

**Friends of the Flich Way and Associated Woodlands**  
**Notes from Committee meeting of Wednesday 1 February 2023, Great Notley**

**Taking part:** Stan Davies (Vice-chair), Sandra Reynolds (Secretary), Margaret James (Treasurer), and Committee members Graham Dalby, Wendy Moss, John Moss. Tom Hamilton (Ranger)  
**Apologies for absence:** Alan Trigg (Chair), Bob Wright

**Approval of Minutes of 14 September 2022** - Agreed by all and signed by the Vice-chairman.

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

Closed actions:

- AP 21.1 Margaret will transfer £500 to our savings/contingency fund from current account.
- AP 21.2 Wendy has written to volunteers and will prepare an article for the next Parish magazine to try and recruit more stewards.
- AP 21.3 Wendy to issue work party email to volunteers.
- AP 21.4 Wendy will send email asking for volunteers on the day.
- AP 21.5 Stan to advise Booking Hall café of date.
- AP 21.6 Stan to revamp signs for end of Carriage.
- AP 21.7 Wendy & Margaret to purchase presents including soft toys for infants.
- AP 21.8 Sandra to set up online ticket sales and posters ready for half term.
- AP20.5 Sandra to contact Susan Barker about alternative funding for wooden statue in Garnetts Wood. No response received from Susan Barker. In view of the healthy bank balance, decision taken to fund Mr Garnett statue from Friends funds rather than through a grant application. Graham to pursue for statue only, no bench at this stage.

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 send email to Witham town council asking for their assistance.
- AP16.3 Bob has written to SRC quarry and has not had a response and will contact them again.

New Actions:

- AP 22.1 Wendy to buy a new vaccum for the Carriage to replace the old one.
- AP 22.2 Stan to source a local panel beater to address the rust issues on the Carriage.
- AP 22.3 Wendy will put out an email to the volunteers sounding out their support for changed work parties.
- AP 22.4 Stan to purchase further litter pickers.

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

Hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year.  
Since our last meeting a number of work parties have taken place mostly at the Discovery Centre and more recently High Cross Lane where our New Year picnic in the Woods had 17 attendees. BBC Essex Quest went to the carriage on Sunday 2/10/22 – Lloyd was there to deal with it. At long last we are now using the trailer to convey volunteers to site to save long walks

**Margaret James - Treasurer's report**

Our bank balance as of 13 January 2023 is £7,876.94 in our current account with £4,520.85 in our savings account making an overall balance of £12,397.79.  
We made a further transfer of £500.00 from our current account to our savings account at the end of September 2022.  
With the rise of interest rates we are now receiving more interest on our savings account, in December we received £2.97 as against .28p last April.  
We have renewed our yearly insurance at a cost of £461.72 an increase of only £10.00 from last year  
The blown window in the Carriage has been replaced at a cost of £396.00.  
EDF have refunded us £174.34, we are making monthly payments of £100.00 which seem to be covering our cost.  
We have received from Amazon Smile £10.03. since our last meeting.

Santa was again a great success. From the sale of tickets we received £621.00, £145.50 from the Tombola and £41.25 from card payments making a total of £807.75. The costs for the day totalled £273.00 making a profit of £534.75.

Although it was very cold everyone enjoyed the day, with all the snow and lights it made a magical experience for the children all the parents seem to appreciate our efforts.

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

Our Christmas lunch at Weavers was a great success everyone enjoyed it and was pleased to be back there after our 3 year break and we raised £140 for Little Havens. We have booked Thursday 14 December for this years Christmas Lunch.

Now that Christmas is over Wendy and I will start looking at ideas for our outings this year and will let you know as soon as we have arranged something.

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

Online statistics - 894 web page visits and 1,579 page views in last month. Facebook shows 2,378 'likes', up 60 since the September meeting.

Planning Applications and updates (west to east)

FWAG and cycle groups in Bishops Stortford are making progress on agreeing funding for route creation between Bishops Stortford, the Flitch and the airport. Funding has been agreed for a feasibility study.

UTT/22/0267 Land at Tilekiln Green Start Hill as a depot for Wren Kitchens. Awaiting decision. There is large amount of local opposition.

UTT/21/1683 Takeley Station Planning appeal to convert to a House of Multiple Occupation was dismissed on the ground it represents a significant overdevelopment of this site that not only undermines the significance and setting of the Non Designated Heritage Asset, but also represents a contrived and poor design response to this context that would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, as well as the future living conditions of residents who would inhabit this scheme.

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

Former Winfresh depot has been taken over by UDC Tom and I met Ben Brown from UDC along with Stuart Withington of FWAG to discuss the alternative route within their site which will reduce the time spent on High Cross Lane. It was a constructive meeting and Ben will follow up within UDC.

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 progress on the Staggs Farm development. Their obligation includes the creation of the bridleway between Buttleys Lane and Ongar Road.

