

Urban&Civic is the Ministry of Defence's development manager for the Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield site; one of the largest brownfield sites in the country.

If you would like to meet the team, discuss any ideas or issues about the development, have a tour of the site or look at the community facilities, then please contact:

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Waterbeach Barracks Newsletter

Autumn 2019

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Printed on Carbon Captured paper

Urban&Civic

Outdoor movie in a spectacular setting



Cinema event organiser's Star and Mouse brought a magical evening to Summer at the Beach, with an outdoor showing of 2019 movie of the year, Green Book.

There was a fantastic atmosphere as everyone enjoyed the great selection of street food, drinks, garden games and live music in the lead up to the movie.

Hello

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As we move forward to Key Phase One of the development of the Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield site, we're excited to share our next steps with neighbours, stakeholders and local communities. This new neighbourhood will create an arc of development connecting Waterbeach Village and the Barracks area with Cambridge Research Park and set the tone and level of ambition for future development across the whole of the masterplan.

Key Phase One, which will open up the unique setting of the lake and reinstate the historic causeway up to Denny Abbey, will deliver the first primary school and community infrastructure, together with new homes and exciting public open spaces that will enjoy the existing water bodies and woodland blocks. Site preparations will include over a million pounds worth of demolition and remediation works and establish an entrance from the A10 at the Research Park roundabout to minimise impact on the village.

This newsletter includes an update on the drop in sessions held in October to talk about the next steps in planning. If you missed those you can view the material shared and have your say online until 15 November. The plans will be submitted to the District Council before Christmas, when formal consultation will begin.

In this edition, we also include an update of early works on site, which include woodland management and landscape work to support the setting and habitats of the first phase, and the archaeological investigations which will take place before we can start development.

We include a few highlights of activities, facilities and events that have happened on site recently and an update on the Museum, and also from our neighbours at Denny Abbey and the Farmland Museum and Wicken Fen.

We hope you enjoy this update and welcome feedback on what you would like us to focus on in future editions.

With best wishes



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Section 106 Agreement takes Waterbeach Barracks vision into delivery.

“ We have a rare and unique opportunity with this new town to create a community that is not focussed around the car and where energy efficient homes and businesses and a healthy and environmentally rich landscape will allow people to thrive in the heart of South Cambridgeshire.

”

Cllr Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning for South Cambridgeshire District Council

The Section 106 Agreement was signed for Waterbeach Barracks in September, confirming the legal framework for the development to move into delivery. This includes £141million worth of new services, facilities and transport upgrades that will come forward as part of the development of 6,500 homes on the former Barracks and Airfield at Waterbeach.

Back in May, South Cambridgeshire District Council’s Planning Committee gave the green light to Urban&Civic’s outline plans to develop the former Waterbeach Barracks site, subject to the finalisation of the Agreement - which sets out developer’s funding towards community services and facilities.

The Agreement will see many upgrades and community facilities come forward at different stages of the development, including:

- At least 30% affordable housing, with a viability assessment to be carried out to see whether this can rise to 40%.
- Three primary schools, a secondary school and a special educational needs school.
- A health centre.
- Open spaces with outdoor pitches – to include sports areas, children’s play space, allotments, community orchards and three sports pavilions.
- A new leisure centre, including a swimming pool.
- Three community centres and a community hub with a library.
- A Community Development Worker and Community Fund to safeguard and enhance the wellbeing of residents and support integration with local communities.

A total of almost £16 million worth of transport upgrades in and around the village of Waterbeach have been agreed as part of the Section 106 process. Amongst these are:

- Improvements to the A10, including at the junction of Humphries Way and Landbeach Road, widening works around Butt Lane and widening of the A10 towards Ely at the Stretham roundabout.
- New pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Improvements to the existing A10 shared cycleway and footpath.
- A bridge across the A10 for pedestrians and cycles near the junction of Denny End Road to link to a new cycle route along Mere Way connecting with Cambridge.

- Traffic management measures in Waterbeach, Landbeach, Cottenham, Horningsea and Milton.
- Cycling improvements through Milton.
- Improvements to local bus services and stops.

Tim Leathes, Development Director for Urban&Civic, which is managing the development on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, said:

“Now we can really get started, many thanks to members and officers in South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridgeshire County Councils. We understand what is expected of us. Waterbeach is the best brownfield site in the country and we shall be going about transformation in the Urban&Civic way: based on continued community involvement and the routing of construction traffic away from new and existing housing. The Royal Engineers have left us a legacy of thousands of trees and a unique 20 acre lake. The fundamental foundations of the site and our robust plans provide an opportunity to push the boundaries of sustainable living for the 21st Century.

