

Friends of the Flitch Way
Notes from the Committee meeting of Wednesday 29 November 2017

Venue:	Sandra's house, Great Notley
Present:	Chairman, Alan Trigg. Secretary, Sandra Reynolds. Committee members, Val Blamire, Stan Davies, Bob Lucas, Wendy Moss
Apologies:	Margaret James, John Moss, Tom Hamilton

Minutes of previous meeting

Accepted as a true record and signed accordingly by Chairman.

Matters arising and review of Action Points

AP1.3 Done.

AP2.1 Ongoing. Indications are that cost of replacing boardwalk will be in the region of £40,000.

AP2.3 Position unchanged re. information boards and way markers for Garnetts Wood.

AP2.4 Done.

AP2.5 Sandra will keep an eye on progress being made by Land Agents towards declaring Local Nature Reserve.

AP2.10 Successful outcome to listing wood processor on e-bay. Sold for £6,250 and removed from site. Sandra thanked for the effort put in to achieve successful outcome.

AP3.1 & 2 Superseded by sale of machine.

AP3.3 Done. Consider re-siting stall nearer to FWAG stall at 2018 Carnival.

AP3.4 Done. Volunteer flyers printed in time for distribution at Dunmow Carnival.

AP3.5 & 6 Ongoing.

AP3.7 E-Mail sent to Notley High School re carriage volunteering. Response awaited.

AP3.8 Sandra to approach WI with a suggested date of 14 January for the knitted model of Braintree Station to be presented in the carriage.

AP3.9 Done. Bob confirmed that he had attended the September first aid course.

Chairman's report

Nothing specific to report on. Good work done by volunteers on work parties since September. Thanked Sandra for the work she had put in to get the wood processor sold. Pleased with the price obtained which would go towards the new boardwalk costs, together with funding to be obtained from other sources. Effort would be needed in the new year to identify suitable funding sources and make applications.

Treasurer's report

Made by Wendy in Margaret's absence. Current bank balance is £9,656.41 which included monies received from the sale of the wood processor. £800 transferred into the savings/contingency fund which stands at £2,400.12, including interest. Refund of £187.92 received from EDF, energy supplier for the carriage, and monthly direct debit reduced from £75.00 to £62.00. Electricity usage continues to be monitored each week.

Visitors to the carriage continue to make donations although the amount is reducing as expected due to the weather.

On the social side, 2 places were still available for the Christmas lunch at Bocking on 20th

December. It has become the custom for Andrew and Irene Adair to collect for Little Havens Hospice at the Christmas meal. They are unable to attend this year's lunch and the committee agreed with Alan's suggestion that a collection be made in their absence.

Secretary's report

Online statistics. 252 web page visits. 746 views in last week with top pages Blackwater Rail Trail 245, Flitch Way 159 and Flitch Way history 111. Facebook shows 728 'likes', up 51 since the September meeting.

Flitch Way Action Group (FWAG) making good progress under their new chairman with meetings with ECC taking place. Agreement reached on part of the route. Little progress being made on the Buttleys Lane section with land owner's agent and ECC Public Rights of Way.

Some correspondence with Sarah Cocks of Rayne PC had taken place regarding the Brook Green Development, following letter sent to BDC Planning by Andrew Adair on the Friends' behalf.

New AP4.1 BDC Planning Committee would be making a decision on the developer's application at their December meeting and those opposing the application were encouraged to attend. It was agreed that we should ask Andrew Adair to speak on the Friends' behalf at the meeting.

New AP4.2 The Friends have been invited to speak at a meeting in Colchester on 16th January to discuss the North Essex Strategic Plan and it was agreed that Andrew would also speak on our behalf at that event. He is happy to do so but is likely to require a lift to the venue. (Update - we are no longer required to speak at this meeting)

Work party report

Wendy reported that Flitch work parties had taken place at Dunmow Cutting, Great Notley and in the Stane Street Halt/Hatfield Forest area since the previous meeting in September. All the banks at the cutting have been cut back with the exception of the middle one. Good overall attendances have occurred with an average of 13 volunteers per work party, equating to a total of 412 volunteer days.

On Pam's behalf, Wendy said that the carriage has been open on a total of 127 occasions with volunteers covering 230 sessions.

Carriage report

New AP4.3 The roofing contractor is aware of the outstanding work to be done on the roof but that is unlikely to re-start until March/April due to weather conditions.

