

Abbey Action

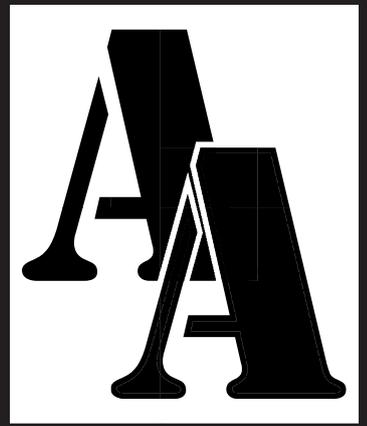
ABBEY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

The Community Newsletter for East Barnwell/Abbey

Spring 2011 Edition

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'Heroes' displayed at The Leper Chapel



One of the "larger than life" sculptures on show inside the Leper Chapel during February.

They were created during weekly sessions at Wintercomfort day centre run by former Spitting Image puppet maker Linton Bocock. The theme was 'heroes' - someone who had made a positive impact on the lives of homeless or former homeless people. Homeless people often describe themselves as feeling like modern-day lepers so it is fitting that the historic setting of the Leper Chapel was the venue for the exhibition.

Read more about the display and an associated music event on page 2.

Abbey Community Newsletter - Plans for the coming year are:

Edition	Covering period	Deadline for articles	Distribution
Summer	mid-June - early Sept	16 May	mid-June
Autumn	Sept. - Nov	1 Aug.	early Sept.
Winter	Dec - Feb. 2012	1 Nov .	early Dec

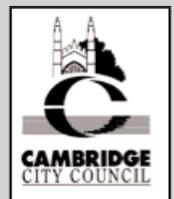
If you have any news about a local group, project or facility in the Abbey area please send details to Abbey Action. Space is free for community groups and activities that benefit the local area. Previous editions of the Abbey community newsletter are also available on the website www.cambridge.gov.uk ("Community & living" section).

Abbey Community Notice Boards

Local groups and events can also be promoted for free through the community notice boards overseen by Abbey Action, for example, outside Barnwell Road and Ditton Lane shops. One side is maintained by Abbey Action for local posters (the other side is for city-wide events and is overseen by the City Council's Distribution Service). Send posters or articles to Keith at the Abbey Action office at East Barnwell Community Centre or email articles to abbeyaction1@tiscali.co.uk.

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As spring emerges from a winter with some very cold weather, we appreciate warmer days with longer daylight. However, harder financial times means that local services and facilities are under more pressure, so it is important people support those in their neighbourhoods. Many groups and activities take place locally, avoiding the need to travel very far. East Barnwell Community Centre and Abbey Meadows Community Wing are two well-used Abbey venues. Activities also take place at the various churches, the Abbey Pool and Fitness Centre, Barnwell Road Library and the Cambridge Museum of Technology. Through the Abbey Community Newsletters we hope to cover the range of activities taking place - from sport and exercise, local history to social and environmental.

New Primary School Building Project

You may have noticed a new building going up on the **Abbey Meadows Primary School** site. It is a new classroom extension that includes 9 classrooms, resource areas and all the necessary facilities for up to 270 children. The project has been commissioned by the local authority due to the increasing pupil numbers in the Abbey area and across the City.

The two-storey building uses modern methods of construction - a solid timber frame from Austria that was erected in seventeen days. It will be brick finished on the ground floor and maple weatherboard upstairs. There will also be substantial landscape improvements on the site and extra pedestrian access to alleviate vehicular congestion at the front of the school. The current contractor's access road off Barnwell Road is temporary and will be removed leaving a "reinforced grass" route as an emergency gateway. The project is going to schedule and is due for completion for the new term in September 2011. School website: www.abbeymeadows.co.uk



Abbey Meadows school building in progress

Chapel a focus for music and art

Annual Concert of Words and Music.