“The next stage of planning and design will see us turn those commitments into tangible and exemplar delivery, which will start this year with a tree planting programme which will see thousands more planted over the 20 years of development. Early actions will also include a purpose built cycle connection to the Science Park, reinstating the historic Causeway up to Denny Abbey and providing permanent accommodation for the Waterbeach Toddler Playgroup. We are aiming for the first new homes to be occupied by Christmas 2021.”

James Ryley, Principal Estate Surveyor at The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), said:

“This is a significant milestone. We are pleased that this project has moved another step forward. We are looking forward to working with our partners on creating this housing development as well as providing accompanying facilities for the community to use and enjoy.”

First phase of development: Have your say



Concept drawing showing the arc of development within the first phase

Nearly 100 people came along to Urban&Civic's drop in sessions on 16 and 19 October in the Community Rooms. The sessions were to update the local community on the next stage of planning, following on from the planning consent for the Outline Application for 6,500 homes, and the schools, facilities and transport infrastructure to support them.

As part of that next stage, Urban&Civic has been preparing for the next stage of planning with an application to support the delivery of the first phase of development. This includes:

- 1,600 homes
- First Primary School
- A transport hub, including park and ride bus services, a connecting shuttle bus and community service to the rail station and local villages
- Key cycle infrastructure including off site connections such as Mere Way and an A10 cycle lane
- Delivery of the central spine Causeway route through the site for pedestrians and cyclists, connecting the village, through the Barracks to the lake, and up towards Denny Abbey
- Initial health provision and library services
- Community space and facilities, a community worker and fund to support the new community and its integration with its neighbours.
- 25 play areas, sports facilities and fitness trails
- Significant green space including doubling the amount of woodland and delivering 11 acres of grassland, and the first ecology corridors for the development.

The Displays set out the core aspects of the Phase 1 application, with the Design Team on hand to talk through the plans and take comments back to inform the evolving plans. The team also shared plans for the construction access from the A10 and the construction management regime which will be put in place to minimise local impacts.

A critical document within the Phase 1 application is the Design Code which sets a high standard for design coming forward, from landscaping and access routes, and covering all buildings and facilities. This aims to keep the standard of design high from the first tree to the last brick, and will be used by the team and planners at the Local Authority to ensure the vision of the place is maintained throughout its 15-20 year delivery.

Caroline Foster, Senior Development Manager for the project, said:

"We are grateful for people's time and inputs as we develop the first phase for this exciting development. It is a critical time to ensure we translate the ambitious vision we have for this unique place, which local communities and partners have helped to shape, into high quality delivery. And that we do that in a way that brings real benefits locally and delivers on our promise to minimise the local impacts. We hope to submit the full plans before Christmas, and they will then be formally consulted on by the Local Authority".

You can still review the information, and have your say online, by going to www.waterbeachbarracks.co.uk and following the Have your Say link.

Early works:

Woodland management begins work on start

“ We will be planting 11,000 trees in the first phase to make the woodland more diverse, resilient and nature-friendly and have worked with the Forestry Commission, Wildlife Trust and local authorities to define a range of local and priority trees to include in planting schedules. ”

One of the defining aspects of the Barracks and Airfield is the amount of woodland – a unique part of the Royal Engineers legacy. Among the first works undertaken on site, will be ensuring a comprehensive programme of woodland management is put in place.

Urban&Civic have been working with the Forestry Commission to agree a programme of works which restores areas of plantation woodland into healthier areas for both nature and people. Early works will focus on 3 areas which include:

- Removing trees which are in poor health, which includes a number of the dense plantation conifers and Ash trees suffering from “Ash Dieback”.
- Opening up some of the denser areas of woodland to create woodland glades - this not



Urban&Civic have used the largest tree spade in Europe to translocate trees within the development at Alconbury Weald

- only provides healthier woodland with more light reaching the area below the trees, but creates areas for safe cycle and walking routes and for woodland play.
- Moving a small number of trees which will not thrive due to proximity to roads going in at the main entrance from the A10, but can be moved to create mature woodland setting in other locations.



The work will make the single species plantation areas of military woodland more resilient and diverse. Crucially it will also enable the addition of tree species which provide more variety of height and density within the tree canopy and support local wildlife: creating the habitats which will achieve a net gain in biodiversity across the development as it moves forward.