Stan thanked Brian and Richard for the work they had done in installing a digital running system on the model railway which allowed for sounds from the locomotives. Only one was able to do so at the moment and Bryan is enquiring into the cost of upgrading at least one of the steam locos. The new digital system was a little more complicated than the old but it could be used in conjunction with the existing controls. Bryan had agreed to show volunteers how the digital controls work and in view of the fact that a carriage volunteer's get-together had not taken place recently, it was agreed to make arrangements to do so on Wednesday 10th January at 7pm, there being no time available in the run up to Christmas.

New AP4.4 Wendy will ask Pam to write to the volunteers inviting them to that social meeting.

Footpath (P3) Group report

2 new P3 volunteers have recently joined the group, taking the place of Pat and Ian who had either moved away from the area or were about to.

September work parties had taken place in Stisted, Great Chesterford, Vange and Rochford. In October, the group had worked at Rochford and Bardfield Saling and in November, Bardfield Saling, Great Chesterford, Tolleshunt Knights and Earls Colne. Pete continues to post work party photographs on the Friends Facebook pages and it was good to see the positive comments on the work done by the group.

Ranger's report

As Tom was absent on a tractor course, Sandra reported on his behalf.

With regard to the Travellers site at Felsted, meetings were taking place between ECC Country Parks, Uttlesford District Council, Police and the person in charge of the ECC Travellers unit who claimed not to have been made aware of the ongoing problems. Tom was reasonable optimistic on there being a positive outcome.

New AP4.5 It remained imperative for incidents to be reported to Police and Sandra will put something on the Friends' website to that effect.

Changes at ECC continue to be made with Tim Dixon, in charge of all Essex Country Parks leaving at Christmas. Jenny Duffy, manager of Great Notley and other Parks will also be leaving at that time.

Christmas Event in the Carriage

Scheduled to take place on Sunday 17th December with Santa in attendance from 11am to 3pm.

New AP4.6 Wendy will organize prizes for Santa to give out.

Carriage to be decorated on Wednesday 6th December with Wendy, John, Val and Carol. ,
Volunteers to meet at 9.30 On the day to set up tables etc.....Wendy to contact Scout Hall to arrange access to tables and get permission for volunteers to park in Scout Hall car park on the day.

Alan and Annette will be in charge of the tombola. They have 35 prizes in hand with promises of further prizes to come.

Nail Game and Bookstall will also be on platform. Enquiries to get hold of at least 1 other push-up gazebo to be made.

Any Other Business

Meeting agreed to Friends website showing a link to Long Distance Walkers Association.

New AP4.7 Sandra will add link to LDWA.

Sandra said that Sustrans were looking to organize a cycle event for youngsters in the new year. Sustrans notice board is being replaced and the boards at Bannister Green and Stane Street will also be replaced in a different format and in a more durable material.

New AP4.8 Stan and Sandra to liaise in the new year on the Halt Noticeboards.

New AP4.9 Sandra to organise a walk along the Blackwater Rail Trail in the new year.

Alan said that a more focused approach to grant applications needed be taken before seeking funding for the boardwalk and he proposed doing so early in the new year.

Next meeting

Subject to venue availability will take place at 4pm Wednesday 21st February at Great Notley Discovery Centre.

There being nothing further to discuss, Chairman thanked Sandra for her hospitality and brought the meeting to a close.

Summary of Action Points for next meeting

Brought forward from previous meeting

AP2.1 Ongoing. Indications are that cost of replacing boardwalk will be in the region of £40,000.

AP2.3 Garnetts Wood car park work done and benches installed. Information boards and way marker posts still to be designed and installed.

AP2.5 Sandra will keep an eye on progress by ECC Land Agents towards declaring Local Nature Reserve

AP3.5 Alan to produce a list of potential Boardwalk suppliers in kit form.

AP3.6 Tom to supply the name of the boardwalk company that they use.

AP3.7 E-Mail sent to Notley High School re carriage volunteering from Sandra Response awaited.

AP3.8 Sandra to approach WI with a suggested date of 14 January for the knitted model of Braintree Station to be presented in the carriage.

New actions

AP4.1 Report back on BDC Planning meeting and decision re. Brook Green development of 12 December

AP4.2 Done - no longer required to speak at January meeting

AP4.3 Wendy to give update on carriage roofing contractor.

AP4.4 Done - Wendy will ask Pam to write to the Carriage volunteers inviting them to the social meeting.

AP4.4 Feedback on carriage volunteers' get-together.

AP4.5 Done - Sandra to add statement on website encouraging people to report incidents to Police.

AP4.6 Report on Christmas event in Carriage.

AP4.7 Done - Sandra will add link to LDWA.

AP4.8 Stan and Sandra to liaise in the new year on the Halt Noticeboards.

AP4.9 Sandra to organise a walk along the Blackwater Rail Trail in the new year.