

A very merry Christmas to all of our friends and supporters. Have a great time and may your feet stay dry!

We are delighted to say that a very large grant from Anglian Water has arrived. This is being spent on the GreenBlue Rainwater Gardens, the large storage pond at Alconbury Weston and the Deep Roots project at Great Gidding.

Volunteering and maintenance. Many thanks to volunteers who did bank clearance along Hamerton Road. Also to those who cleared away the trees which were previously removed from the brook at Polecat Lane.

EA flood alleviation scheme: Progress is being made. The latest stage summarised by the EA last week: *'From an initial review of the updated baseline model outputs, we believe that there is value in testing the full set of proposals through the options modelling. We will be progressing with this work in the new year'.*

Alconbury Weston Pond: The Archaeology process is now well underway. The archaeologists have produced their plan which is being approved by the planning department. Once approved and weather permitting deep scrapes will be made over several areas of the field to check for any artefacts and then at last the pond can be constructed.

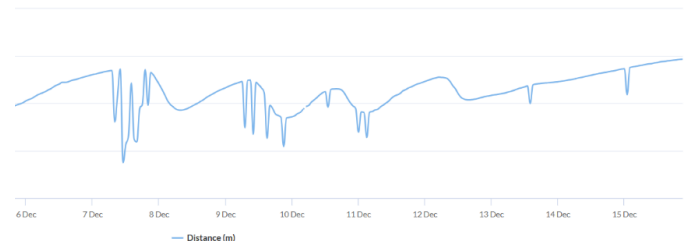
GreenBlue: We have made considerable progress with the HydroPlanter project for the Memorial Hall. The Memorial Hall site has been surveyed and the necessary material, equipment and excavation services have been ordered. Final plans have been agreed with the Memorial Hall Committee. Currently we are negotiating dates for the delivery of the material and, when agreed, we will be able to set a date for the installation, which will be early in 2024. Meanwhile, we have started planning for the second HydroPlanter site, which will be at the Sports and Social Club. Again, all participants are fully engaged and funding has been agreed. Weather permitting, we hope that both sites will have been completed and paid for before March 2024.

Defra funding for NFM: We will hear if our bid for funding for 9 more ponds (**P4P, Ponds For People**) has been successful in January.

Sensors: The new depth sensors are working very well. We are making daily measurements to see how the brook flow speed relates to water depth.

Thanks to the community foundation we have funding for many more sensors. These will be installed soon. Our plan is then to hold a meeting for those interested in helping to decide what and how to present the information to members of the community. We will hold a similar meeting for the farming community to get their ideas on how to present information more relevant to agriculture.

Interested in how we present the data? Contact: info@alconburyfloodgroup.uk



Sediment origins project. Sediment is a problem in the Alconbury Brook. Many people will have noticed islands of sediment that reduce the width of the channel. Sediment also carries pollution and sometimes represents a major loss of good farmland. With funding from the EA and guidance from Dr Simon Pulley from Rothampstead Research, Flood Group volunteers are collecting sediment and soil samples from across the catchment. We hope that in the long term this project may help to reduce the sediment and pollution load in the brook. **If you sometimes walk around the countryside beyond Hamerton and would be willing to collect some small soil samples please contact: : info@alconburyfloodgroup.uk**

Rainwater harvesting for fire engines. This is not our idea but we think it's a good one. Many farms have started to collect rainwater from barn roofs. The more rainwater storage the better from a flood point of view. It would be even better if fire engines could connect to farm rainwater storage tanks in an area where wildfires are more frequent and rural water hydrants are uncommon.

Deep Roots Project. The experiment continues. We have completed our analysis of the first field and have a map of how porous the soil is. More or less larger numbers of worms coincides with more porous soils but we don't know if the worms make the soil porous or if the worms just like soil with more space. Another part of the project involves looking at how some bacteria work with plants to increase root size. We have carried out our first soil DNA extractions to see which types of fungi and bacteria are there at the moment. We plan to supplement some plots with useful bacteria.

Youtube video. The County Council have recently produced and published a video about the Alconbury Brook Flood Group. It tells you a little about us and has some excellent drone segments with views of Alconbury. You can see for yourself at: <https://youtu.be/UfulW-7-dCk?si=LoClbPdO9PCWZejL>

As always contact us at: info@alconburyfloodgroup.uk

Charity: A less than subtle reminder that We have a Just Giving Page: [The Alconbury Brook Flood Group - JustGiving](#).