On a cold Sunday in January, the ancient Leper Chapel came alive to the sound of music and verse for **Homelessness and Leprosy Sunday Concert**. The historic setting was the venue for Cambridge Link-up's fifth annual concert of words and music. The event included songs from homeless singing group **Street Voices** (who have recently recorded a CD) as well as sets from Banjo Nick and blues guitarist, Toby Peters. A selection of readings was presented by FLACK Magazine (see below). Tea and Wintercomfort Cupcakes will be served after the concert. The chapel was full with all seats taken and other people standing!

Keith Jordan, project worker for Abbey Action who attended the concert said "the musicians, especially two solo guitarists, were as good as many I've seen play at the Cambridge Folk Festival over the years."



Combined with the concert, an interesting art display was staged inside the chapel for a week in early February. The displays for the **Heroes exhibition** included a series of almost life-size sculptures of real people who have had a positive effect on the participants/artisans' lives. These included Iron Man, Davina MacCall, Salvador Dali and family members and friends such as; George Scott "He was a visionary capable of making good things happening"

My Grandad "My Grandad is my hero because he had to do things I never had to"

The display came out of a collaboration between Wintercomfort for the homeless and local artist Linton Bocock. Linton said "I asked the participants to produce a sculpture of someone who had made a positive impact on their lives and had given them direction, ambition and hope for the future. The results have been, interesting, surprising and very satisfying."



Cambridge Link-Up - a homeless led community group that raises funds for projects involving homeless people and awards small grants for those in urgent need. www.cambridgelinkup.org.uk

FLACK - a new charitable social enterprise based in at the CityLife Social Enterprise Centre, on Newmarket Road. "We work with the energy and potential of homeless people by involving them in the production of a monthly what's on magazine. Flack offers training, support and a voice to people who are often overlooked; and so helps to rebuild their self-esteem and break the cycle of homelessness." www.flackcambridge.org.uk

Future events at the Leper Chapel this year:

Sunday, 12 June - Storytelling
6th - Sat 9th July - *in situ*: Theatre's Richard Spaul and Bella Stewart perform Shakespeare's Macbeth
Saturday, 10 September - Stourbridge Fair - 800th Anniversary Celebrations
www.cambridgeppf.org

Details of some meetings, events and exhibitions taking place locally

MARCH

March (from the 2nd week)

Barnwell Road Library exhibition

Subject: Local nature reserves Barnwell West, Coldhams Common, Logan's Meadow. Wildlife sightings in the Abbey area.

26th March (Saturday)

The 2011 River Cam Cleanup

10:00am-1:00pm, culminating with a BBQ.

Once again volunteers are invited to take part in this excellent opportunity to give the much-loved river a helping hand, by participating in the Cam Cleanup. The Cam meanders its way 12 miles from Granchester Meadows to Bottisham lock, passing one long boundary of the Abbey ward. It is a popular event for local residents, community groups and the residential boating community. The event is organised by Camboaters, Anglian Water's River Care alongside Cambridge City Council and the Cam Conservancy.

The 2009 Cleanup saw more than 200 volunteers collect over 400 bags of recyclable and general rubbish from the river and its banks. Hard working grapple teams recovered 100 bikes from the riverbed and three motorised scooters were retrieved from the Stourbridge Common section.

Please follow links below to see information about previous Cleanups:

<http://www.camboaters.co.uk/camcleanup/index.htm>



APRIL

Barnwell Road Library exhibition

Subject: Abbey Community Directory

The range of groups, facilities & activities in the area & 'launch' of the directory.

Digital switchover takes place!

The way we receive our TV signal changes this month - the switch from analogue to digital signal. The existing analogue TV signal will be switched off in 2 stages.

Stage 1 (30th March) - analogue BBC 2 switched off forever
Stage 2 (13th April) remaining analogue channels switched off

For advice on what changes you might need to make:

Call **Digital UK** on **08456 50 50 50**

Find information on their website www.digitaluk.co.uk or in local libraries.

