head Gardener of St John's College has advised the River Manager that professional tree surgeons will be undertaking works to reduce a large plane tree in the grounds of the Fellows' Garden. Darwin College has commissioned contractors to reduce a large chestnut tree in the college grounds adjacent to the Mill Pond on 12<sup>th</sup> April. Banksmen will be in attendance to warn navigators of the hazards.

**8.5.7 Pontoon licences:** The pontoon licences for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 at the Mill Pit and Quayside have been issued to Scudamore's Punting Company Ltd. A licence has been issued for the first time to provide an infill pontoon at Quayside which will be made available for public access only (i.e. no commercial operations). Granta Punts have failed to return their licence agreement at the time of writing this report. The City Council has condemned the Bowl's Pavilion on Jesus Green. This has been used as temporary storage by commercial punt operators licensed to work from La Mimosa punt station. No alternative storage has been offered. The River Bailiff has reported that a number of home-build storage lockers have been placed underneath the raised boardwalk near La Mimosa. These may constitute a hazard to the structure if water levels rise when the river is in spate. The River Manager met with City officers with responsibility for enforcing the Good Governance Byelaw at Hobson House, 7<sup>th</sup> February. The City Council has reintroduced its 'Voluntary Code of Practice for the Visitor Industry – Improving the Public Perception of the Punting Industry' for punt operators and touts. The River Manager has agreed to dispatch copies of this Code to applicants with their registration discs.

**8.5.8 Registration numbers:** Mr Jenks has written to officers noting that many rowing craft fail to display their registration numbers (British Rowing codes being accepted in lieu of a Conservancy-issued number). Lack of observance of this regulation by motorised craft is comparable in scale.

**8.5.9 Removal of Sunken/Abandoned Boats:** Recovery of sunken vessel 'The Shed', Riverside, was delayed by strong flows in January. It was eventually returned to Clayhithe and broken-up,

being beyond repair. 'Lazy Days' also remained part-sunken at Riverside throughout January and early February. The owner eventually managed to refloat it. Two vessels were found adrift on the navigation, 31<sup>st</sup> March (a punt and dinghy). These were reclaimed to Jesus Lock; their owners were notified. An offer has been received for reclaimed vessel 'Mistral', lying Clayhithe. The tenderer has agreed to remove the vessel from the waterway. It will be scrapped. Its Bolinder engine may have some re-sale value.

8.5.10 Vehicles on the Halingway: Organisers of the CRA Winter League races requested access to the towpath for stationing a marshal's vehicle near the A14 road bridge. Permission was granted for each respective date.

8.5.11 Noise: A liveaboard owner moored opposite Grassy Corner complained about early morning noise of College rowing crews and cox boxes in mid-February, citing being awoken at 6.50am one particular morning. When the coach was asked to keep the noise down he did the opposite and turned it up. The complaint was forwarded to the Senior CUCBC committee for action.

Conservator Mr Phillips, liveaboard owner at Stourbridge Common, submitted complaints to the City Council and River Manager about early morning noise from rowing crews and coaches upstream of the railway bridge. The City Council contacted CUCBC about the issue; Mr Pryce-Jones redirected the complaint to CUCBC, the appropriate body concerned. Mr Hamersley, Chairman of CUCBC, has explained that their regulations do allow for the use of cox boxes before 7.30am but no coaching upstream of the railway bridge except in a collision situation. He provided assurance that they have deployed 2 Early Morning Marshals on duty all term during weekday rowing in the early hours and one of the marshals is moved to the Penny Ferry once the crews have left the Boathouses, making that effectively 3 Early Morning Marshals. He reported that crews' adherence to CUCBC's Rules has been good since his Chairmanship started in October 2010. He attends in person some mornings. Mr Phillips was reminded that his complaints would bear greater weight if he attended to the registration of his new wide-beam vessel.

The Police had received complaints from Riverside residents about groups of youths making rope swings and setting up tents on Logan's Meadow Local Nature Reserve. The officer was advised to make contact with the City Council's Community Reserves Officer.

