

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

Taking part: Alan Trigg (Chair), Stan Davies (Vice-chair), Margaret James (Treasurer), Committee members, Wendy Moss, Dick Hughes, Andy Hobster, Bob Wright, Tom Hamilton (Ranger) and guests Sue Baumbach and Cheryl Harris

Apologies for absence: Sandra Reynolds (Secretary),

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the rangers for use of the room.

Approval of Minutes of 8 September 2025 - Agreed by all and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising and review of Action Points from last meeting.

Closed actions:

AP35.1 Stan to draft an article for social media highlighting Terry's good work which Sandra will publish. No further action required.

AP35.2 Stan to ask Kevin French to submit proposal in writing so we can better comment.

AP35.3 Sandra to prepare Santa event posters and ticket page. Tickets will go on sale on 25 October.

AP35.4 Sandra to book conference room for next meeting.

AP35.5 Stan will invite Terry Blyth and his wife to the Christmas lunch

AP35.6 Stan will start the process of getting the leaflets re-printed.

Carried forward from previous meetings and ongoing:-

AP34.3 Sandra to ask Claire to confirm the locations of the four benches which must be in Takeley ward. Update – the benches have been delivered and are awaiting installation plan from Claire

New Actions:

AP36.1 Stan to approach the relevant authorities with regard to obtaining any available grants to replace the damaged Stane Street Halt station sign.

AP36.2 Sandra/Alan to approach Vistry to see if they would fund or provide a replacement bench at Langford Halt.

AP36.3 Tom to check on the size of scaffold poles on hand before ordering the clamps as they might be a different size and report back to Wendy.

AP36.4 Stan to speak to Sandra to see if she knows where we got the last information boards from in view of obtaining a replacement.

AP36.5 Wendy to purchase 10 pairs of Gauntlet gloves.

AP36.6 Alan and Sandra to consider best approach to Essex Highways England regarding the erosion at both ends of Hazlemere Bridge in co-ordination with ECC Rangers

Alan Trigg – Chairman's report:

Welcome all to the November Committee Meeting.

The Dunmow Cutting work is now complete with the main bank looking amazing.

Wendy and Margaret arranged a visit to Copped Hall in Epping followed by lunch at The Horseshoes in Upshire. The weather was not ideal, however the visit was excellent – Wendy and Margaret to cover details in their Social Report.

The work on the Railway Carriage is coming along nicely. A massive thanks to Terry Blyth who is undertaking the bodywork repairs and Stan for co-ordinating and repainting the carriage.

It is very annoying to see the damage caused at Langford Halt by the company putting in water pipes to a new estate without any care for property or the rare Calamint that was at the front of the platform.

Margaret James – Treasurer's report

The bank balance as 4 November 2025 is – Current Account £2,587.15, Savings Account £4,731.51 making a total of £7,318.66.

Margaret James – Social Activities report

On the 23 October, 18 of us went to Copped Hall. We were all amazed how much work had been done since our last visit in April 2022. We were unable to see the gardens due to the weather but over coffee and cakes we were told the history of the old Tudor house which once stood in the grounds. Following our visit we all went to The Horseshoes a short drive away for a delicious lunch. The visit was enjoyed by everyone.

There are still places available for our Christmas lunch at Weaver on 19 December.

Sandra Reynolds – Secretary's report

Online statistics – 1,258 web page visits and 2,256 page views in last month. Facebook has 3,378 followers.

Cheryl Harris is now managing the Membership database of Friends and volunteers and the mailing list.

Planning Applications and updates (west to east)

- UTT/25/2786/OP 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. This lies to the north of the B1256 so we have not commented.
- UTT/25/1854/FUL Cranwellian, The Street Takeley. Application to replace existing house and equestrian facilities with 6 houses. It does include a buffer zone. Awaiting decision. No change since last report.
- 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. Approved 11 Nov 25. It includes £40,000 for surfacing and drainage, signage and information boards for section of the Flitch in the vicinity of the site, including the section between the site and the old Takeley Station.
- UTT/25/0539 Land to the south of Stortford Road, Little Canfield. Proposed nursery, soft play area, swimming pool, and versatile learning spaces. This has been approved on 23 Oct 25.
- ESS/16/24UTT An application has been made at the landfill quarry site at Crumps Farm, to redevelop the site and build a 121 industrial units and. Solar farm with the access over the Flitch Way. Awaiting decision.
- UTT/19/2354 Land to the west of Butleys Lane. Previously 60 homes were granted permission following appeal. The new application seeks to reduce it to 46 homes. Approved 28 Oct 25.
- UTT/25/2425 Land at Highwoods Farm, Butleys Lane for 8 self-build houses with a passing place and footway down the lane. Awaiting decision.
- Hedgehog Grove Solar Farm – 15 August 25 the company has decided to withdraw their national planning application and proceed via the district planning process so we await further details of their plans. (Andy to update)

Approved developments with funding for Flitch Way

- 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/18/2574 Staggs Farm Land south of Stortford Road for 332 houses. Work is underway at the site. Includes surfaced bridleway creation and £54,000 for Flitch Way.
- UTT/21/3596 Moors Fields, Station Road, Little Dunmow for 160 houses approved on 2 March 2023. The planning obligation includes £86,720 for Flitch Way improvements and £120,000 toward improvements to the bridge over the Chelmer in Great Dunmow. Cycle and pedestrian access on to the Flitch Way to be provided, all before first occupation.
- UTT/22/3470/OP Land north of Baynard Avenue Flitch Green for 72 houses. A cycle path to the Flitch way to be created.
- BDC 22/03402 Land to the rear of Gilda Terrace for 120 houses. S106 includes £40,000 for Flitch Way. 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

Since our last meeting in September there have been 8 work parties the first in Great Notley Park and the rest at the Dunmow Cutting raking and cutting the banks encouraging future wildflower growth. This year we have managed a full cut of the largest bank and opened up the view of the picturesque bridge there.

