

**Friends of the Flitch Way and Associated Woodlands**  
**Notes from Committee meeting of Monday 10 February 2025, Great Notley**

**Taking part:** Alan Trigg (Chair), Stan Davies (Vice-chair), Margaret James (Treasurer), Sandra Reynolds (Secretary), and Committee members Bob Wright, Andy Hobster, Wendy Moss, John Moss, Dick Hughes,

**Apologies for absence:** Stuart Warwick (guest), Tom Hamilton (Ranger)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Tom for being host.

**Approval of Minutes of 2 December 2024** - Agreed by all and signed by the Chair.

**Matters arising and review of Action Points from last meeting.**

Closed actions:

AP 31.1 Dick to expand his original email outlining the surface problem and what needs to be done to rectify the surface based on his many years' experience in the industry. Complete

AP 31.2 Sandra to contact the local Essex Bridleways Association representative to discuss the surface condition. Complete – the surface is not a problem for horses just wheeled users.

AP 31.3 Sandra to contact Mark Coletta and request funding for three additional benches in Takeley ward. Email sent 24 November. Mark has proposed funding spread across 3 councillors.

AP 31.4 Sandra to write to Mary Cunningham thanking her for her funding support. Complete email sent 2 December.

AP 31.5 Sandra and Margaret to meet in January to start to assemble spreadsheet. Update Margaret will be meeting Dawn on 17 Feb to update the spreadsheet.

Carried forward from previous meetings and ongoing:-

None

New Actions:

AP 32.1 Sandra to download the Paypal report for Margaret

AP 32.2 Stan to contact Mary Cunningham and ask if she would support the purchase of the train.

AP 32.3 Bob to contact Stretch at Little Canfield Parish Council for an update on the re-surfacing and also to ask for the funding for the information boards.

AP 32.4 Sandra to contact the Gardens of Little Easton Lodge for a speaker. Confirmed.

AP 32.5 Sandra to lend Margaret a PC with excel

**Alan Trigg - Chairman's report:**

We were very grateful for the donations received from the funeral of Derek Atkinson, a much missed volunteer steward in the Carriage Museum. The Friends funds were used to repair the steam locomotive on the model railway and a dedication for family and friends was held at the Carriage in January.

Since the last meeting we have held work parties at Felmoors Farm, Great Notley Discovery Centre and Rayne – Wendy to provide further details of these and future work parties in her report.

Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful with our application for the Groundworks grant. As a result we agreed to purchase two new hedge cutters to replace the old broken and unreliable ones. Thanks to John Moss for arranging and getting us a good deal for the pair.

We had a very successful Christmas in the Carriage - details will be provided in other reports. Thank you to everyone who helped decorate the Carriage and also to those who helped out on the day.

**Margaret James - Treasurer's report**

Our bank account balance as of 31 January - Current account £1,345.56, Savings account £4,691.87 making a total balance of £ 6,037.43

I transferred £1,000.00 from the Savings account into the Current account to ensure sufficient funds to cover the cost of buying the hedge cutters.

Santa day was again a success making a net profit of £493.44. We received £760.61 from the sale of tickets, £11.70 nail game, £108.75 tombola and £12.20 from book sales. The expenses for the day were £399.82.

Margaret was happy to step down from the role of Treasurer if another volunteer was happy to do this role.

### **Margaret James - Social Activities report**

We all enjoyed our Christmas lunch at Weavers and have booked again for this year 19th December.

Wendy and I have found a couple of places in the invitation to view brochure which we think might be good to visit this year. I am waiting to hear back from Pat with details for a visit to The Old Sun Inn in Saffron Walden. We are looking to arrange it for the beginning of April. Full details will come out once we have confirmed it.

### **Sandra Reynolds - Secretary's report**

Online statistics – 867 web page visits and 1,371 page views in last month. Facebook has 3,315 followers.

Planning Applications and updates (west to east)

