

Friends of the Flich Way and Associated Woodlands
Notes from Committee meeting of Monday 22 January 2024, Great Notley

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

Apologies for absence: Tom Hamilton (Ranger).

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

Approval of Minutes of 8 November 2023 - Agreed by all and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising and review of Action Points from last meeting.

Closed actions:

AP26.1 Wendy to contact Honeycomb storage about storing the people trailer.

AP26.3 Stan will keep trying to upload the Charity accounts. Ongoing.

AP26.4 Wendy to send out a Santa request for help email to the volunteers.

AP26.5 John will obtain a bag of salt to use on the platform if icy.

Carried forward from previous meetings and ongoing:-

AP11.1 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. Apparently BDC are conducting surveys. Ongoing.

AP 22.2 Stan has had no success with local panel beaters to repair the Carriage. Ongoing.

AP24.5 Stan has given the original Dunmow Cutting sign design to Sandra to create a new one. Ongoing.

AP26.2 Need to finalise bench locations and installations with Tom.

New Actions:

AP27.1 Alan to contact scaffolding company about delivery of poles

AP27.2 Stan to circulate Carriage Steward handbook for review. Update – circulated and no change required.

AP27.3 Sandra to book Great Notley Country Park for AGM on 10 May for a 7pm kickoff.

AP27.4 Sandra to invite Dick Hughes to next meeting.

Alan Trigg - Chairman's report:

Since our last meeting we have held a number of work parties at Little Dunmow, Watch House Green and High Cross Lane.

After a few initial hiccups the Christmas in the Carriage went really well – thanks to all the volunteers who came along to help.

AP27.1 Alan to contact scaffolding company about delivery of poles

Margaret James - Treasurer's report

Our bank balance, as at 19 January 2024 is current account £1,156.21, and savings account £7,594.74 making an overall balance of £8,750.95

We had a very successful Santa day on 22 December 2023. We received £632.43 from sale of tickets and £105.28 from the tombola, the total expenses for the day were £237.59 making a profit for the day £500.12.

I have renewed our Public Liability Insurance at a cost of £465.89 an increase of only £4.17.

Margaret recommended we review our safeguarding policy for the Carriage and volunteers and to confirm we had signage on the Carriage entrance. The volunteer wording was checked at the meeting and no change was needed. No unaccompanied children entrance signs are in place.

AP27.2 Stan to circulate Carriage Steward handbook for review.

Margaret James - Social Activities report

Christmas lunch at Weavers was again enjoyed by all who went. We have booked again for this year Friday 13 December 2024. A date for your diary.
Wendy and I are looking for new outings in the coming months.

Sandra Reynolds - Secretary's report

Online statistics – 991 web page visits and 1779 page views in last month. Facebook has 2,997 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. ECC Highways have included £25,000 for the Flitch Way to improve connectivity with Bishops Stortford. Awaiting decision.

UTT/21/3272 The Squires 90 houses at Little Canfield. Permission for 90 houses refused on grounds of sustainability and historical illegal dumping nearby. I spoke at the Planning appeal on 1 August and the appeal was dismissed on 29 November 23.

Former Winfresh banana depot now being used by UDC. Tom and I met with local councillor Geoff Bagnall and drew up a safe route alongside the depot which will avoid the narrow lane. Geoff has sent this to UDC and we are awaiting a response. Ongoing.

UTT/22/3013/OP A reworked application for 14 self-build sites at Highwoods Farm, Buttleys Lane has been submitted. Ongoing.

UTT/23/0918 Round House Buttleys Lane have lodged an appeal to build an additional house between the Round House and the Flitch Way. Ongoing.

UTT/18/0839/SCO No further formal progress on the approved Staggs Farm development.

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. The full application has been submitted to direct to the Planning Inspectorate and a decision is now due 31 March 2024.

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. Planning refused 24 November 23.

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.

BDC 23/01880/OUT Land south of Springfields and north of Flitch Way – 74 houses directly next to the Flitch Way. Objection made as this sits on land where planning has been refused previously by the Secretary of State. Planning strongly refused on 18 October 23. They have appealed and I plan to speak at the hearing on 12 March 24.

BDC 23/02722/OUT Land south of Springfields and north of Flitch Way – An alternative layout of 74 houses directly next to the Flitch Way. Objection made. Planning officer has recommended refusal and the planning committee meets on 23 February 24.

Wendy Moss - Work Party report

Since our last meeting on 8 November we have completed 16 work parties. We started work on the Flitch Way at Felmoors Farm cutting the banks and doing some ditch clearing there and this work continued up to the Christmas break. Since then we have worked at High Cross Lane east on the picnic area and also on the Flitch on both sides of the road. Our volunteer turn up rate has improved especially since Christmas with an average of 9 again and that is encouraging we need to try and keep this number going. The Santa event was a great success this year with a good turnout of 11 volunteers who come along to help at different times of the day. We now need a programme of work so we can keep volunteers interested going forward into Spring.

Stan Davies - Railway Carriage report

Since the November meeting the Carriage has been opened to 265 visitors for 22 morning and 13 afternoon sessions with donations and sales of £61.49.

Volunteers covering the sessions have been Derek 18, Kevin 8, Stan 6, Lloyd & Gwyneth 2 and John 1. In addition to the above, Brian and Richard have worked in the Carriage on 10 occasions.

The lack of volunteers has not caused problems in this period, the poor weather conditions and the closure of the café over the Christmas period meaning there have been noticeably less visitors to the station.

Moving the canopy to the western end of the platform has been an improvement with the Carriage and station sign now being fully visible.

Alan Trigg - Footpath group (P3) report

November – Replace 2 footbridges Hempstead, clear Bridleway Wimbish, clear Footpaths Epping and Braintree.

December – Clear Bridleway Wimbish, clear Footpaths Hempstead and Radwinter,

January – Repair footbridge Gainsford End, clear Footpaths Hempstead and Radwinter

Tom Hamilton - Ranger's report

Nothing to report.

Any Other Business

Shalford Parish magazine have asked for an article and Sandra completed this. It will be in the March edition.

Santa in the Carriage review

We sold 120 online tickets at £5. In the morning we had one no-show. In the afternoon had 9 no-shows.

We could probably have handled more tickets - possibly 30 per hour instead of 20.

We should consider stopping at 4.30, and doing 30 minute ticket slots to minimise queuing. This year we had queues around 10.15 and 4.00.

The tombola stall should have a bowl of sweets or similar for unsuccessful children.

The first Santa planning meeting should take place in the summer.

AGM Preparation

The 20th AGM is planned for the 10 May. Dick Hughes has agreed to be our speaker.

Andy Hobster and Dick Huges have agreed to stand for the committee and Graham Dalby will be standing down.

AP27.3 Sandra to book Great Notley Country Park for AGM on 10 May for a 7pm kickoff.

AP27.4 Sandra to invite Dick Hughes to next meeting.

Access from Flitch Green

The western access from Flitch Green needs clearing and the parish council are happy to help where possible.

Next meeting

The next committee meeting will be on Monday 8 April at 2.30pm Wendy's house.

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