Alongside the woodland management, the first phase infrastructure going in includes some key waterways, including small lakes and swales to carry up to 68,000 cubic metres and connected by over 1 km of ditches. This will support the management of the wider water systems, improve the health of the woodland and grassland, and provide an attractive setting to the gateway to the development.

Early works included in this landscaping will also include reprofiling some of the bund of trees and hedges along the A10, which will be heightened in places to create and enhance an ecological corridor along the Car Dyke corridor, and create an inspiring woodland and natural setting for the new Primary School coming forward. The new planting and a fence along some aspects of the bund will provide a buffer between the development and the A10 and provide connections for nature which run along the species rich grassland and established woodland and hedges.

Caroline Foster, Senior Development Manager for the project said:

“A lot of the early landscaping will happen from November through to May, and will at times look muddy, while we create the waterways and put in place some of our utility connections and the construction routes and new entrances. We will need to remove and move around some hedges and trees to achieve the overall improvements to this important corridor.

Come the Spring and early summer we will ensure we have an inspiring gateway to the development which sets the tone for our commitment to creating a really stunning woodland setting to the first phase of development and the primary school.”

We will be updating the website regularly with images and facts on the species as the work progresses:
www.waterbeachbarracks.co.uk

New trees being introduced to the site include



Hazel
Corylus avellana

In managed woodland hazel is coppiced. The hazel nuts produced in late Summer and can be seen in winter. Small, green catkins can also be present in autumn.



Bird Cherry Tree
Prunus Padus

The spring flowers provide an early source of nectar and pollen for bees. The cherries are eaten by birds, including the blackbird and song thrush, as well as mammals such as badgers.



Field Maple
Acer campestre

The UK’s only native maple is widely planted in gardens and parks due to its tolerance of pollution and rich autumn colours.

Sustainability

Sustainability is a key part of the vision set by the Outline Application and this will be reflected in the delivery of Key Phase One.

New developments provide a unique opportunity to bake in fundamental sustainable foundations and the team has been working hard with leading experts in best practice development, and in collaboration with a strong drive from South Cambridgeshire District Council, to create an exemplar place that is resilient to climate changes and plays its part in reducing the impact we all make on the environment around us.

Water management plans have been developed with input from the Environment Agency, the Internal Drainage Board and others to ensure water is managed effectively, and supports the wider water cycle area. On a domestic level water efficiency measures will run

through all homes and buildings supported by cultural education on water and energy efficiency.

Building materials alongside the setting, layout and direction of all built form aims to minimise energy use, maximising natural light and heat, to cut energy use. Landscape and tree canopy will be used to provide areas of cooling and shade. Hardstanding from runways and taxiways onsite will be recycled and reused in foundations which will see a huge reduction in landfill, as well as in aggregate needing to be brought to the site. At Alconbury Weald Urban & Civic are recycling 98% of all hardstanding and using it on site.

The target set through planning for 10% renewable energy

provision is one we intend to smash: with a range of solar and other renewable sources being planned from the start of development. Now that planning is confirmed the details and contractual arrangements for those can be finalised and further details will be shared in the coming weeks.

Economic sustainability is also a priority for the team, and a lot of work is going into developing a jobs and skills strategy that will support local people into employment on site across construction, design, and landscaping as well as retail and services coming forward. Alongside that, Meet the Buyer events will enable local companies to be involved from day one, ensuring investment stays as local as possible and supporting local businesses to grow with the development.

The location of Waterbeach – with existing rail connection to Cambridge and potential for additional investment in public transport and cycle infrastructure