- UTT/23/1470/OP Stansted Distribution Centre redevelopment including new buildings of over 10m high directly next to Flitch Way. Approved 10 January 25. ECC Highways have included £25,000 for the Flitch Way to improve connectivity with Bishops Stortford.
- UTT/24/2682/SCO Land to the north of Taylors Farm, Takeley for a 27.4 ha industrial area. The local Parish Councils have pointed out the potential impacts on the Flitch Way and Hatfield Forest. I anticipate a full planning application in future.
- UTT/24/2242 Land to the west of Station Road, Takeley for 68 houses by Bellway Homes. It does include a buffer zone. We have commented. It is awaiting decision. No change since last report.
- UTT/24/1198 Land to the south of Smiths Green. Previously 37 houses were dismissed at Planning Appeal stage. This application for 15 houses is on half the land and does include a buffer. We have objected. Application withdrawn 5 December 24.
- Former Winfresh banana depot now being used by UDC. Awaiting update from park rangers regarding the path routing.
- UTT/19/2354 Land to the west of Buttleys Lane. Previously 60 homes were granted permission following appeal. The new application seeks to reduce it to 46 homes. Awaiting decision.
- UTT/23/2964 Land at Highwoods Farm, Buttleys Lane for 14 houses has gone to appeal in October. Awaiting decision. No change since last report.
- UTT/22/3470/OP Land north of Baynard Avenue Flitch Green for 72 houses. Planning was refused in November 23 and an appeal made dated June 24. A one day held on 4 December 24. Awaiting decision.
- BDC 22/03402 Land to the rear of Gilda Terrace. Permission has already been granted and the new developer Crest Nicholson are finalising their plans. We have asked the play area and pump house be relocated as they are adjacent to the Flitch Way. Ongoing with latest plans dated March 2024 showing no changes next to Flitch Way. No change since last report.

### **Wendy Moss - Work Party report**

The Santa in the Carriage event in December was well attended and enjoyed by all of the volunteers who gave up their valuable time to help out on the day. Since our last meeting in December, we have carried out 8 work parties with an average of 10 volunteers turning up. We spent 5 work parties at Great Notley improving the pond near the High Ropes area and while there had our post-Christmas get together. This was well attended by 20 volunteers and 3 rangers. Everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to socialise and meet up with friends they haven't seen for a while. Following this we have carried out 3 work parties in Rayne near Gore Bridge. The rangers were cutting down dangerous trees and the volunteers cut out invasive scrub and bramble encroaching all over the bridge supports and the surrounding area. There is a lot more to do and we

will continue to work along the ditch line and towards the station over the coming weeks but it is already starting to look much better and we have had several encouraging comments from walkers.

### **Stan Davies - Railway Carriage report**

The Carriage has been open for 12 morning and 6 afternoon sessions since the last meeting. Volunteers have been John & Wendy, Kevin, Susan, Lloyd & Gwyneth and Stan.

Brian and Richard have attended on 10 Wednesday mornings.

We have had 289 visitors with total donations of £72.12.

Brian and Richard have requested we purchase a new diesel locomotive with sound and light effects as the current one has stopped. The train costs in the region of £200. Currently the Carriage is not covering its costs from donations so we agreed to see if we could get a grant for the purchase.

AP 32.2 Stan to contact Mary Cunningham and ask if she would support the purchase of the train.

### **Alan Trigg - Footpath group (P3) report**

December – Footpath clearance at Stanway,

January - Footpath clearance and repair bridge slats at Peldon,

February – Footpath clearance at Stansted Mountfitchet

### **Tom Hamilton - Ranger's report**

No update as Tom was unable to attend.

### **Any Other Business**

Little Canfield Waste depot path – No update as Tom was absent.

High Cross Lane renovation - John has completed the framing of the information boards.

AP 32.3 Bob to contact Stretch at Little Canfield Parish Council for an update on the re-surfacing and also to ask for the funding for the information boards.

Bench Replacement near the Thremal access - Great Hallingbury Parish Council have confirmed they will fund the higher cost bench replacement and place an order after 1 April 2025.

Restoration of surface near Bannister Green Halt – we have had many complaints about the corrugations and quality of the surface at Bannister Green Halt following the contractors works. Sandra has raised a complaint about the service and included Dick Hughes engineering report on 4 December 24 but the email address was incorrect. On 10 February, we had a productive telephone call with customer services at ECC. Under Section 81 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 the contractor has to complete the works “at the safety and convenience of persons using the street (having regard, in particular, to the needs of people with a disability)”. The reference is 2961852 linked to FS-case-686241443.

Santa in the Carriage - We sold 146 tickets beforehand and had 9 walk ins and a total of 14 non shows.

Morning - 77 online tickets, 6 x 30 min slots. 5 no shows. Very little queuing.

Afternoon - 69 online tickets, 5 x 30 min slots. 9 no shows. Majority of the walk ins were in the afternoon. Queuing 3 to 4 slots most of the time but no one was complaining.

For next year it would be easier if we set up at 9 so it was all finished by 9.45.

AGM preparation – Provisional date is 6 pm on Friday 9 May at Great Notley Country Park.

AP 32.4 Sandra to contact the Gardens of Little Easton Lodge for a speaker.

AP 32.5 Sandra to lend Margaret a PC with excel

Hedgehog Grove Solar farm – We have been invited to attend the Community Liaison Group and agreed that Dick and Andy would be our representatives.

Local Nature partnership wildlife have requested that we join their group. A better understanding is required first.

**Next meeting**

The next committee meeting will be on Monday 31 March at 2.00pm at Great Notley Country Park.

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