There is also a **Digital Switchover Help Scheme** which will be available to you if you are:

- Aged 75 or over, or
- Have lived in a care home for six months or more, or
- Get (or could get) certain disability benefits, or
- Are registered blind or partially sighted

For further information visit their website at www.helpscheme.co.uk or call free on **0800 40 85 900**.

14th April (Thursday)

East Area Committee

Meeting Room at Cherry Trees Day Centre, St. Matthews Street (Petersfield) Starting at 7.00pm

This is the Cambridge City Council's forum for councillors and residents from the Abbey, Coleridge, Petersfield and Romsey wards.

Councillors representing these areas attend and local issues are discussed and decisions affecting these areas are taken. Residents from the Abbey Ward are welcome to attend and ask a question, or make a statement on a local matter during the **Open Forum section**.

More details contact: Toni Birkin Tel (01223) 457086

There is an archive of agenda and minutes for City Council, committee and sub-committee meetings on www.cambridge.gov.uk/democracy.

20th April (Wednesday)

Barnwell & Fen Ditton Local History Society

Speaker evening: Mr Frank Agger - History of the Regal Cinema
All welcome, 7 - 9.30pm At Abbey Meadows Community Wing (on the Abbey Meadows school site, off Galfrid Road)
Visitors £2, Members free (annual membership £10)
Contact: Mr D Cullum (01223) 243353
Email: johnmoyle@yahoo.co.uk

MAY

Barnwell Road Library exhibition

Subject: Health & Fitness

The range of ways to keep fit in the Abbey area.

Taster activities will be organised to coincide with the exhibition.



5th May (Thursday)
Local Elections (City Council)

16th May
Deadline for articles for summer edition of the Abbey Community Newsletter

(for June distribution) Contact Abbey Action (contact details on front page)

18th May (Wednesday)

Barnwell & Fen Ditton Local History Society

Speaker evening: Mr Rodney Tibbs - 50 years at the Cambridge Evening News
All welcome, 7 - 9.30pm
At Abbey Meadows Community Wing

Focus on: East Barnwell Community Centre



East Barnwell Community Centre is a popular venue for many community groups and activities in Abbey; Tuesday Carpet Bowls Club, For-get-me-not Club, Brownies, East Barnwell Childminding Group, Jets Netball, Karate, Fizzyfit exercise classes, See Saw Pre-school to name a few. Rooms are available for new groups, one-off events, meetings and children's birthday parties.

The centre has been independently-run since 1998 by a few local people who formed East Barnwell Community Association. It operates on a very small budget - it's only source of income is from room hire.



The community centre is located on Newmarket Road (between the Ditton Lane and Barnwell Road junctions). Debbie Hardingham is the Centre Manager. The office is open most weekday mornings, term time or phone (01223) 211945. New email address: eastbarnwell@btconnect.com

East Barnwell Centre gets busy with.....



East Barnwell Community Centre serves a diverse range of needs within the Abbey Community. The centre's YMCA trained exercise instructor, Sarah Taylor has been delivering her **'exercise to music'** classes across Cambridge for nearly 10 years.

Now, she's put her own company image through its paces and it's true to say the new look is well and truly fit for purpose. The newly named **Fizzyfit** classes will still offer a fitness for all levels programme, but now reflects a bit of the fizz and energy she puts into her work. Sarah's simply bubbling over with new ideas for the classes. First on Sarah's agenda is to give something back to the local community and what better way than to have East Barnwell Centre as her **nominated charity for 2011**.

Debbie Hardingham, Centre Manager said: "We're so pleased Sarah wants to help with our fundraising this year. It's so rare for people to offer us help so it's wonderful to see that Sarah's so proactive - she's got great community spirit. We're really looking forward to working together with Fizzyfit to help improve the facilities we provide to the local community."

Sarah Taylor said: "I wanted to do more for the community and I have lots of ideas for great fundraising events. I'm really glad to do my bit and it is great that everyone using the centre will benefit. So if you want to support the **Fizzyfit** fundraising events keep an eye out on the centre's noticeboard for what's up and coming."