8.5.12 Disposal of sewage: Mr Allen (Town Bumps Secretary) has been making enquiries about the overflow of untreated effluent from Newfields Caravan Site, Chesterton, into local watercourses. The site has a long and complex history. The EA is to make a decision on the appeal of the Fen Road first time sewerage application in May/June 2011. Cllr Smith (Milton/SCDC) has received costings details submitted by Anglian Water. To connect the 'duty properties' to a mains connection to Milton STW would cost £2.03M; the alternative option of a new Package Treatment Plant for the same properties would cost £2.325M.

8.5.13 Diving operations: None requested.

8.5.14 Swimming: A university student, an experienced swimmer, requested permission to swim along the Backs to raise monies for Comic Relief, 18<sup>th</sup> March. His request was declined, with regret, on account of the byelaw prohibition.

## 8.6 Environment and Planning

8.6.1 Biodiversity: Mr Sivell, Biodiversity Officer for Buglife, a conservation trust, contacted the offices about a project to create more habitat for rare Eyed Longhorn Beetle (*Oberea oculata*). The sole UK population has contracted to a site near the River Cam. The beetle favours purple willow and the trust is keen to create 3 or 4 new habitat patches in 2011 to sustain the population. The River Manager has indicated a willingness to assist the trust, the other project partners being the EA and Natural England.

The River Manager attended meetings of the Cam Valley Forum in Grantchester, 19<sup>th</sup> January and 2<sup>nd</sup> March. The Forum has been preparing a campaign about the perceived pollution threat from the land remediation activities at Hauxton. The site is being redeveloped for housing. The Forum has created a generic Powerpoint presentation for its members to use in public presentations. Their AGM was held on 4<sup>th</sup> April, Newnham. The River Manager attended. The guest speaker was Bob Evans, soil scientist at Anglia Ruskin University, who gave a presentation on 'the geology of the Cam catchment and river catchment improvements'. Mr Evans cited ditch clearance as one of the principal reasons for increased turbidity in main watercourses. The Forum aims to coordinate some guided river walks over the summer, to include the River Mel and Hobson's Brook.

The River Manager has volunteered to be a local point of contact about non-native invasive species in the Conservancy Area as part of a wider network being developed via the Association of River Trusts.

RiverCare has launched its 'Otterly Fabulous Survey' with a facebook page at [www.facebook.com/RiverCare](http://www.facebook.com/RiverCare) which illustrates how volunteers are working to improve their local watercourses.

The River Manager tendered apologies for the City Biodiversity Meeting, coordinated by Guy Belcher, City Council, 6<sup>th</sup> April, evening.

A member of the public complained about the Conservancy's conservation duties in respect of swans and the management of rowers. A response was provided setting out the issues.

A local angler (also Special Projects Editor for Angling Times) contacted the offices about a mink seen in the Mill Pond opposite the Anchor Public House. He asked about the Conservancy's policy on mink control. The River Bailiff believes that there is a resident population of mink on Darwin Island. None of the river crew are suitably equipped to deal with mink. Coordinated eradication is best achieved through the networking of private landowners with an over-arching body such as the Wildlife Trust or Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) as currently demonstrated by the Bourn Brook Project where 20 mink have been trapped to date. Trumpington Farm Company already traps and dispatches mink in the upper reaches. The large population of water voles surveyed by the Wildlife Trust near Baits Bite and Horningsea, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, would suggest that the mink population on the lower river is relatively low.

A member of the public reported a swan entrapped in fishing line, 28<sup>th</sup> March, near the Boathouses. The report was forwarded to the RSPCA.

The offices have received a copy of 'News from the Fen', the Wicken Fen Vision newsletter, March 2011 edition.

8.6.2 Cambridge City Council Local Plan: The City Council is committed to preparing a new Tree Strategy for Cambridge to replace its Arboricultural Strategy. As part of this process, the City hosted a series of interactive ‘drop in’ workshops for members of the public.