UTT/21/3596 Moors Fields, Station Road, Little Dunmow for 160 houses appears to be approved at the August Planning committee but is still awaiting formal decision. The planning obligation includes £86,720 for Flitch Way improvements and £120,000 toward improvements to Cherry Garden Bridge 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.

UTT/22/2290 Station House (Felsted) application to demolish station and replace with 8 houses.

We have objected but offered our support for the UTT/19/2921 which would retain the Station House. Sadly approval has been given to demolish the Station House and build 8 new houses despite letters from the neighbouring parish councils and us to keep the station.

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.

I was part of the Flitch Way Action Group meeting with Lee Scott (Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport) held on 9 November 2022. He was generally supportive of our plans to improve connectivity around Great Dunmow and Bishops Stortford. Helen Baker of the Public Rights of Way team attended and was designated as the person to work with at the current time.

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

Since our last meeting in September, we have completed 23 work parties with a continuing average of 8 volunteers attending. We have visited a variety of locations carrying out some work in Dunmow cutting, several work parties at Great Notley Park removing invasive reed and opening up the views around the lake such an improvement. Also some work was done rebuilding and tidying the willow arch there. The after Christmas get together took place at High Cross lane with 17 attending and I understand it was very successful with Tom supplying the jacket potatoes and chili topping as usual. More recently work was continued at High Cross lane picnic area and currently we are now working in Little Dunmow opening up the views, cutting back verges and improving access.

Although I have not been around for a while due to family issues and a holiday I am back now and will take over again looking after the volunteers and work parties. I want to express my sincere thanks to Alan for stepping in and doing such a sterling job in my absence.

Ian Creshull and Andy Hobster are now trained first aiders.

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

Since meeting of mid-September, the Carriage has been open for 80 morning or afternoon sessions, covered by 11 volunteers. There have been 669 visitors with donations and sales of £234.64.

The blown window has now been replaced. The Carriage bodywork is beginning to show its age with rust spots in a number of places, some worse than others. Andy Horder previously looked after rust but is no longer able to continue doing so. Attention needs to be given to prevent serious deterioration.

Maintenance work on model railway done by Brian and Richard each week much appreciated.

Rayne Beavers would like to hold their meeting in carriage on Monday February from 6pm to 7pm.

John and Stan will host them.

AP 22.1 Wendy to buy a new vaccum for the Carriage to replace the old one.

AP 22.2 Stan to source a local panel beater to address the rust issues on the Carriage.

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

**September** – Clear footpath Blackmore End, Complete kissing gate, put in two bridges & way marker posts at Little Sampford, clear badly overgrown footpath near Leez Priory

**October** – clear footpaths near Leez Priory, Elsenham and Halstead

**November** – repair bridge & steps & clear footpath at Great Henny & Dunmow, Footpath clearance at Twinstead & Middleton

**December** – Clear footpath & repair bridge Castle Hedingham, Clear bridleway West Wood

**January** – Clear footpath in Radwinter, Clear footpaths at Castle Hedingham & Earls Colne, remove 2 stiles & replace with kissing gates Shalford Green, Clearance work on the Essex Way at Crossing

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

Lots of work has taken place since the last meeting. The clearance and willow tunnel at Notley are looking good. The delay Xmas picnic seemed to go well.

The new trailer to move volunteers is working very well at Little Dunmow where work is taking place to open up the track and free up the wildlife hotspots. Work parties will carry on at Little Dunmow to the half term week (12-19 Feb). One of the existing benches will need replacing and there is an opportunity for a new installation. Sandra has approached Little Dunmow parish council for funding and also agreed to using the donation from Grange Farm Runners to help fund the other one.

After half term Tom will spend at least a month working with Richard using a cherry picker to remove unsafe branches on the Flitch Way. A replacement ranger (Matt) can run work parties but only on Wednesdays. There is also the option of doing work parties without a ranger especially sorting out the drainage and overgrown bank near Felmoors Farm and maintenance at Stane Street Halt. Tom may also need short notice help for his work.

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

### **Any Other Business**

**Santa Event in the Carriage.** Overall the day worked very well. Next year we need to try to arrange lunch to arrive at the lunchbreak.

**Garnetts wood statue.** Graham has been in contact with the carver. He has sourced a suitable piece of wood and is due to start the carving in the next few weeks. The aim is to the installation in April when the paths in the wood have dried out more.

**Litter picking station.** Final report recently submitted to BDC as required under terms of Grant. £276 of Grant Funding of £300 spent but no receipts available for the £60 timber and materials used for sign, the cost of which was estimated from earlier purchase of wood for other purposes. BDC have queried that, along with the £24 balance not spent.

Rather than refunding the £84, BDC have agreed we buy more litter pickers to account for the full amount of the Grant.

AP22.4 Stan to purchase further litter pickers.

**AGM** – Agreed the date 5 May at 7pm at Great Notley Country Park.

### **Next meeting**

The next committee meeting will be on Monday 17 April at 2pm.

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