Sarah Taylor's new website is under construction so keep an eye out for when it launches www.fizzyfit.com.

For further information about how to get Fizzyfit please call Sarah on: 07795 297998

Room available

A large room (approx. 14 x 9 metres, with storage space) is available at East Barnwell Community Centre for any organisation (perhaps shared) to use as a permanent base. Previous users have included the Steiner School and Cambridge Regional College. This is in addition to rooms that can be hired for one-off or regular activities at the centre.

For more details or to take a look, please contact Debbie the Centre Manager (see above for details)

Restoring the "lost gardens" of East Barnwell

In a new project for 2011, the "lost gardens" of East Barnwell Community Centre are being restored and maintained. Plans include restoring the over grown borders by the car park, planting up with home-propagated plants, building a compost heap to take all the leaves and garden waste from the grounds, tidying up the exterior of the centre and creating a garden area for See Saw Pre-school. It will take place on Tuesdays, roughly every fortnight, 10am-11.30. Next dates: Tuesday 5th & 26th April Refreshments will be provided. So if you have some time to spare and want to help the community centre, get some exercise or learn some gardening skills, come along and join us. Bring sturdy boots or wellies and gloves. Tools provided. Please contact Keith Jordan at Abbey Action (based at the centre) - see contact details on front page.



The 'lost gardens' restoration: in progress (left) and before (right)

Garden Tools appeal

The garden project at East Barnwell Community Centre, and other garden projects about to start in the Abbey area, could do with some "recycled" tools. If you have any tools you no longer need and can donate them to the community centre they would be most appreciated.

Some tools required: garden spades and forks, hand forks and trowels, spring rake, garden gloves, large buckets, a wheelbarrow, hedging shears, secateurs, pruning loppers. You can drop them off at the centre office on Newmarket Road (usually open weekday mornings) - but may be best to contact us first to find out if the tools are the ones required.

Tel. Abbey Action (contact details on front page) or East Barnwell Community Centre Tel. (01223) 211945.

Local Groups and Activities in Abbey



A small selection of groups looking for new people to join

East Barnwell Friendship Club

The club is looking for new members who would like to meet up on Thursday afternoons. So if you are lonely, have time on your hands or want to try something new come along to Abbey Meadows Community Wing (by the primary school, off Galfrid Road) on Wednesdays between 2 - 4pm. Over the year the club has many activities, from cake and plant stalls, outings, Christmas dinner, other social activities. Just turn up or give Hazel a call first on (01223) 241585

Abbey Bowls Club

The Abbey Bowls Club (featured in our autumn edition) will soon be starting a new season. The season runs from May until early September. The club is based at the bowls green and clubhouse on the corner of Newmarket Road and Barnwell Road. The club plays several times a week. £25 membership, £1.50 per game (including refreshments) If you are interested in joining, call in one evening when you see bowling taking place and have a chat with Rodney or Peter



Cambridge Priory Townswomen's Guild

The group of local residents meet on the second Wednesday in the month at Abbey Meadows Community Wing, Galfrid Road, 7:30- 9:30pm. The group has speakers, on a range of subjects; arts & crafts, special interests (from the National Trust, flower arranging to aromatherapy) plus socials, etc. New members are most welcome. Contact: Mrs Frost, Tel. (01223) 292131 or Mrs Abraham (01223) 501216

Hobby Crafts Group - NEW

Are you interested in joining a regular daytime gathering of people who are interested in making things and arts & crafts - it could be anything from card making, knitting, model building, willow weaving... anything you make yourself? We are planning a first meeting of people who are interested - bring along anything you have made or are in the process of making. It could become a regular activity where people can meet up, swap ideas and skills and just have some fun. If you are looking for something new to do or picking up useful tips - come for some inspiration! East Barnwell Community Centre: Wednesday 6th April 10am - 11.30am No cost. Refreshments provided. Just turn up. Contact: Abbey Action or John Moyle on 07941 534626.