Friends of Midsummer Common held its AGM on 16<sup>th</sup> March. The River Manager was unable to attend. Key agenda items included plans for the 2011 Strawberry Fair and the special 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Midsummer Fair.

Mr Brown has approached CUCBC about restoring the litter bin on Stourbridge Common to its original colour. The bin had been repainted in Caius College colours following the Lent Bumps.

8.6.3 Cambridge Sport Lakes: The River Manager paid an informal visit to catch up with the project’s Executive Director, Mr Woolhouse, at Milton Country Park on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

8.6.4 CamToo Project: Nothing to report.

8.6.5 Planning Consultations: A response was submitted to Cambridge City Council in respect of planning application reference 11/0061/FUL (installation of a concrete cattle ramp) before the deadline of 21<sup>st</sup> February. A response was submitted to SCDC planning consultation reference S/0312/11 (revised quantitative risk assessment for risks to groundwater ... Hauxton), 15<sup>th</sup> March.

8.6.6 SCDC Towpath: Payment of £4,230 has been received from SCDC, being their annual contribution towards the cost of handling litter.

8.6.7 Land Registry application, at Quayside: see 8.5.7 Pontoon Licences, above.

8.6.8 Water Framework Directive: See Grant Applications, above.

8.6.9 Waterspace Strategy: The Spalding Waterspace Strategy has been published. A Strategy is also being prepared by Richard Glen Associates for Bedford. Another study has been intimated for Ely pending the availability of funding.

## 8.7 Moorings

8.7.1 Camboaters: Camboaters’ committee met on 20<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the powered craft licence fee options consultation. A formal letter was sent to the River Manager seeking feedback on a number of items. Agency notices on navigation closures and restrictions have been forwarded to the Camboaters’ committee for their members’ benefit. The River Manager has asked if consideration could be given to adding a link from the Camboaters’ new blogspot.com website to the Conservancy website.

8.7.2 Clayhithe 48 hour visitor’s moorings: The River Foreman has been recording his monthly visual inspections and the River Bailiff has been serving notices on over-staying craft.

8.7.3 Mooring Arrangements with Cambridge City Council: City officers with responsibility for rented moorings were alerted to the poor condition of houseboat ‘Towed Hall’, Chesterton

Road, in February. The roof was damaged by strong winds in winter and the houseboat seemed a likely candidate for sinking.

City officers were alerted to items of household rubbish dumped on the riverbank next to narrowboat 'Pug', a Licence holder, moored Stourbridge Common.

The River Bailiff has continued to provide enforcement duties of the City Council; payment has been received. He has notified the City Council about boats overstaying the 48-hour limit at Jubilee Gardens. The Council's Mooring Licence terms and conditions require moorers to abide by the Conservancy's byelaws. It would appear that the necessary cross-checking is not taking place as part of the Mooring Licence application process. For example, narrowboat Twentieth Century Fox remains at Stourbridge Common in spite of the owner being prosecuted for non-registration and failing to produce a Boat Safety Scheme Certificate. Two separate letters to the Ms Ainley, Head of Streets & Open Spaces, and Cllr Cantrill, who have responsibility for the portfolio, have failed to elicit a holding response. Cllr Wright has been following-up the collapse of the mooring liaison meetings in 2010. These used to be coordinated by Active Communities three to four times a year and they provided a useful discussion forum for Camboaters, City, Conservancy and Cam rowers.

Mr Phillips has alerted City officers to holes adjacent to the moorings at Stourbridge Common which are a health and safety hazard.

The lock to the door of the pump-out room failed and swimming pool contractors needed to gain emergency access, 28<sup>th</sup> March. The barrel lock, the EA standard design for the region, had to be drilled-out. The Pool Manager was advised to contact the Ely EA Operations Delivery Team to arrange the replacing of the lock. Mr Rule, EA, advised that this exercise was costly to both the City and EA. He blamed the failure of the lock on the circulation of counterfeit navigation keys which has upset the mechanism.

8.7.4 Conservators' Mooring Policy: During his normal duties, the River Bailiff found an attractive enamel brooch marked CMBC. The Club was notified of this find and the owner came forwards to reclaim it.

