

**Friends of the Flich Way and Associated Woodlands**  
**Notes from Committee meeting of Wednesday 19 January 2022, Rayne**

**Taking part:** Stan Davies (Chair), Sandra Reynolds (Secretary), Margaret James (Treasurer), and Committee members, Wendy Moss, Val Blamire, Bob Wright Graham Dalby. Tom Hamilton (Ranger).

**Apologies for absence:** John Moss, Alan Trigg (Vice-chair)

**Approval of Minutes of 10 November 2021** - Agreed by all and signed by the Chairman.

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

Closed actions:-

Carried forward from previous meetings and ongoing:-

AP11.1 Sandra and Tom met with Countryside Properties near Langford Halt. There is a way to link up the southern section of the Blackwater Rail Trail, crossing the Langford Road at the planned new roundabout and then joining the overgrown section which Countryside have offered to clear. Part of this route uses a footpath which would need to be upgraded to a bridleway. Sandra will work with Sue Dobson of Essex Bridleways Association on the upgrade.

AP16.3 Bob has written to SRC quarry 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 write again.

AP17.3 Stan and Wendy assessed what equipment was needed to qualify for a Locality fund grant and decided given the recent donations that we have sufficient at present. Stan will write to Graham Butland so he can re-allocate the money.

New Actions:

AP18.1 Sandra to draft objection to Solar Farm adjacent to Great Notley Country Park.

AP18.2 Wendy to ask for volunteers for first aid training and Tom will contact Bob direct.

AP18.3 Sandra to investigate funding for 3 benches around Start Hill area from Uttlesford.

**Stan Davies - Chairman's report:**

Little more to say that isn't going to be covered in later reports. Thanks to everyone who helped with planting bulbs at Rayne Station.

As one of BDC Leader's nominated charities, attended Chairman's Christmas service at St Peters on Friends' behalf. Gave a short presentation on our origins and the work we do. Sue Wilson, Leader of BDC made a very complimentary response. Presentations also made by the two other nominated charities, Home Start and Colne Valley Railway.

**Margaret James - Treasurer's report**

Our current bank balance as at 14th Jan 2022 is £6906.98.

We had two very successfully Santa days receiving £839.05 from the sale of tickets. Our expenditure for the day totalled £137.44 giving us a profit of £701.61.

Thanks to Wendy and John we have received £139.52 from the donation buckets at Tobys. For the months of November and December we have received donations from Paypal £6.87, Amazon £9.85 and Virgin £23.20.

This month we have paid £675.00 for the hedge trimmer that the Footpath Workgroup asked us to buy for them.

**Margaret James - Social Activities report**

Our Christmas lunch at The Bell in Panfield was a great success and enjoyed by everyone. It was lovely to be able to get together again with friends

Wendy and I will be looking in the next few weeks at places and planning some outings for the coming months so watch this space!!!

**Sandra Reynolds - Secretary's report**

Online statistics - 1,179 web page visits and 2,118 page views in last month. Facebook shows 2,142 'likes', up 55 since the November meeting.

Braintree Council contacted us regarding specific funding for our work which has resulted in them ordering us an £8,400 Agroco POD Trailer which can carry 10-14 people. Agroco have a chassis available for March delivery and then need 4-6 weeks build time.

Sue Wilson has agreed to help investigate BDC planning application 12/01620/FUL granted in March 2013 which had Section 106 funding included for a bridge over the river.

Uttlesford and East Herts council are working together to see how best to connect the Flitch Way with Bishops Stortford and are funding a feasibility study,

We have also been contacted by Peter Kohn, chair of the Earls Colne to Kelvedon cycleway project which they hope will eventually link with the Flitch Way and Halstead. They are seeking our advice. Great Notley Parish Council have donated a Stihl strimmer and harness for us to use.

Post meeting update- Grange Farm & Dunmow runners have contacted us and chosen us to be their charity of the year and would like to present us a cheque for £2,000 on 31 January.

#### Planning Applications

UTT/22/2007 Solar Farm on 114 hectares adjacent to Great Notley Country Park. We discussed the proposal. AP18.1 Sandra to draft objection to Solar Farm adjacent to Great Notley Country Park.

UTT/18/2574/OP Land south of Stortford Road (332 houses at Staggs & Folly farms). The S106 has been signed and includes £54,000 for drainage and surface improvements in the cutting and boardwalk section plus the creation of a bridleway and semi-hard, semi-permanent surfacing between Buttleys Lane and Ongar Road which is part of the Flitch Way connection. Importantly this has to be in place prior to first occupation.

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

Since our last meeting we have carried out 11 work parties with an average of 10 volunteers turning up on both Tuesdays and Thursdays. We finished the work at Great Notley clearing around the lake, planted daffodils at Rayne station and more recently started working along the Flitch Way from Graunts Court clearing the scrub and dead trees along the hedge line opening up the banks for wildflower regeneration in the hotspots. There has been recent interest in volunteering and we have had three new member applications Peter Wood, Aiden Kelly and Ian Hounsell. Ian has chosen to be a member only but Peter and Aiden are interested in volunteering. Aiden has already had his induction in the railway carriage and both he and Peter have been added to my email list and received invitations to our work parties. I have also this week heard from a Stuart Warwick and have sent him an application form and details of our volunteering opportunities.

We have purchased some new gloves and I understand Tom has ordered new helmets, 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 out on the next few work parties.

**Stan Davies - Railway Carriage report** - Very quiet at the moment given the time of the year and the poor weather we've been having. Staffing remains a problem. Since the last meeting their have 24 sessions covered by 4 volunteers. We want to say special thanks to Derek who has done 14 of them. There were 128 visitors.

#### **Stan Davies - Footpath group (P3) report**

Received a note from Peter Lane thanking the Friends for meeting the cost of the new hedge trimmer. Work parties since last meeting as follows:-

10 November. Bambers Green. Bridleway clearance.

17 November. Great Bardfield and Rayne. Footpath clearance.

24 November. Bocking. Footpath clearance and bridge re-build. Bambers Green. Continue work on bridleway.

Work parties stopped on instructions from PRoW due to spread of Covid variant.

12 January. Re-started under strict Guidelines from PRoW. Wendons Ambo and Newport. Footpaths clearance

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

It is encouraging to see lots of people coming out. The next few weeks will be focussed on clearance at Graunts Court. It would be good to get more first-aiders trained. Bob Lucas's has run out and needs refreshing. There is still no sign of a weekend ranger so Tom is still working 10 days on and 4 days off. The sleeper benches installed a few years ago are beginning to show signs of

rotting and 3 near Start Hill need to be replaced. The company we ordered them from before is no longer operating and Tom suggested we opt for a galvanised steel support and oak seat which should be more durable, vandal-proof and still in keeping with industrial heritage.

AP18.2 Wendy to ask for volunteers for first aid training and Tom will contact Bob direct.

AP18.3 Sandra to investigate funding for 3 benches around Start Hill area from Uttlesford.

### **Any Other Business**

Stansted Flight Path consultation – Bob provided an updated from the consultation meetings he has been attending. It is an ongoing process and he will keep us updated of any significant changes.

### **Next meeting**

Wednesday 30 March at 2pm at Sandra's house.

The AGM has been pencilled in as a face to face meeting at Great Notley Country Park on Friday 6 May at 7pm.

The Santa event was considered to be very successful but timeslots need to be shorter next year.

The online booking with designated timeslots and outside queuing worked well.

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