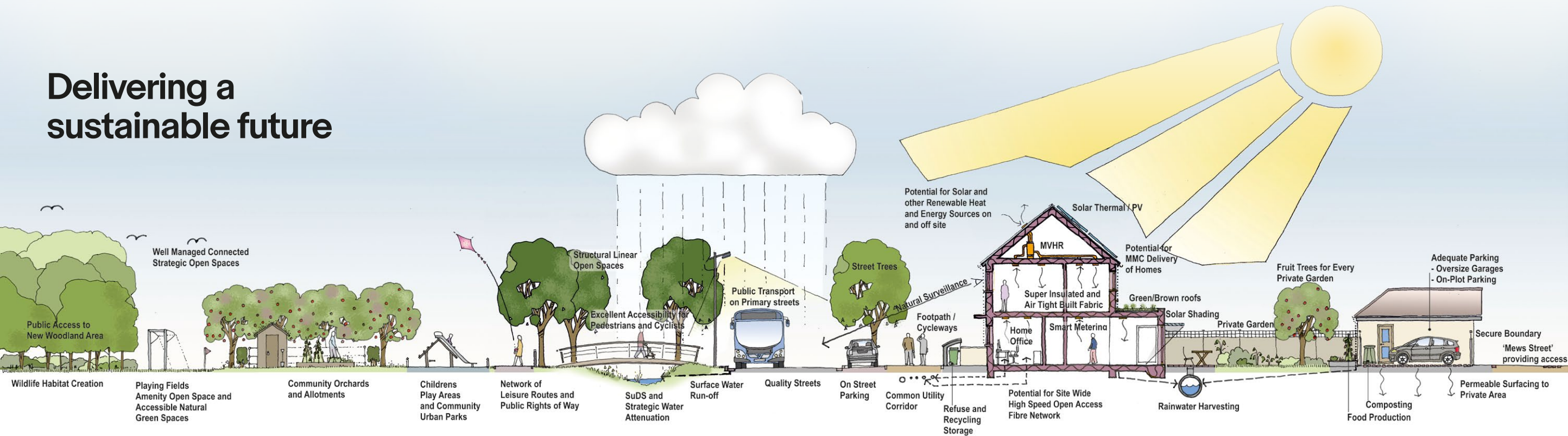
– has always been a fundamental part of its potential as an exemplar sustainable community. The transport strategy commits us to not just putting in place the infrastructure required to make viable low carbon travel choices, but also to create a culture of cycling and walking first, which will be measured in regular surveys. Planning legally binds us to delivering a modal shift to get people out of cars and into buses and onto bikes, and this is a challenge and an opportunity the team relish and will be working with main employment centres to achieve.

Crucially it is the landscape and environment that offers huge gain to the local area. From day one of thinking about the development, the strong legacy of the Royal Engineers in terms of woodland planted, grassland managed and the vast lake have defined the framework of development. And not just on site, but the opportunity to use the development to connect green corridors across the local area, through the delivery of a mosaic

of connected habitats that work with landscape scale habitats, such as the Wicken Fen and the Cam Washes.

The Biodiversity Strategy and the Green Infrastructure Strategy for the development go hand in hand in supporting the habitats and spaces, and priority species for the local area, with careful planning and ongoing auditing with the Wildlife Trust to ensure the development delivers a net gain in biodiversity (that is better habitats for nature after development than were there before). Extensive measures are planned in both the natural landscape and within the built form – such as hedgehog highways, swift bricks and nature friendly garden guides – to ensure all parts of the development play their part. This interconnectivity also provides safe green corridors for both nature and people to move about. For example “bee lines” provide routes throughout the site for pollinators such as bees and butterflies to move around, supporting their numbers, but also helping the new and existing habitats to grow.

Delivering a sustainable future



New Meaning project provides skills for life and homes for the homeless



A former canvas hangar at Waterbeach Barracks will be used to construct six modular units for homeless people in Cambridge, which are due to be available at Christ the Redeemer Church in Barnwell by Christmas.

The units, which will be warranted for a 60 year lifetime, will provide compact, low cost and healthy living spaces with a fitted kitchen, living area, shower room and bedroom.

The construction of the units, which were designed and developed by not-for-profit organisation New Meaning, will also provide training opportunities for ex-homeless adults from the YMCA, which will be supported by the EDGE Construction Skills Centre. This could give them the kick start they need to pursue an exciting new career in construction.

Five of the homes will be rented by ex-homeless people and one offered to another tenant in exchange for some oversight and caretaking responsibilities. The homes will remain in Barnwell for two or three years before being relocated elsewhere in the city.

Rebecca Britton, Head of Communities and Partnerships for Urban&Civic, said: "This is a great project, and one we're pleased to be able to support by providing temporary space on the Barracks to build these units."

“

We have ten homes around the City which we either own or lease. We're helping people who are moving through the journey from sleeping rough to having a sustainable front door. The second stage of this journey is where the modular houses come in ... and this project will help us support a more sustainable option rather than them returning to the street.

”

Henry Brown, the CEO of Jimmy's Night Shelter, which will manage the pilot scheme and provide support to its residents





The Museum will be open from 1-4pm on Remembrance Sunday, 10 November 2019, and will then be closed until March 2020.