There have been an average of 7 volunteers attending on a regular basis. Susan has done a great job since taking over the running of the work parties rallying the volunteers and keeping everyone informed with follow up photos and information. I am continuing to keep the records from her feedback.

I have had a very good response from my call for volunteers for the Santa event and have managed to fill all the positions needed for the day. Margaret, John and I will be decorating the Carriage on 1 December and I have managed to borrow the background sheet for Santa's grotto from the church again this year.

Stan Davies – Railway Carriage report

Since the September meeting, the Carriage has been open to 623 visitors on 41 occasions, 29 morning sessions and 12 afternoons. Thanks primarily to Garry, visitors have been welcomed on Tuesdays and Thursdays for most weeks and the recent schools' half term break saw the Carriage open on most days during the week. Volunteers since September have been Garry, Stan, Kevin, Susan, Geoff with Lloyd and Gwyneth covering Sunday mornings. Brian and Richard have attended on 7 occasions. Visitor donations and sales of a variety of items amounted to £150.43.

Work by Terry Blyth on restoration and re-painting of the Carriage is continuing and work is currently being done on the side adjacent to the platform. This has been a massive job and the highest praise is due to Terry for the standard of work he is doing, the result of which will be to prolong the life of the carriage for a number of years to come.

Alan Trigg – Footpath group (P3) report

September - Replace slats on bridge in Brick End and repair bridge and path clearance in Toppesfield. Clear footpaths in Earls Colne and Great Henny.

October – Clear footpaths in Toppesfield and Takeley,

November – Clear bridleway in Langley.

Tom Hamilton – Ranger's report

Three benches between Buttleys lane and Takeley have been condemned and removed.

Fortunately, the Councillors for Takeley Ward have funded three benches and Great Hallingbury Parish Council have also funded a bench. The benches have been delivered and await an installation plan. Wendy asked if the relevant Councillors could be approached to see if any grants were available to replace the damaged information boards.

AP36.1 Stan to approach the relevant authorities with regard to obtaining any available grants to replace the damaged Stane Street Halt station sign.

Any Other Business

Little Canfield Waste depot path – A follow up meeting was held with on 16 October with Adrian Webb and Claire Bunn and many of the previous concerns on the route were resolved and next steps were agreed to create a funded plan.

Bench Replacement – The 4 benches for Great Hallingbury and Takeley Ward have been delivered but we are awaiting installation dates from Tom and Claire. Sandra asked Felsted local councillors to fund 3 benches in Felsted Parish. The initial response was probably not but I have gone back to them explaining most of the usage will be by the local community.

Little Dunmow land from ECC – Kevin French was unable to attend the meeting so it was unclear the precise piece of land in question.

Langford Halt Damage – After discussing the damage reported by local residents, Tom's view was that it was hoped the ground would recover and the paint on the platform could easily be removed. Alan asked if the company responsible would replace the bench which they had removed along with the Blackwater Rail Trail sign which had also been removed. Tom thought that might be an option and maybe the Friends should approach the Company concerned direct.

AP36.2 Sandra/Alan to approach Vistry to see if they would fund or provide a replacement bench at Langford Halt.

Santa in the Carriage - We agreed to the event on Saturday 13 December. 165 tickets offered for sale at £5. Only 6 unsold tickets left as of 9 November.

Morning 6 x 30 minute sessions between 10.00 and 1.00. Afternoon 5 x 30 minute sessions between 2.00 and 4.30.

Wendy reported that a full list of volunteers for the day has been circulated and the 170 presents have now been purchased and are due to be wrapped this week. Alan reported that we still had 18 Tombola prizes left from last year and he had 7 books for the book stall. Stan agreed to obtain some children's toys and Cheryl would supply some bottles. Further donations for the Tombola stall would be appreciated.

Hedgehog Grove Solar farm – Andy reported that the next meeting was Monday 24th November. He stated that there had been Local Community Consultations in both Rayne and Felsted. Unfortunately, these had been held in the afternoon rather than the evening meaning a large number of people who were at work would not have been able to attend. The controlled crossing over the Flich Way is still being considered as an option.

Wendy reported that replacement signs were needed at Clap Bridge, Stane Street and Langford Halt but we needed to purchase some extra clamps.

AP36.3 Tom to check on the size of scaffold poles on hand before ordering the clamps as they might be a different size and report back to Wendy.

Wendy reported that the main Halt sign at Stane Street is in a poor state and needs replacing.

AP36.4 Stan to speak to Sandra to see if she knows where we got the last information boards from in view of obtaining a replacement.

Cheryl reported that we had taken on two new members since she recently took over the membership database.

Stan reported that there were no changes needed for the new leaflet so 1000 leaflets had been ordered with 250 being sent to the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership who had agreed to donate £50.

Wendy asked if we needed to purchase any more Gauntlet gloves – It was agreed by everyone that we should.

AP36.5 Wendy to purchase 10 pairs of Gauntlet gloves.

Dick reported that both ends of Hazelmere Bridge were in a poor state where the weather had eroded them at the ends after the concrete. This was making it difficult for cyclists, mobility scooters and pushchairs in particular. Tom stated that it was the responsibility of Essex Highways England and suggested a two-prong approach from the ECC Rangers and the Friends of the Flich Way to see if anything can be done. Alan, Sandra and Tom to discuss the best approach.

AP36.6 Alan and Sandra to consider best approach to Essex Highways England regarding the erosion at both ends.

Next meeting

The next committee meeting will be on Monday 26 January 2026 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.