

Friends of the Flich Way and Associated Woodlands
Notes from Committee meeting of Wednesday 17 April 2023, Great Notley

Taking part: Alan Trigg (Chair), Sandra Reynolds (Secretary), and Committee members Graham Dalby, Wendy Moss, John Moss, Bob Wright.

Apologies for absence: Stan Davies (Vice-chair), Margaret James (Treasurer), Tom Hamilton (Ranger)

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

Approval of Minutes of 1 February 2023 - Agreed by all and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising and review of Action Points from last meeting.

Closed actions:

AP 22.1 Wendy sourced a vacuum for the Carriage to replace the old one.

AP 22.2 Although the Rayne based panel beater agreed to consider doing the work on the carriage, he hasn't visited to assess the job, presumably because he has too much work on in his repair workshop. Stan has not approached any other local businesses but will do so now that weather is improving.

AP 22.3 Wendy sent an email to the volunteers sounding out their support for changed work parties.

AP 22.4 Stan - Further supply of litter pickers purchased and BDC Councillor's Grant now fully spent.

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 there is no response. Sandra has had contact with Witham town council asking for their assistance. Ongoing.

AP16.3 Bob has written to SRC quarry and has not had a response and will contact them again.

New Actions:

AP 23.1 Sandra to write to Takeley Parish council to ask them to fund the replacement bench at Stane Street Halt.

AP23.2 Sandra to get a replacement sign about Nigel at Gatewoods pond if the original fails to turn up.

AP 23.3 Tom to advise on how best to resolve the muddy area outside Rayne Station as the grass is struggling to recover.

AP23.4 John will purchase a battery lawnmower for the area outside the Carriage.

AP23.5 Sandra to confirm AGM room booking with Tom.

AP23.6 Wendy will purchase some more Flich Way mugs as stocks are low.

Alan Trigg - Chairman's report:

Since our last meeting a number of work parties have taken place although slightly reduced due to Tom's availability.

Mr Garnetts statue has now been grounded ready for the new installation.

Awaiting delivery of some scaffold poles to the Country Park for Bannister Green Halt.

Margaret James - Treasurer's report

Our bank balance as of our end of year 2023 is £8,148.00 in our current account with £4,530.98 in our savings account making an overall balance of £12,678.98.

I have completed the year-end figures and given all the paperwork to Dawn, once she has completed her checks I will complete the paperwork for the AGM.

Margaret James - Social Activities report

19 of us are going out tomorrow for a visit to Camfield Hall which includes a tour of the Hall and gardens ending with high tea in the dining room. I'm sure it will be a good day.

Sandra Reynolds - Secretary's report

Online statistics - 955 web page visits and 1,711 page views in last month. Facebook has 2,720 followers.

Planning Applications and updates (west to east)

UTT/22/0267 Land at Tilekiln Green Start Hill as a depot for Wren Kitchens. The second application was refused by UDC.

UTT/21/3272 The Squires 90 houses at Little Canfield. Permission for 90 houses refused on grounds of sustainability and historical illegal dumping nearby.

UTT/22/3013/OP A reworked application for 14 self-build sites at Highwoods Farm, Buttleys Lane has been submitted. I've replied with the same comments as previously.

UTT/18/0839/SCO No further formal progress on the Staggs Farm development, however the Planning Inspector has just approved re-development on the existing Helen Romanes site so activity should start soon as this includes a new school. Their S106 obligation includes the creation of the bridleway between Buttleys Lane and Ongar Road which runs parallel to the A120.

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 new application for 72 houses. Raised issues with road safety and asked for contribution as could be part of a Safe route to school. ECC Highways have raised a number of concerns and links and contributions to the Flitch Way have been suggested.

UTT/22/0007 Solar Farm on 114 hectares adjacent to Great Notley Country Park. Objection made. Planning Committee granted permission but still awaiting final decision.

BDC 22/00864/FUL Rayne. Over-55 site for 79 park homes. We requested a contribution and Highways have asked that they provide cycle path access to the Flitch and contribute £20,000 towards surfacing etc. 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.

Wendy Moss - Work Party report

Since our last meeting in February, we have completed 13 work parties with a continuing average of 8 volunteers attending. We have visited a variety of locations carrying out some work in Little Dunmow, several work parties at Felmoors farm opening up the views and working with Dick Hughes supervising clearing the ditches there. Most of the other work parties were supervised by Ranger Matt and we are grateful that he was able to come out to give us his time. Also some work has been done more recently on our own reinstalling information boards in Rayne and High Cross Lane picnic area and installing new ones at Stane Street and Rayne station. Thanks go to John who has worked hard to get these boards refurbished and in some cases completely remade and to Chris Butcher who provided transport for the tools and got the boards to the sites. We now look forward to Ranger Tom's return and to see what he has in store for the forthcoming work parties. Compiling a list of work that can be done in the summer including maintenance and bench replacement.

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Stan Davies - Railway Carriage report

Since the meeting of 1 February, the Carriage has been opened for 64 morning or afternoon sessions, 29 of which were covered by Derek Atkinson. In addition, John Moss and I hosted Braintree Beavers one evening for an enjoyable, noisy, session. Excluding Beavers, there have been 655 visitors. Of that total, Saturday has been the most popular day with 350 visitors with 75 people on Easter Saturday. A total of £137.53 was received from donations and sales.

Alan Trigg - Footpath group (P3) report

February – Footpath clearance Finchingfield, Great Bardfield and Gt Yeldham, Bridleway clearance Twinstead, Clear fallen tree in Rayne,

March – Bridleway clearance Mashbury and Tilbury Juxta Clare, Footpath clearance in Braintree, Stansted Mountfitchet and Lt Hallingbury

April – Footpath clearance in Harlow

Tom Hamilton - Ranger's report

Nothing to report.

Any Other Business

AGM – Agreed the date 5 May at 7pm at Great Notley Country Park. Sandra will send out in the next few days.

AP23.5 Sandra to confirm AGM room booking with Tom

Local History Event. On behalf of the Friends, Stan has agreed to take part in Local History Day at Braintree Library on Saturday 27 May and have a meeting with one of the organisers this Saturday to discuss what they expect by way of a presentation/display from us.

Garnetts wood statue. The aim is to the installation in May when the paths in the wood have dried out more. Bob will act as point of contact for the carver when Graham is on holiday.

Carriage museum – Following discussion we decided to keep showing the Carriage opening hours at weekends with other days being subject to volunteer availability.

AP23.6 Wendy will purchase some more Flich Way mugs as stocks are low.

Stebbing Scouts Litter pick – planned for Monday 8 May. We have recommended they concentrate on the Takeley area.

Little Dunmow bench replacement. The parish council have agreed to fund a bench and will work with us to create an information board.

Next meeting

The next committee meeting will be on 19 June at 2 pm at Wendy & John's house.

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