Whilst the Museum is closed for the winter, the team plans to reorder the Royal Engineers section, subdividing the displays into the Regiment and its squadrons. Most of the Engineer collection went with 39 Engineer Regiment up to Kinloss in 2012 and, although it is hoped some artefacts will come back from Scotland shortly, the Museum would be very grateful to receive any donations from the Engineer days. New items expected in shortly include a collection of mines (dead) via bomb disposal and a model of a Bailey Bridge – the portable, pre-fabricated truss bridges, designed by the military for speedy temporary installation – so next March should see plenty of changes that will attract interest from new and returning visitors.

The new publication of the Royal Engineers time at Waterbeach 'Sappers at the Beach' is now available from the Museum and Rosemary Newsagents in the village, and would make a great Christmas present!

The museum also has a 'Friends' group, which is £12 a year and includes a unique badge.

The Museum will be launching its new website soon, so watch out for that announcement on Facebook: www.facebook.com/waterbeachmilitaryheritagemuseum/

Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum grows collection

The former Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield played an important role in the lives of the many military personnel that served here, as well as those they sought to defend.

Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum, which is located just inside the Barrack's main entrance off Denny End Road, has a range of fascinating artefacts, memorabilia and photos that commemorate the men and women who served at Waterbeach Station from its opening in 1941 until the closure of the Barracks in 2013.

Several hundred people have already come along to the Museum this season, including visitors from America, Australia, Canada and France. Some interesting conversations have been had about personnel who served at Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield and quite a few were children that once lived in the Village whilst parents were serving at the base. Through these visits, museum volunteers have gained a better insight into the people serving and living in Waterbeach, and how happy they were to be based here.

Visitors continue to bring artefacts and photographs of their time at Waterbeach, adding to the Museum's displays and records. If you have any memorabilia to donate to the Museum, from the days of the Royal Engineers or before - please email waterbeachmilitarymuseum@waterbeach.org or send it to Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum, Waterbeach Barracks, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire CB25 9PA.



New Heritage Group takes shape

As the development moves into delivery, one of the first partnership groups which are part of the planning and delivery structure going forward has held its first meeting.

The Heritage Group will play a key role in supporting Urban&Civic to develop and deliver a Heritage Strategy for the development, and ensure it works with the existing heritage locations and opportunities across the local area. It is chaired by Quinton Carroll, Assistant Director of Environment & Commercial Services, from Cambridgeshire County Council. We spoke to him about the aims of the group.

“The area of the barracks and surrounding the site are rich in heritage and culture, and we are keen to make the most of this to bring interest and opportunity to the development. Promoting heritage and the historic environment brings many benefits: it makes a location more interesting as a place to live and work, and provides places to visit. Getting our residents out and about, whether it will be to the lake, to Denny Abbey or the Car Dyke Canal improves everyone’s quality of life.

“To this end, U&C is working with the County Council and other partners to create a Heritage Stakeholder Board, where all those with an interest in promoting and making the most of our heritage can share ideas and aspirations. Membership includes Denny Abbey/Farmland Museum, the Barracks Museum, Wicken Fen, District and County Councils’ heritage, environment and health teams, our archaeological contractors and the local community, working with ourselves and our agents to develop a strategy that will focus on key themes around the site. This will cover what we already know, such as Denny Abbey, to what exciting discoveries will emerge from the forthcoming archaeological excavations.”

The group is one of a series of groups reporting to an overall Project and Delivery Group chaired by the Local Authorities, which will monitor delivery and ensure the development remains on track and delivers against the shared agreements and milestones set out in the planning framework. We will focus on one of the groups in each edition of this newsletter.

If you would like to find out more please contact Rebecca Britton at Urban&Civic.



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”

Quinton Carroll, Assistant Director – Environment & Commercial Services

Tithe Barn secures National Lottery support



The Tithe Barn Trust is ecstatic that it has secured the final funds needed for the urgent repair works to begin on the unique timber frame Tithe Barn in Landbeach, near Cambridge.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has provided the final piece in the jigsaw, by offering a £98,900 grant towards the project.

Tithe Barns are increasingly rare in the UK and the Landbeach Barn is the only one remaining in Cambridgeshire with so many historic features including an elm timber frame, thatched roof, timber granary and brick threshing floor. The essential funds raised will mean that a skilled team of craftsmen of Thatchers and Carpenters will now set to work carefully restoring and repairing the building which is believed to date from the medieval period.