A Fen Ditton resident complained to officers about the state of the moored vessels and activities associated with them on the land immediately downstream of the Plough public house. She was advised to make contact with SCDC, the local planning authority. The boats are compliant with the Conservancy's registration and mooring policy requirements. The Parish Clerk was referred to the useful summary document produced by AINA 'Residential use on water' which sets out the legislative framework for the control and regulation of liveaboard vessels.

Mr Middleton has been mooring his barge occasionally in Ditton Cut (part owned by Fen Ditton Parish Council). The PC has a 'no mooring' sign in place there. The Parish Clerk was alerted to this behaviour.

The future of the informal mooring arrangements at the former Penny Ferry public house, Chesterton, remains uncertain. The City Council's North Area Committee has refused the application for the site to be redeveloped for private housing.

8.7.5 Moorings at Riverside: The River Manager tendered apologies for a joint liaison meeting between City officers, Councillors and local residents on 26<sup>th</sup> January (absent on annual leave). The question of land ownership remains unanswered. Ms Gilbert of Riverside Area Residents' Association has been assembling evidence based on various letters and minuted records. Cllr Wright has volunteered her services to look into these aspects of land ownership further. The

City Council's solicitor has accessed Land Registry Records and only two titles are vested in the City (Engineer's House and land near Elizabeth Bridge). City officers believe that the Conservators' byelaw 6.10 could be used to greater effect to regulate the moorings. The problem with this approach is that most of the vessels moored at Riverside do not meet the definition of 'houseboat' set out in the byelaws. City, County and Conservancy officers are due to meet 7<sup>th</sup> April to discuss health and safety issues pertaining to the moorings alongside the railings.

The available moorings are at capacity; as soon as a space becomes available, another vessel fills the vacant berth. A tenant aboard a liveaboard boat moored at Riverside complained that someone had interfered with his mooring lines and moved his vessel without his permission. Another narrowboat, a relatively new arrival in the Conservancy Area, had taken its space alongside the wall. A letter was sent to the owner of the new narrowboat explaining that no-one save the Control Officer could move a boat without the owner's permission.

The river traffic monitoring data collected by Conservancy staff in 2009 remains in raw format; there has been no time to analyse it. The River Bailiff's April 2011 enforcement observations record that the registration status of Riverside moorers is more compliant than the fleet of craft moored on the Commons by virtue of Licences issued by the City Council. A City Councillor has made enquiries about the registered owner of a narrowboat moored at Riverside to follow up some enquiries about the occupancy and use of the vessel following complaints from local residents.

## 8.8 Registration

8.8.1 Boat Standards: A commercial punt operator requested information about the Conservancy's construction standards for punts (byelaw 8.3b). The operator was planning to produce a free Youtube film on how to build a traditional punt; he has promised to forward the URL to the offices when he has completed it. There is no formal specification besides craft meeting maximum beam dimensions (1m for single punts, no more than 1.95 m for ferry punts) and no loose decking or protruding bolts or screws. Advice was sought from the Avon Navigation Trust which also registers a fleet of hire punts. Their Manager suggested using the guidance published by the Lloyds for Small Craft Construction.

The Boat Safety Scheme has issued a 'Dangerous Vessel' notice against 'Sweet Virginia' which has recently been moved by her new owners from Cambridge to a hardstanding at Upware Marina for re-inspection.

8.8.2 EA Interchange Agreement: The Chairman and River Manager met with CMBC representatives at their Clubhouse, Waterbeach, to discuss the powered craft licence fee options consultation, 18<sup>th</sup> January, prior to their submitting a formal response on behalf of their members. That same afternoon, a meeting took place at the Bridge Hotel, Waterbeach, with Cam Sailing Club representatives who raised their members' concerns regarding the fee proposals. The consultation closed on 28<sup>th</sup> January. Most respondents who had provided their address details were given an acknowledgement of receipt. A detailed letter from Mr Jenks was published as an Appendix to the Special Meeting papers and a full response was given after that meeting (see Minutes of the Special Meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2011). A letter prepared by the licensing sub-committee group was sent to Mr Woodcock, EA Regional Director, 19<sup>th</sup> January, seeking an amendment to the existing interchange agreement and to set up a meeting with the Regional Waterways Manager and EA's solicitor, Ms Sillitto, to discuss any future agreement.

