

Hemingford Abbots -River Warden's Report for the year ended 17th May 2022

To the Annual Parish Meeting 18th May 2022

RIVER GREAT OUSE – Hemingford Abbots

- The problem of penny wort appears to have been overcome thanks to the persistent efforts of Environment Agency ('EA')
- The protective railings over the lock bridge at Houghton Lock have been replaced and all surrounding fencing has been repaired or replaced
- The use of the River for recreational purposes continues to increase particularly by Canoeists, Paddle Boarders and Swimmers
- River users should be aware of the advice recently received from EA in the following terms:

current regulations for rivers and open waters in England protect wildlife and are not designed for the protection of human health – with bacteria found in pollution from sewage and animal slurry posing the two biggest risks.

I recommend HAPC put notices effect at the Black Bridge and the start of Footpaths leading to the River at Chapmans and the Regatta field

- Generally speaking reed growth mid river has been less than in previous years to date but there has been more around banks
- The frontage (and fallen trees) around Battocks Island are not maintained and properly dealt with. Thanks to the efforts of the Jubilee Pageant co-ordinator EA have carried out some clearance but quite rightly maintain it is the responsibility of the owner of Battocks Island who has been reluctant to respond
- Fishing posts (and some stages) have been put up on the main River and Backwater

GENERAL

I would like to record gratitude to the farmers and riparian rights owners who look after the land surrounding our river and also to those who allow wider access than the footpath itself. Lack of control of dogs by owners is poor recompense which is why I continue to believe notices should be provided by HAPC. I repeat my suggestion of warning notices to swimmers of sudden depth changes and the danger of Weils disease (see comments above)

**Iain Muspratt
River Warden
Hemingford Abbots Parish Council
17 May 2022**