The Tithe Barn Trust is a small charity committed to saving and sympathetically restoring the Grade II Listed Tithe Barn. Key to the Tithe Barn Trust’s charitable aim is maximising public access to the Tithe Barn and education, to ensure that the Tithe Barn has a vibrant and sustainable future. As part of this, the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant will be used to deliver a programme of activities for the public, including hard hat tours and thatching demonstrations, school visits and trial events such as a farmer’s market and art exhibition.

“

It is incredibly exciting that the restoration works can now start to the Barn. We have been fundraising so that the repairs can begin to save the Barn before it is lost. We have to thank the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Amey Community Fund, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the October Fund and the public for supporting such a worthwhile project.

”

Gemma O’Shea, Volunteer and Chair of Tithe Barn Trust



3 ways you can get involved in the Tithe Barn project;

1. Volunteer: Visit <https://do-it.org/organisations/tithe-barn-trust> or email tithebartrust@gmail.com to find out more.
2. Become a Friend: Visit <http://www.tithebartrust.org.uk/become-a-member/>
3. Visit the Tithe Barn and go along to future events.

Early evaluation indicates Roman settlements

Oxford Archaeology (OA) is one of the largest heritage service providers in the UK and the East office, based at Bar Hill, routinely undertakes archaeological work in advance of development in and around East Anglia, including at other Urban&Civic sites at Alconbury Weald, St Neots, Newark and Corby.

In 2015, OA East excavated 139 trial trenches at Waterbeach Barracks targeting areas where historical aerial photographs, geophysical survey results and previous excavations indicated there may be underlying archaeology. This evaluation identified three main areas of archaeological

remains, all of Roman date, which will be fully excavated ahead of each phase of development.

Waterbeach Barracks lies at the juncture of two important Roman regional transport links, which made it an appealing location for settlement and trade. The western edge of the site is bounded by the Car Dyke (Old Tillage) Roman canal, a waterway that ran from the River Cam just south of Waterbeach to Lincoln via Peterborough, as well as the Roman road known as Akeman Street, which runs north-east from Cambridge to Littleport (today, followed by the modern course of the A10).

A large assemblage of Roman finds, including hypocaust tiles used in building central heating systems, were recovered from Waterbeach Airfield whilst digging a cable trench in the mid-1980s. Also situated within the airfield to the south of Denny Abbey is Soldiers Hill, an earthwork attributed to the Roman period although the exact origin is unclear. The Roman ditches, bounding properties and areas of settlement identified during OA East's evaluation of the site contained a range of artefacts. Most of the pottery was locally produced, and a pottery kiln indicated



“
We will be inviting local people to join our excavation as volunteers on the dig, so look out for notices for how to get involved!
”

Stephen Macaulay,
Deputy Regional Manager for OA East

manufacture on site, but there were some shards of Gaulish Samian Ware (fine tableware produced in France) and Spanish amphora, hinting at the extent of trade networks to this area in the Roman period.

Ahead of the first phase of development at Waterbeach Barracks, OA East will be on site for approximately six months to excavate an area of Roman settlement covering approximately six hectares that lies within Key Phase One of the development. As well as archaeological excavation, OA has expertise in the recording and interpretation of military structures and will be recording all the historic standing buildings at the site prior to their demolition or alteration.

OA is a registered charity focused on heritage and education, and will be engaging current and future Waterbeach residents with what is discovered about their Roman predecessors as well as the more recent military usage of the site through volunteering opportunities, school visits, site open days and community projects.

Stephen Macaulay, Deputy Regional Manager for OA East, is managing the archaeological investigations at Waterbeach Barracks. He has worked in Cambridgeshire for nearly 30 years and first investigated the Car Dyke near Waterbeach in 1994.

Stephen said: “The opportunity to excavate this hitherto unknown Roman settlement at Waterbeach Barracks is fantastic. It might even be the remains of a small town and perhaps a port that was controlling the trade north of Cambridge into the Fens and beyond.”



“
We’re already starting to think about what we’ll bring back next year as well as planning a few surprises.

”
Gideon Pain, local artist and event coordinator



Waterbeach Barracks celebrates Summer at the Beach

This year’s Summer at the Beach proved to be the biggest and best yet, with over 700 people visiting Waterbeach Barracks over the first three weekends in July to celebrate local creative talent, enjoy a range of entertainment and soak up the atmosphere with friends and family. The event is part of Cambridge Open Studios.