Karate for concentration! Adrenaline Martial Arts

New beginners intake for children at:
East Barnwell Community Centre
Wednesdays 4.00pm - 4.45pm
This Karate programme helps to develop the skill of concentration in children and teaches them to have complete focus on the task at hand - useful as a life skill! To book a place visit the website www.blackbeltattitude.co.uk or call Tel: 01738 758118

BARNWELL ROAD LIBRARY

Events at the library: Monthly reading group
Rhyme time session for 0-18 months (Monday 2.00 pm - 3.00 pm)
Story Time for 12 months - 5 years (Thursdays 2.00pm - 2.45 pm)
Library opening hours:

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	10.00 am - 5.00 pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	10.00 am - 6.00 pm
Friday	1.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Saturday	10.00 am - 1.00 pm
Sunday	Closed

New Exhibitions in 2011

The first exhibition started at the library in December with a local feature on the BBC series *"Turn Back Time: the High Street"*. Old photos and adverts for shops in the East Barnwell and Abbey areas were displayed. It was surprising to find how many changes to local shops have taken place even from the 1960s. Even the library started off in the row of shops along Barnwell Road before the current building was opened.

A feature on local recycling opportunities and the Abbey Recycling Champions has just taken place. Exhibitions coming up will include those on local and seasonal themes (see Abbey Community Diary on page 3).

Others to follow each month:

- Midsummer and Stourbridge Fairs (both celebrating 800 years this year),
- Community outings - photos of past Abbey Action outings, etc.

The exhibitions are being co-ordinated by the Abbey Action Project in association with the library staff. Please contact Keith at Abbey Action if you have an idea for an exhibition in the future



John Moyle from the Barnwell & Fen Ditton Local History Society who helped with the shops exhibition



“Forever Active” classes

Exercise sessions and those returning to a more active lifestyle



There are many sessions running for the over 50 age group throughout the City. Quite a few of these take place in the Abbey area - from t'ai chi, exercise to music to aqua aerobics and chair-based exercise. Currently, spaces are available at the following sessions for new participants at the Abbey swimming pool and fitness centre:

SESSION: Exercise to music class

Fridays 10-11am

This is an all-round, total body workout to improve flexibility, co-ordination, strength and flexibility.

SESSION: Aqua aerobics

Fridays 2-3pm

This is a workout for people of all fitness levels using the natural resistance of the water. You do not need to be able to swim but you must be water confident.

£3 per session for Forever Active members/£3.50 for non-members. Membership to the Forever Active programme is £12.50 for the year but is not essential to be able to access any of the Forever Active sessions.

For more information and details regarding Forever Active membership, please contact the City Council's Sports Development Service on: 01223 457532 or visit the website: www.forever-active.org.uk

Generation Games

Running throughout the year, this is a project aimed at inspiring all members of the family to participate in fun, sporting activities together. Sessions include badminton, tennis, golf, archery, climbing, table tennis, cycling and rounders.

Additional family sport activities are yet to be confirmed for throughout 2011.

Please visit our website for the most up to date scheduling at: www.cambridge.gov.uk/getactive or contact the Sports Development office for more information on: 01223 457532

News from at East Barnwell Health Centre

PERSONAL HEALTH TRAINERS

Louise Stevens and Dan Tones are the Personal Health Trainers at East Barnwell Health Centre. They offer **FREE** specialist advice and support on lifestyle changes including:

- ♥ Eating healthier
- ♥ Increasing the amount of physical activity
- ♥ Stopping giving up smoking
- ♥ Cutting down on alcohol

Importantly, they support individuals to set targets and goals that are realistic, making it far more likely that they are achieved.

