

Chair: Stephen Tomkins Editor: David Brooks

Please email davidbrooks@btinternet.com with any items for him to consider for the next newsletter or to request that your address be taken off (or added to) the emailing list. Do forward this newsletter to anyone interested.



Following the publication of its **Manifesto**, the CVF has stepped up its efforts to enhance the health of the River Cam and to work for the very survival of its tributaries. Newly-appointed Hon. Sec. Dr. Alan Woods (photo on left) has led the preparation of a major document, **Let it Flow!**,

designed to inform the work of **Water Resources East (WRE)**.

WRE was formed in 2014 by Anglian Water in order to learn from international best practice on how to improve water resource management planning. WRE is now one of the five regional planning groups charged with preparing Regional Water Resources Development plans. The CVF document is our initial contribution to this collaborative effort.

Let it Flow! is available on the CVF website at <https://camvalleyforum.uk/publication-let-it-flow/>. The full Report can be downloaded [here](#) and the four-page summary with the 12 recommendations [here](#). Our overall aim is to end over-abstraction of groundwater and restore naturally healthy Chalk streams.

Though the Report is only an early step in an arduous journey, initial positive reactions have come from Water Resources East and other key organisations, including the Environment Agency (EA), Cambridge Water, Cambridge Conservation Forum, Natural England, the Rivers Trust, the Wildlife Trust, the Thetford River Group, and South Cambridgeshire District Council. A useful meeting has been held with the consultants working on an integrated water study for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The Report will also be part of the CVF contribution to the next draft EA River Basin Management Plan.

Goodness knows how many **watermills** have been constructed in the Cam Valley. The 1086 Domesday Book mentioned 8 in the village of Meldreth alone, including **Topcliffe Mill** (photo below, taken in the 1930s) which must be one of many hundreds in the whole Cam basin. (With what cumulative disturbance to hydrology and ecology, incidentally?)

Owned by St. Thomas's Hospital, London, from 1553-1948 it ceased operating in 1942 though most of the machinery is still intact. During its working life its wheels had been undershot and overshot at different times. An EA gauging station is located just upstream.



Since 1942 the residential mill buildings have been extensively renovated and extended. The mill's history is being actively researched, and detailed information can be found on the Meldreth local history website at <http://www.meldrethhistory.org.uk/>

'RIVER FRIEND' is a series of 'riverine/riparian' booklets by two CVF members, **Dr. Sylvia M Haslam**, a distinguished Cambridge University botanist, and **Tina Bone** the professional artist and publisher. Already available are 'A PROLOGUE TO THE SERIES'; a highly topical 'BOOK 1, DRYING UP' with some specific references to the Cambridge area; and 'BOOK 2, STREAM STORY' about the River Brue in Somerset. The next book on plants is expected shortly and details can be found at <http://riverfriend.tinasfineart.uk/>