Summer at the Beach hosts a range of different events and activities that brings together the local community – with something for all ages and interests.



Over 50 items given a new lease of life at The Repair Café

This year's Summer at the Beach also saw the return of some old favourites, including The Repair Café with a panel of volunteer experts fixing broken objects free of charge. Seven repairers were on duty and managed to give a new lease of life to over 50 items ranging from a hedge trimmer where the cables had been cut to a Sovietera 1960s record player, a cassette Sony Walkman and a TV. There was also a seamstress on hand to restore clothes and haberdashery, sewing on buttons or fixing hems.

Repair Cafés take place every month around the region, with local ones organised by Cambridge Carbon Footprint. Some of the group attending Summer at the Beach, previously participated at a Cambridge repair café event which set a new world record for successfully mending 232 items in one day!



“

The ages of the repairers and the people that come in are pretty broad – it's a community event that brings people together. Even if you don't repair someone's item, if you give them some advice and they feel like they've done their best to keep something going, that's progress. And everybody's incredibly grateful.

”

Paul Bearpark, Repair Café organiser and electronics expert

You can find out more about Repair Cafes at <http://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/events>



Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey



Located at the end of the historic causeway, which is being reinstated to connect it to the village of Waterbeach, the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey provides a fascinating glimpse into life in rural Cambridgeshire.

October was the last month of the 2019 season and was jam-packed with family-friendly events and activities. In half term week there was an autumn-themed family craft activity 'Leafmania', and the season finished with a spooky Rats, Bats and Cats event. There was pumpkin carving, spooky songs, broomstick races, willow wand making and a special visit from the birds of the Raptor Foundation.

The site is a beautiful place to sit and think, draw, write or take some fantastic autumnal photographs. It's also enclosed and safe for toddlers to run around the play area or explore the play shed.

Many families took advantage of the new ticketing system this year, whereby a single admission ticket entitles the holder to repeat entry for 12 months. Any ticket bought in October, will last right through the next season, which starts again in April 2020.

While closed to the public, the site remains available to hire for meetings, events or classes. It has a meeting room equipped with WiFi, projector and screen, and beautiful views across the fields. The rest of the museum can be booked too, for filming or outdoor classes.

If you'd like to see more of what's on offer, please call Sarah on **01223 860 988** or email sarah.michael@farmlandmuseum.org.uk

“
We'd like to thank all the local community who visited us this summer. We had a fantastic summer with great attendance from local families at our weekly activity afternoons, where children made all sorts of wonderful crafts; from their own snakes and ladders boards, through to gargoyles and replica fossils.
”

Sarah Michael from the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey



Once the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey close for the season, staff and volunteers will still be working hard on some big projects! Last winter volunteers re-painted the Farmland Museum mural and refurbished the tearoom, which included building a whole new counter. This year the team will be thinking about the collections space and moving around some of the displays. New volunteers are needed to help out with the many essential jobs that keep the museum open – from cleaning, maintenance and collections work to helping with the education and learning activities.

If you'd like to pop along and see what volunteering at the museum is about, get in touch by emailing info@farmlandmuseum.org.uk or calling **01223 860 988**. They are a very social bunch and provide plenty of tea and biscuits!

Update from Wicken Fen

Wicken Fen, the National Trust's oldest nature reserve and England's most famous fen, is a haven of peace and tranquillity where visitors can enjoy a break from the hustle and bustle of daily life and be at one with nature.

The wildlife changes with the seasons and from October onwards there will be a steady flow of overwintering birds arriving at Wicken Fen. Large flocks of winter thrushes like redwing and fieldfare feed on autumn berries, short-eared owls hunt on Burwell Fen, and hen harriers come in to roost at dusk on the Sedge Fen.

As well as exploring the Fen, you can drop into the Visitor Centre for activities and events being organised.

The Walk for Wicken challenge took place in October to help raise money for the 'Eyes over the Fen' project. This project will provide will provide an elevated hide and higher viewing platform,

giving a great bird's eye view over the historic Sedge Fen. This will give visitors a panoramic vista during times of the year when some of the delicate peat soil paths are rested for conservation reasons.

