

On 12 June Stephen Tomkins and I attended one of the regular meetings of CamEO, the Cam Ely-Ouse Catchment Partnership. Stephen has succeeded Jean Perraton as chair of the Cam Valley Forum.

There was a discussion of invasive plants. We were told that the Environment Agency is intending to follow up on a meeting we had with him some months ago at which we urged that there be coordination among organisations concerned with controlling floating pennywort – the lower Cam was so clogged with this last summer that it had to be closed. The Cam Valley Forum has been largely successful in controlling it on the upper Cam, helped with a grant from Cambridge Water and this winter's very cold weather. CamEO is intending to organise a catchment-wide effort on Himalayan Balsam on 20-22 July, when there will be an effort by the local Wildlife Trust on the Bourn Brook, where there is to be a trial release of rust fungus intended to limit its vigour.

We were told that Anglian Water had organised a Water Summit in May, at which over 120 experts and thought leaders from business, agriculture, regulation, academia, government, the public sector and civil society come together to explore innovative ways to address the challenges of catchment management. The Summit was convened at the direct request of The Prince of Wales and was supported by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.

There was mention at the CamEO meeting of the Water Sensitive Farming initiative, which has been working in the Broadland and the Cam and Ely Ouse catchments to provide soil and water advice which will benefit farmers and the environment. Efforts are being made to get businesses to fund its continuation.

We learnt of DeFRA's intention to give catchment partnerships some responsibility for water abstraction licensing. CamEO is one of four catchment partnerships that will work out what should be done and how.

We were told that we can expect a decision in August on applications for DeFRA's Water Environment Grant funding. Three applications have gone in from the Cam, one from the City Council to improve fish passage on the Cam, one from the local Wildlife Trust to prevent pollution on the Bourn Brook, and one from Cambridge Past Present & Future to improve habitat along the Bin Brook and help control its flooding. There is likely to be a further application round next year; if you have any possible proposal please let me know, as we keep a list of possible projects in case money becomes available. There are also opportunities for small amounts of funding from the Anglian Water Flourishing Environment Fund and the Cambridge Water Pebble Fund

Our attention was drawn to the Ely Aquafest on 1 July.

Barrie Bendall (Rivers Trust), who chairs CamEO jointly with Martin Bowes, said that CamEO has been given a further funding of £15k from DeFRA for the year ahead. This is independent of the servicing contribution from Anglian Water, which pays for Martin's contribution to CamEO.

At these CamEO meetings we hear reports from each sub-catchment. I said:

- The Cambridge Academy for Science and Technology (formerly the University Technical College) intends for a fourth year to expose a group of year-12 students to a project on water. This year they took samples from Hobson's Brook and

analysed them in their lab; next year they are likely to taget the Cherry Hinton Brook. The two water companies give hands-on help.

- Cambridge City Council has now appointed an artist-in-residence to scope out a project related to art and history for the Cam.
- Stephen and I have recently met with Anglian Water to discuss doing a natural capital assessment of the Cam Sub-catchment. We agreed that we would explore the considerable amount of local expertise there is in this. This is partly in order to give more focus on natural capital in the next stage of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough independent Economic Assessment being promoted by Cambridge Ahead.