



Friends of  
Holt Island  
Nature Reserve

*The Friends group is a voluntary organization dedicated to the promotion and protection of Holt Island, Wilhorn Meadow and The Thicket in St Ives for the enjoyment of all.*

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## PRESS RELEASE

# HOLT ISLAND RIVER LITTER PICK GOES WITH A BANG!

The Friends of Holt Island Nature Reserve first River Litter Pick held on Saturday attracted more attention than organizer Ian Jackson had bargained for. 'I hoped that a community effort to clear litter from the Island and the banks through the town would create some publicity but I never dreamt the afternoon would end with an explosion', he said.

Supported by The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership and Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, the Friends group recruited assistance from the local scouts and the St Ives Sub-Aqua Club.

While the Scouts, Friends and supporters combed the banks and collected from the river itself, the divers plumbed the depths under St Ives Bridge. The haul was impressive and included four shopping trolleys, four bicycles, six traffic cones, a floodlight and a microwave. But then, from the water arose an object that looked vaguely sinister. Yep, sure enough it was quickly identified as a First World War mortar bomb. The police were called and the Bomb Squad were soon on their way from Colchester. Litter picking was halted, Hemingford Meadow sealed off and a crowd gathered to watch the countdown. The resulting detonation sent clods of earth hundreds of feet into the air and the boom reverberated round the town. So much for a quiet afternoon's litter picking – but a job well done and a river not only cleaner but also a much safer place for wildlife -- and people!

Ian Jackson, Chairman of the Friends of Holt Island Nature Reserve, wishes to thank everyone who helped to make the day so enjoyable and of benefit to the community. Special thank yous are due to HDC for the loan of their workboat *Reed Rustler* and litter pickers, gloves and bags, and to LH Jones Boatyard, and to all the local supporters and especially the Sub-Aqua group for picking the river bed.

The Friends Group now hopes to make this initiative an annual event. 'I'm not sure if we can recreate the excitement of an explosive finale next year,' Ian said, 'but I know we make the Litter Pick even more effective with more volunteer help, so please watch out for announcements next year'.

Pictures show the Litter Pickers in action, the explosive interlude and the final haul.

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