That meeting took place on 10<sup>th</sup> February at the EA's offices, Brampton. The interchange agreement was entered into in 1994 when the then current byelaws dated 1970 were in force. Substantial changes were made when the byelaws were redrafted and passed in 1995. Ms Sillitto has offered to start the drafting of a new agreement. The 2010 Order allows for the Agency to enter into such agreements, as recently demonstrated by the bulk licence agreements entered into with British Rowing and so on (see 8.1, above). Conservators have been circulated ahead of the 14<sup>th</sup> April meeting with a letter for the attention of Mr Woodcock regarding changes to the wording of the existing interchange agreement (see Matters for Decision, note 5). The licensing sub-committee group met on 1<sup>st</sup> March at Goldie Boathouse to discuss actions arising from the Special Meeting. A brief for consultants developed from a second meeting of the sub-committee which met on 31<sup>st</sup> March, also at Goldie Boathouse (see Matters for Decision, note 5). The River Manager approached AINA and the EA Regional Waterways team for contact names of possible consultants with expertise in economic valuation of waterways.

8.8.3 Non-registration prosecutions: The EA's debt recovery team is pursuing one resident moorer at Fen Ditton who has failed to complete his 2010/11 annual registration.

8.8.4 Interchange agreement with Canoe England (British Canoe Union): See item 8.1, above.

8.8.5 Interchange agreement with British Rowing: A number of rowing club representatives had made enquiries about registration arrangements as from 1<sup>st</sup> April. British Rowing and the EA have agreed a block licence, but this does not apply to Conservancy waters. It means that Conservancy-registered rowing craft will be bound to pay an additional fee to the EA when using their waters for events etc.

## 8.9 Events

8.9.1 Events: Mr Key (CRA) has provided hard copies of the CRA's 2011 events for distribution from Baits Bite office. CFPAS Ltd fishing matches on the Cam have been agreed for the year ahead. Cambridge University Alumni have requested permission to host an alumni rowing regatta, 25<sup>th</sup> September. Cam Sailing Club's racing calendar has been approved and published on the Conservancy website. The River Manager met with the organisers of Trinity May Ball, 18<sup>th</sup> January, to discuss their plans for an evening extravaganza. The River Manager is in the process of drafting an event application form which may, hopefully, cut down on the volume of e-mail messages exchanged with organisers of events by capturing all required information in one step. A draft will be presented to the rowing community at the next joint liaison meeting in the summer. Ms Vos (EA) has provided samples of similar application forms used by other local authorities. Postcodes for key access points along the river have been provided to the CUCBC for emergency purposes.

The River Foreman attended a stakeholder workshop about this year's Strawberry Fair in January in the River Manager's stead (on annual leave). A second workshop will take place in May.

The University Air Squadron had hoped to host their practice regatta on the Cam, 12<sup>th</sup> March, however, this would have meant two races taking place over one weekend. The River Manager is discouraging the practice of back-to-back rowing events so that the river can be used more equitably by all users. The following Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, was offered but this was not suitable

for the organisers. The River Manager suggested that a provisional booking is made for 2012 to ensure that they secure a suitable date to avoid disappointment.

The Cam Clean Up took place on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March and it was another very successful event, credit being due to the coordination of Mr Phillips (Camboaters), Andrew Walters (RiverCare/Keep Britain Tidy) and Mr Carter (City Council). This year, Team Leaders were nominated in advance to manage the volunteers in certain areas. Conservancy staff attended with the Berky weed harvester and small open boat. A barbeque was laid on for the volunteers at the Fort St George public house afterwards, sponsored by local businesses. Regrettably, Cambridge lost the London Boat Race the same afternoon. Donarbon's provided skips for the event free of charge but these were under-used by the volunteers. The River Foreman negotiated for rubbish collected from the lower end of the catchment to be received by Donarbon's without incurring fees.