For more information ask at the Health Centre reception or your GP for a referral or call Louise on 07540 703821. Website www.personalhealthtrainer.org.uk

Carolyn Jaiyeola is the newest member to join the Personal Health Trainer team! Carolyn qualified with Distinction as a Nutritional Advisor in 2010 and believes that everyone deserves health and happiness and it's all about finding the right balance! "Even the smallest of changes to your lifestyle can see big benefits to your health" says Carolyn.

“Walking For Health” - in the Abbey area

If you are looking to getting back to health, perhaps after an illness, here's an activity that might help. Join a gentle walk of about 40-50 minutes duration on Mondays, starting promptly at 10am. Meeting point: Foyer of East Barnwell Health Centre (off Ditton Lane). If you are attending the walk for the first time, please arrive 10 minutes early in order to complete a necessary health form.

Tel. 01223 457532 or contact John, the walk leader, on johnmoyle@yahoo.co.uk or 07941 534626.

This walk is part of the Cambridge City health walk programme. For more information please contact: 01223 457532 or visit the website: www.cambridge.gov.uk/getactive.

Why join your local Walking for Health group?

- ♥ You can start slowly and build up gently
- ♥ It's a chance to make new friends
- ♥ It's **FREE** and you don't need special equipment

WALKING CAN.....

- ♥ Keep your heart strong
- ♥ Reduce your blood pressure and stress
- ♥ Help to manage your weight
- ♥ Make you feel good and help you sleep better

Introducing JOHN MOYLE Abbey's Volunteer Walk Leader

John, a patient at the East Barnwell Health Centre practice, has made impressive improvements with his own "heart" health after suffering an angina attack, before being diagnosed with Degenerative Heart Disease. Through joining and leading the walking group he is now reaping the benefits of being more active. "Our walks are a fun way of exercising & getting to know other people, as we always have a chat and cuppa afterwards."



John leading a walk to Fen Ditton

hazel in flower - one of first signs of spring near Howard Road

Want to lose weight and gain health?

Then how about trying **CHIP**, a free **Community Health Improvement Programme** offered by NHS Cambridgeshire in partnership with your GP surgeries.

CHIP is a fortnightly programme of eight **FREE** and friendly workshops for anyone age18+ with a body mass index (BMI) of 30+ ready to make small lifestyle changes to improve their health and wellbeing.

Groups work in small teams to discuss food portions, healthy eating ideas and tips for breaking bad habits. Healthy ways to improve lifestyle choices are delivered through enjoyable and interactive quizzes, group activities and taster sessions. Health professionals, e.g. Dieticians, nutritionists and fitness instructors lead some of the workshop activities.

A new programme is currently taking place at **East Barnwell Community Centre** on Newmarket Road. Please contact your GP surgery to be referred. For general information on **CHIP**, please contact Helen McFall on 01353 865364



Practical ways to reduce energy bills and reduce your “carbon footprint”

As home energy bills continually increase (even more so after a very cold December) it makes both financial and environmental sense to keep the amount of energy you waste at home and in other aspects of daily life to a minimum. Even if you are still not convinced about the human causes of climate change, reducing the amount of heat wasted in your home is sensible - for your own bank balance!

Cambridge Carbon Footprint (CCF) is a local, voluntary organisation concerned with climate change - currently based on Newmarket Road on the corner of Coldhams Lane. CCF helps people work together creatively to make real reductions in their energy use and therefore CO2 emissions. Presentations, workshops, projects, “carbon conversation” groups, grow-your-own produce sessions and many others provide more understanding about climate change and valuable practical tips on reducing energy consumption.

