

Friends of the Flitch Way and Associated Woodlands
Notes from on-line Zoom meeting of Friday 4 March 2021

Taking part: Chairman, Alan Trigg. Secretary, Sandra Reynolds. Treasurer, Margaret James. Committee members, Wendy Moss, Val Blamire, Bob Lucas, Bob Wright. Ranger, Tom Hamilton.
Apologies for absence: John Moss and Stan Davies

Approval of Minutes of 29 January 2021 Agreed by all and signed on Chairman's behalf by Secretary

Matters arising and review of Action Points from last meeting.

Carried forward from previous meetings:-

AP7.4 LNR designation. Tom will email local parish councils to advise them of FW Local Nature Reserve designation. BDC has already incorporated in GIS system for planners. Carry forward.

AP10.4 The parish council have replaced the glass in the telephone box at Station. Carry forward.

AP11.1 No progress to report on opening up the bridge at Langford Halt. Carry forward.

AP11.2 Tom had no information on recruitment of new Ranger. The post may disappear as part of the restructuring of Country Parks. Carry forward.

AP12.2 Tom has received quotes for replacement of damaged gates for Insurers but has received an edict that all insurance claims to now be handled by ECC Facilities Management which will cause a delay. Carry forward.

AP 13.1 Final decision on location of 3 benches yet to be confirmed. Sandra to check with BDC on one location. Carry forward.

AP13.2 Stan has placed order for the benches which should be delivered to Gt Notley shortly, ready for us to install in due course. Grant received from ECC to cover cost. Balance of £459.74 remains available to cover cost of 3 information boards. Draft of 1 board for Rayne Station done but design of other 2 boards remain outstanding. Closing date for claiming balance of grant is 31 March. Carry forward.

AP13.4 Tom has drawn up a list of outstanding work for volunteers including small party litter picking. Re-commencement of volunteering will follow ECC guidelines.

AP13.5 Wendy will invite Gordon Cameron and family to see the memorial bench once it has been purchased and installed. Carry forward.

AP14.1 John has arranged for the electrician to inspect the Carriage and new heaters have been ordered. The installation should be completed in the next few weeks.

AP15.1 New Alan will speak to the Meehans about locating a donated bench next to the box.

AP15.2 New John to order wood to create frames for new information boards.

AP15.3 New Alan will talk to Josh about removing the tent at Rayne Station so the area can be reseeded and allowed to recover

Chairman's report: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting of 2021 due to ongoing Covid 19 restrictions. Since the last meeting no further work parties have taken place although there is now a proposed road map which may enable us to return sometime in the near future.

No further update on contact from the previous roofer due to Covid 19 and he has so far not been able to pay. Concluding his report, Alan thanked all volunteers for their patience and asked them to stay safe in the ongoing difficult times.

Treasurer's report

The current account balance is calculated at £2,450.35. That balance takes into account the payment of the copyright fine and the payment to the electrician for our new heaters.

We have received though on line donations a further £60.00.

Margaret said that she had nothing to report on social activities, all such matters having been put on hold.

Secretary's report

Online statistics- 546 web page visits and 1110 page views in last month Facebook shows 1725 'likes', up 14 since the January meeting.

Planning Applications.

UTT/21/0332/FUL Land at TileKiln Green Start Hill. This land is directly north of the Flitch Way and runs up to Jct 8 M11 roundabout. They want to turn it into a lorry depot for Wren Kitchens. We have objected but asked for weekend parking for FW users and also to contribute for a connection into Bishops Stortford using the existing tunnel under the M11 to the south of the FW.

UTT/21/0405/FUL Former Winfresh site on High Cross Lane east. We have asked for a new path along the northern perimeter to avoid the need to walk 80m along the road with lorries, traffic calming, weekend parking and improved boundary sightlines.

BDC/18/01605 Land south of Gilda Terrace. The appeal will be held on 20 April 2021 and I have requested to attend on behalf of the Friends.

Flitch Way Action Group update.- The former FWAG chairman and Friend of the Flitch Way, William Chastell has sadly passed away from Covid. He was one of the founding members of FWAG promoting a safe traffic route connecting the Flitch Way at Great Dunmow. He worked tirelessly and with great diligence to achieve that aim and the first sections have been completed. The FWAG AGM was held on 24 Feb, and joined by William's family and also UDC councillors Susan Barker, Deryk Eke and Rod Jones who were very supportive of the plans.

Copyright infringement – To prevent any future issues, wildlife images not taken by the committee have been removed from the website and the wildlife section will be revamped.

Work Party report - Nothing to report.

Railway carriage update - Still uncertainty if and when the carriage will re-open. Getting previous volunteers back is likely to be a problem. Some stewards will not be returning due to health issues and everyone would need to be contacted in advance of any opening.

Footpath group (P3) report – Nothing to report.

Ranger's report – Updates provided in the action review. The only additional update was that UDC had asked the owners of Felsted Station to clear up all the rubbish at the site, which had been actioned.

Any Other Business

AGM – Following discussions we agreed to hold the AGM at 1400 on Friday 7 May via Zoom and Friends would be able to attend if they wanted. The format would be similar to last year where a detailed report, accounts and trustee report would be produced and circulated in advance of the meeting. Alan has to step down as Chair and Stan has agreed to put his name forward. Bob Lucas will be resigning from the committee but continuing as a volunteer and first aider and both he and Pete Lane will step down as Trustees at the AGM. Graham Dalby in putting his name forward for the committee. Please let us know if anyone else is interested in joining.

Sandra will try to create online membership forms which include the required Gift Aid signatures.

BDC grant – Margaret is applying to BDC for a covid relief Additional Restrictions Grant which covers organisations like ours which don't pay business rates.

Next meeting

Friday 4 June at 2pm, hopefully face to face.

There being no further matters to discuss, Chairman thanked everybody for their contributions and brought the meeting to a close.