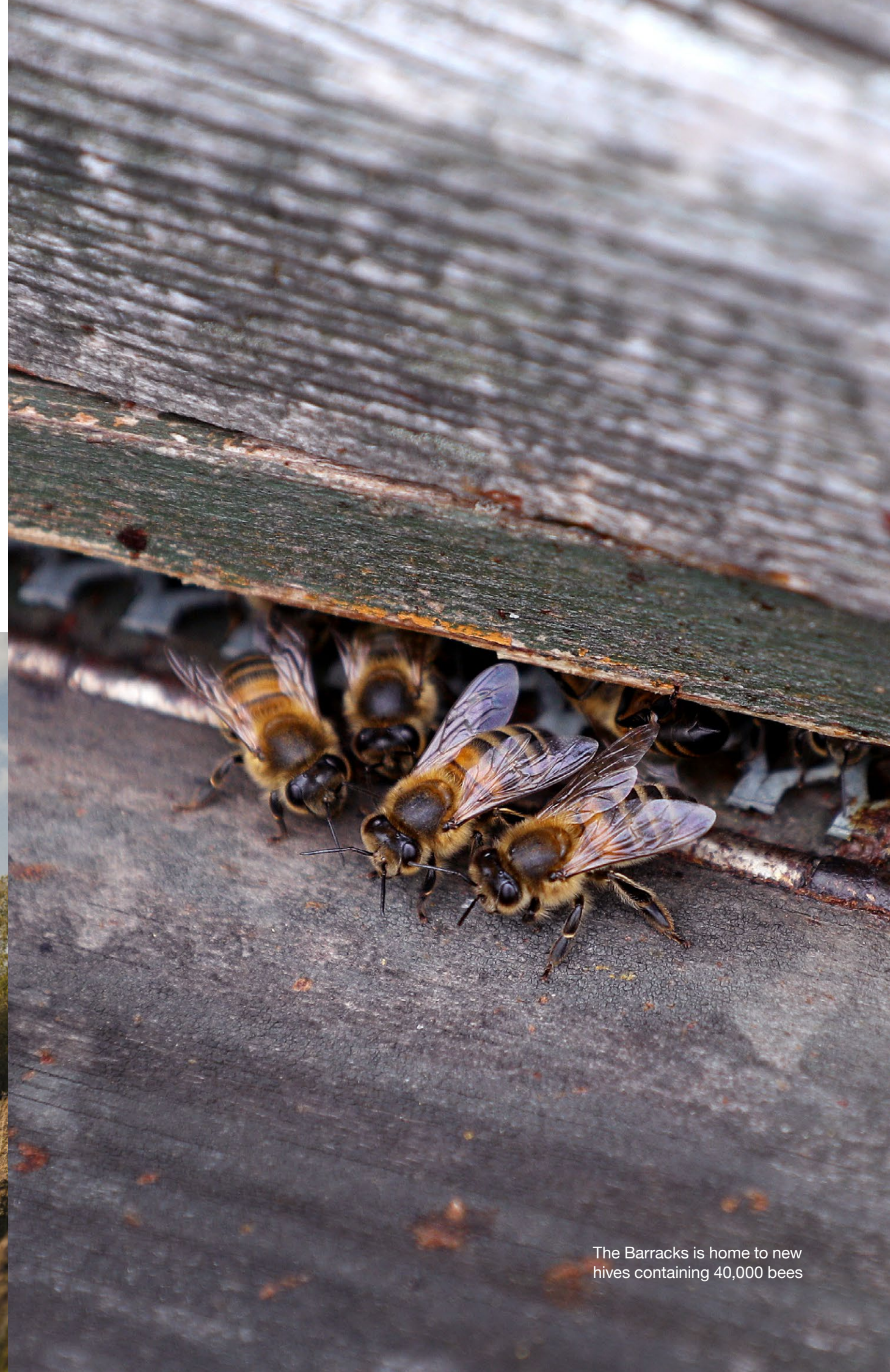
You can also make magical memories with your family by visiting Father Christmas in Fen Cottage at Wicken Fen and enjoying Christmas crafts with the elves. See the website for available dates in December.

Whilst exploring the Fen you can warm up with a hot drink and a range of tempting treats at The Docky Hut Café. In October, the Café's expansion project began and when it reopens in early February 2020, there will be a larger seating area and more space to prepare a wider selection of delicious food and drinks. While the work takes place, you will still be able to enjoy your favourite scones, soup, sandwiches, cakes and drinks from a mobile catering outlet, with seating in the Learning Centre.



For more information, speak to one of the Wicken Fen's friendly team at the Visitor Centre or visit <http://bit.ly/wickenwhatson> to find out more about all the autumn/winter events.

Photo credit: Mike Selby



The Barracks is home to new hives containing 40,000 bees