Energy in the Home - opportunities for making your home warmer

- Sessions dedicated to energy in the home.
- Detailed information about home energy
- Low carbon network events - to help group participants continue to plan and make reductions
- “Getting started on eco-renovation” sessions - how to do the basic DIY
- Advice for people who are renting
- **Climate Friendly Homes scheme** - Trained volunteers carry out home energy surveys which are processed by a home energy professional. This provides a report for the householder with prioritised, suggested improvements and a list of suppliers & installers. At a follow-up visit the volunteer answers any householder questions and helps them plan further improvements. Between the 2 visits, CCF can also lend an electricity energy monitor, which can really help awareness and so reduce electricity bills.
- * “House doctor”, DIY service and Light Bulb Library are currently available to anyone who does a group and will also be available to anyone who has a survey done.
- * An infrared camera can be used to take photos to spot where heat may be leaking from your house.
- * **Open Eco Homes** will be running this year - all sorts of retro-fitted energy efficient homes to visit.
- * Links with Cambridge Regional College which runs “Eco-Refurbishment for Householders” courses

Other activities:

Sustainable “Come Dine with Me” - ‘our very own sustainable food version of the Channel 4’s series’ - people take turns to host a “sustainable dinner party” for each other. This is your chance to show off your culinary skills, enjoy three or four nights of dining out, and meet new, local people!

Carbon Conversations - sign up now for April!

‘If you are interested in our work we urge you to take part in one. They are very stimulating, engaging and enjoyable, whether you know a lot or a little about climate change and the need to reduce our personal carbon emissions. If you have any ideas for places we could run groups, or want to know if there is a group near you, let us know.!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Cambridge Carbon Footprint
Citylife Social Enterprise Centre
182-190 Newmarket Road
Cambridge CB5 8HE
Tel: 01223 971353
info@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org
Website: www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org

ENERGY/MONEY SAVING TIPS

Lots of small savings can add up - just like not over filling your kettle to make a cup of tea. If you boil more water than you need several times a day, think of the yearly waste!

Remember to unplug your mobile phone charger once it's charged. 95% of energy used by mobile phone chargers is 'wasted energy' - plugged in, but not in use!

For more energy saving tips see

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Easy-ways-to-stop-wasting-energy>

If you have some good energy saving tips please send them to Abbey Action.

Abbey Recycling Champions

People interested in encouraging others to recycle more and reduce what they throw away recently met at East Barnwell Community Centre. The first meeting of Abbey “recycling champions” looked at opportunities to increase recycling, and reduce waste via education and events. Creative uses of “waste” food and materials can also help you save on your financial outgoings.

Co-ordinated by the City Council, the recycling champions scheme provides information about recycling to members of the community who are interested in championing this cause and has provided them with opportunities to help out at other events. A group has just started at Arbury Community Centre and is planning some new events and there is now an opportunity for people in Abbey to get together to plan events in this area.

A number of fun and informative events are in the pipeline, including a recycled musical instruments workshop (made out of waste materials). This will in collaboration with some talented musicians from the Wintercomfort project.

No previous experience or knowledge is required to be a recycling champion, just a passion for reducing the amount of rubbish that we throw away and a little time to learn more and talk to others about it.

For more information about becoming a recycling champion please contact

Mark Buckton, Recycling Champions Co-ordinator, Cambridge City Council

Tel: 01223 457673 email mark.buckton@cambridge.gov.uk

CHILDREN TAKE THE HELM

Children are taking the helm of a new play boat on the River Cam.

The boat is run by Cambridge City Council, having gained funding from a Big Lottery grant. It will give children opportunities for urban adventure play, which is all about taking risks in a safe and supervised environment.

The custom designed 57ft long, 10ft wide wide beam narrowboat was "launched" onto the river on Saturday 5th February with a special trip for the Vikings, the group of children who have been involved in the project from the beginning. Young people from the Abbey ward have been closely involved with decisions about the layout and design and have had training to be part of the junior crew, assisting with steering the boat.

This boat will be part of a new summer programme of activities used by the specially trained and qualified team in the council's **children and young people's** participation scheme (ChYpPS). It will bring more awareness to young people about our river which is the centrepiece of what makes Cambridge the unique place.

Activities for children in the Abbey ward

Find out more about activities run by the City Council's ChYpPS team; call 01223 457873 or email chypps@cambridge.gov.uk. You can also visit the website www.cambridge.gov.uk/chypps.



