

Friends of the Flich Way and Associated Woodlands
Notes from Committee meeting of Wednesday 06 April 2022, Great Notley

Taking part: Stan Davies (Chair), Alan Trigg (Vice-chair), Sandra Reynolds (Secretary) and Committee members, Wendy Moss, Bob Wright. Tom Hamilton (Ranger).

Apologies for absence: John Moss, Val Blamire, Graham Dalby, Margaret James (Treasurer)

Approval of Minutes of 19 January 2022 - Agreed by all and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising and review of Action Points from last meeting.

Closed actions:

AP18.1 Solar farm objection - See Secretary's report

AP18.2 Wendy has found another volunteer for First Aid Training.

AP18.3 Sandra wrote to Councillors Driscoll and Reeves regarding new benches around Start Hill and got no response.

AP17.3 Stan submitted quotes for a new carpet in the Carriage Museum as part of the Locality fund grant.

Carried forward from previous meetings and ongoing:-

AP11.1 No update on Countryside development. Sue Wilson has asked Neil Jones about S106 funding for a bridge over the Blackwater (12/01620/FUL) and Sandra has followed up with an email to see how we can move forward.

AP16.3 Bob has written to SRC quarry several times to see if they can provide 20mm gravel for some of the paths in Garnetts Wood and High Cross Lane car park. He has not had a response and will contact them again.

New Actions:

AP19.1 Sandra to re-print info boards at Stane Street and Bannister Green Halt in A1 size

AP19.2 Sandra to get an estimated delivery date on the trailer.

Stan Davies - Chairman's report:

On 18th March, several committee members enjoyed a round of Crazy Golf and a buffet at Rivenhall Oaks Golf Club as part of a Civic Reception held by the BDC Chair person. The Friends are one three charities nominated by her as beneficiaries of her fundraising efforts during her year in office. The other charities are Colne Valley Railway and Homestart who give support to families in need. The Chair person, Sue Wilson, is coming to the end of her year in office. I have been invited to her AGM on 25th April to receive a cheque and say a few words on how the money will be spent. Since receiving the invitation, I have been told that it will be a virtual meeting and the cheque will be sent in the post.

Margaret James - Treasurer's report

Our bank balance as at our year end of 31st March 2022 is £8,415.40 with £4,011.41 in our savings account making an overall balance of £12,426.81.

The end of year accounts are finished and have been passed to Dawn Walters to check and pass. In the last month we have received a grant from ECC of £1,188 which made it possible to have the carriage recarpeted at a cost of £1188.00.

We also received a £100.00 donation via the Charities Aid Foundation.

Margaret James - Social Activities report

21 of us are going on Monday 11th April to Copped Hall and gardens in Epping and after our visit 19 are going on to The Bull in Theydon Bois for lunch. We are all looking forward to an enjoyable time hoping for good weather.

Sandra Reynolds - Secretary's report

Online statistics - 1,008 web page visits and 1,826 page views in last month. Facebook shows 2,199 'likes', up 58 since the January meeting.

Ride London – there could be potential funding opportunities for the Flitch Way and Blackwater Rail Trail in conjunction with Active Essex. Small grants of £5-50k or large ones of £50-250k. We tick lots of the boxes already.

Planning Applications

UTT/22/0267 Land at Tilekiln Green Start Hill as a depot for Wren Kitchens. Little has changed since the last refused application and we have objected.

UTT/18/2049 & UTT/22/0703 Land south of The Street, Takeley for 8 houses which were agreed on appeal. They have submitted planting schemes which would block a historic access way between Dunmow Road and Hatfield Forest, crossing the Flitch Way. We have objected.

UTT/21/1683 Takeley Station creation of 5 bed HMO and new house. Applicant has appealed the decision refusal. No additional comments made.

UTT/22/0391 Land at Highwood Farm, Buttleys Lane for 14 self-build houses. Objected as concerned about increased traffic down lane to Flitch Way.

UTT/21/3596 Moors Fields, Station Road, Little Dunmow. Application reduced from 180 to 160 houses. No further comments made on top of our request for £100k to improve route to Great Dunmow including bridleway bridge over Chelmer.

UTT/22/2007 Solar Farm on 114 hectares adjacent to Great Notley Country Park. Objection made.

Wendy Moss - Work Party report

Since our last meeting we have carried out 15 work parties with an average of 10 volunteers turning up on both Tuesdays and Thursdays. We finished the work at Graunt Courts cutting back verges to the hedge line and taking out dead and dangerous trees opening up this area to the sunlight to encourage wildflower growth. We then made a visit to High cross lane picnic area and then more recently started working at Garnetts wood clearing up after the tree felling there and protecting the stools from deer. The meadow at Garnetts has also had some attention clearing it of dogwood. There has been one recent volunteer application from Francesca Hutt and she has attended her first work party.

We have purchased some new short gloves as several volunteers seem to prefer these. Tom has given out new helmets and I have made all volunteers aware that they need to let me know if they need any new or replacement PPE and we will give these items our attention asap.

Stan Davies - Railway Carriage report

Since our January meeting, the Carriage has been open to visitors for 68 separate sessions, either morning or afternoon, with a total of 495 visitors. 9 volunteer stewards have taken part with Derek again the top one, covering 29 sessions, mainly during the week. Approximately £160 has been collected in Carriage from donations and a variety of items sold by Derek. More volunteer stewards are still needed.

An escorted walk from Braintree Station to Rayne is due to take place on Saturday 9th April followed by a talk by Stan in the Carriage. This has been organised by Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership which was set up to encourage use of rail transport to get people “out and about” and take more exercise.

The flooring in the Carriage is being replaced on Wednesday 20th April by Edward Walker carpets. The cost has been covered by a grant from the ECC Locality fund, supported by Councillor Graham Butland. The existing tiles will need to be lifted and the floor cleared of materials on the Monday and/or Tuesday before the work is done. Stan has agreed that Derek can have the old carpet tiles.

Stan Davies - Footpath group (P3) report

Another busy period for the Footpath group at a variety of locations as follows:

19 Jan Repair bridge at Silver End, replace bridge at Stisted and install waymarker posts at Braintree.

26 Jan Footpath clearance at Newport.

2 Feb Install waymarker posts at Newland Hall, Good Easter and Great Waltham.

9 Feb Footpath clearance at Ulting.

16 Feb Install waymarker posts at Wimbish and Little Sampford.

23 Feb Replace bridges and clear footpaths at Hempstead.

9 Mar Clear blocked footpath at Dunmow.

16 Mar Replace and install steps at Quendon (a record 16 steps) and install waymarker posts.

23 Mar Install handrails on footbridge and clear footpath at Little Canfield.
30 Mar Footpath clearance at Stanway Green.

Tom Hamilton - Ranger's report

It has been a good winter for the work parties. Future parties will be held at Bannister Green Halt, Stane Street Halt and Langford Halt. The planned new trailer will come in useful at all the locations as they are a long walk from the parking. The information board at Stane Street Halt has been damaged.

Work parties will go down to one a week soon.

AP19.1 Sandra to re-print info boards at Stane Street and Bannister Green Halt in A1 size

AP19.2 Sandra to get an estimated delivery date on the trailer.

Any Other Business

The AGM will be held on 6 May 2022 at 7pm as a face to face meeting at Great Notley Country

There is no guest speaker this year.

Josh from the Booking Hall Cafe is happy to carry on offering us a discount and this year the rate will be 17%.

Next meeting

Friday 20 May at 2 pm Sandra's house

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