St John's College have requested permission for a punt-based orchestra to navigate the Backs on 'Suicide Sunday', 19<sup>th</sup> June (last year the College organised a 'Piano on a Punt', see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2vpY60sm3o>). Permission has been granted subject to certain conditions.

John Lewis Partnership are organising a 'kayak challenge' from Cambridge to Denver return in mid-May. Scudamore's had agreed to provide the craft for this charitable event.

Tees Solicitors has requested permission to hold a Duck Race to raise funds for the charity Headway Cambridgeshire on 2<sup>nd</sup> June downstream of Magdalene Bridge.

The Alzheimer's Society has approached the offices about holding another 'Memory Walk' on 4<sup>th</sup> September. The route includes part of the towpath.

## 8.10 Publicity

8.10.1 Notice-boards: Noticeboards have been updated with events' listings and GOBA Bulletins and other local talks of interest (Fenland History on Friday, Cam Valley Forum AGM).

8.10.2 Publications: The Spring 2011 edition of GOBA News includes an article about Conservancy non-registration prosecutions and removal of sunken vessel 'The Shed' from Riverside. A response has been provided to a member of the public enquiring about books and source materials detailing the local history of the Cam/Granta between Cambridge and Byron's Pool.

Waterways World, March 2011, published an article 'Cam boaters face 25% licence hike', presumably cribbed from other sources. The article contained a number of factual errors.

8.10.3 Presentations: The River Manager delivered a presentation on managing the River Cam to the Oakington Over 60's Club on 8<sup>th</sup> February, afternoon.

The River Manager attended the public launch of the City Council's Lottery-funded 'ChYpPS' playboat (Children & Young People's Participation Service), 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Cllr Walker also attended. The boat was 'launched' by the Major.

The River Manager has made contact with the RNLI's Treasurer, Cambridge Branch, since both donation pots need to be emptied. The monies represent speaker's fees and loose coins picked up by the Bailiff during his patrols.

8.10.4 Media: the Cambridge News has published the following river-related articles known to officers since the last committee meeting: 'Boat owners may face 25% fee rise to meet shortfall' (18<sup>th</sup> January); 'New reprieve for Mr Asbo' (21<sup>st</sup> January); 'Air ambulance called out as rower has heart attack' (25<sup>th</sup> January); 'All aboard for maiden voyage of playboat' (14<sup>th</sup> February); 'Barge owner's warning as bosses decide to remove swan' and 'Over my dead body' (17<sup>th</sup> February); 'Arson attack under bridge' (21<sup>st</sup> February); 'Driver jumps into Cam as car hangs over edge' (28<sup>th</sup> February); 'Why has Mr Asbo got such a cob on?' (28<sup>th</sup> February); 'Call for new moorings after late-night houseboat terror' (9<sup>th</sup> March); 'Trees planted along river towpath' (15<sup>th</sup> March); 'Plan to build homes on pub site rejected' (25<sup>th</sup> March). The crowning glory was their April Fool's Day article '£1.5m gold statue to honour swan that terrifies rowers'.

The River Manager declined an invitation to speak about the aggressive swan Mr Asbo on BBC Radio Cambs, 21<sup>st</sup> January.

8.10.5 Website: The annual website maintenance fees have been paid for the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. Some redesign of the site, now almost 5 years old, is recommended under any renewal terms. Statutory notices have been published as necessary. Links have been added to the EA's 'River Status' which shows water level trend data for a 48 hour period. The 4 relevant sites on the Cam are at Byron's Pool, Jesus Lock, Baits Bite Lock, and Bottisham Lock. Under a programme of cuts, the Visit Anglian Waterways website is no longer to be supported by the EA; regrettably, it went out of service on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

8.11 The River Manager will raise any other matters which arise between the time of preparing this report and the meeting.

April 2011

River Manager