Abbey "Nature Reserve"

One of the coldest Decembers in living memory created hardships for many people - frozen pipes, slippery roads and pavements, falls and broken bones and high fuel bills! Wildlife can also suffer in very cold spells, especially small birds that can lose much of their body weight overnight trying to keep warm. It is good to see that many birds have survived with lots of sightings around the Abbey area in recent weeks.

Some birds manage to store food in the autumn to act as a reserve. For example, in autumn, **Jays** were seen collecting acorns from the oak trees on the corner of Newmarket Road and Ditton Lane. They were making repeated flights across the busy roads to bury the acorns in the cemetery and gardens in the Peverel Road area. If you find a young oak tree growing in your garden this spring that's the reason! It is normal to see various migrant birds from Scandinavia, Russia and

parts of mainland Europe over the winter and early spring - having moved from even colder areas where food is scarce. **Redwings, Fieldfares, Blackcaps** (from Germany) are often seen in the Abbey area - in gardens or in the hedgerows around Coldhams Common and Stourbridge Common. The hawthorn hedgerows laden with berries were a great food source. Very colourful **Waxwings** were seen in various parts of Cambridge and you may have had them in your garden if there is a shrub with ripe berries (e.g. cotoneasters).



Waxwing Photo kindly supplied by wildlife photographer Evan Bowen-Jones



Birdwatching from the riffle butts, Coldhams Common

Other sightings:

There was also a report of a **Water Rail**, a secretive, brown waterside bird similar to a moorhen, along Coldhams Brook. There have also been several sightings of a **Peregrine** falcon on the chimney of the Cambridge Museum of Technology. They are sighted occasionally in Cambridge, especially on other tall buildings such as Addenbrookes Hospital and the spire of the Catholic Church on Hills Road.

There were several reports of a **Little Egret** during January and February especially around Coldhams Common, Barnwell Road and the path behind Sainsburys! This striking pure white heron was using Coldhams Brook to search for small fish to eat. In fact one day after getting a report from a local resident, Keith Jordan, Project worker for Abbey Action, saw one as he was cycling along Barnwell Road one evening. "I spotted the egret in the wide part of the brook just where it emerges from underground below Barnwell Road - only 20 feet from the busy rush hour traffic! It was fishing for small Sticklebacks. This is also where I've seen a **Kingfisher** looking for food, despite the traffic!" Volunteers from the City Greenways Project had cleared this stretch of the brook last year to maintain the open water.

More about: Little Egret

A fish-eating bird, member of the heron and bittern family. Has attractive white plumes on the crest, back and chest, black legs and bill and yellow feet. They usually live around the edges of water habitats, hunting in areas of shallow water, walking through water and snapping at prey, or by running and agitating the water with their feet to disturb prey. Like herons, they roost up in trees.

They are an increasingly common sight in inland areas too and are gradually increasing their range northwards. They are resident all year round in the UK but other birds arrive from the Continent in autumn and winter.

Conservation success story!

The Little Egret was probably common in Great Britain centuries ago. They featured in the banquets of the gentry including King Henry VI in 1429 - they may have been on menus of Cambridge colleges and Barnwell Priory and during feasts at the Stourbridge Fair! They had disappeared by the mid 16th century. Over-hunting in mediaeval times certainly helped and the demand for feathers for decorating hats! Little Egrets only survived in southern Europe by the 1950s but conservation laws protecting the species were introduced. They re-appeared in the UK in significant numbers in 1989, breeding in Dorset in 1996. The population increased rapidly with over 750 pairs breeding in 2008, and now you can spot one in the Abbey area of Cambridge! This depends on having a good habitat - clear water with a healthy fish population. Clearing back overgrown trees and shrubs along parts of Coldhams Brook can also help reduce shade and allow more light to get in to improve the habitat for aquatic plants and animals.

See some photos and find more information:
www.bbc.co.uk/nature/taxa/Little_Egret
www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birdguide/name//littleegret/index.aspx