

## **Friends of the Flitch Way and Associated Woodlands**

### **Notes from Annual General Meeting**

**Date.** Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2008

**Venue.** Discovery Centre, Great Notley Country Park

**Time started.** 7.00pm

**Time finished.** 9.20pm

Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, in particular the speakers for the evening Roger and Sylvia Jiggins from Essex Bat Group and Steve Bunn and Claire, Country Park Rangers. Current officers and committee members were introduced and the purposes of the AGM explained. Stan referred to the changes which had taken place over the previous twelve months which included Nigel Wood losing his job. Referring to Steve Bunn speaking to the meeting later on, Stan asked that it be borne in mind that Steve had played no part in decisions made at County Hall with regard to either the merger of Great Notley and the Flitch Way or Nigel's position. There was a need, therefore, to focus on the future rather than what had happened in the past.

An enjoyable and informative slide show presentation on bats was then given by Roger and Sylvia who had also brought along a variety of written material and specimens of various species of bat.

A short refreshment break then took place.

#### Treasurer's report.

The treasurer distributed copies of the charity's balance sheet to the meeting and provided details of the major items of income and expenditure contained therein. Making reference to the overall credit position illustrated by the accounts, Pete said that the Friends needed to continue efforts to raise funds and asked to be kept informed of any potential sources of funding which those present might become aware of in the coming year.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Keith Hind, seconded by John Moss and accepted unanimously by the meeting.

#### Secretary's report.

Wendy gave details of current membership as well as number and type of work parties and numbers of volunteers in attendance over the previous year.

Letters of thanks for work that had been done were also read to the meeting.

#### P3 report.

Details of work done over the course of the year were given by Ann.

#### Election of Officers.

Stan said that the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary had all expressed a willingness to stand for another year and he confirmed that there were no other nominations to be considered. John Moss proposed that Stan Davies, Pete Lane and Wendy Moss be re-elected accordingly. That proposal was seconded by Gordon Glanfield and a unanimous vote to accept was made by the meeting.

Of the current committee, Stan said that Jo Fish wished to stand down because of other commitments. Andrew Bloomfield and Don Morecombe expressed a desire to serve on the committee for the coming year. Jim Cloke proposed that both Andrew and Don be voted on to the committee, together with Ann Lane and Claire Malone-Lee. The proposal was seconded by Val Blamire and accepted unanimously by the meeting.

#### Ranger's report.

Steve Bunn, Senior Ranger for Great Notley Country Park and Flitch Way then addressed the meeting.

Steve said that he and senior country park management continued to be grateful for the valuable work done by the Friends. He was aware of the concern that the concentration on work being done at the Discovery Centre now and in the future would have a detrimental

effect on the Flitch Way. He stressed that that would not be the case and he was more than happy for the Wednesday work parties to continue on the Flitch Way during Autumn, Winter and early Spring. He envisaged volunteers spending three weeks on the Flitch Way and one at Great Notley. He admitted that providing ranger support to work parties during late Spring and over the Summer was a problem, however, because of pressures on rangers' time assisting in events at Great Notley over that period.

In answer to a question from the floor, Steve said that it was possible that some work parties could take place without direct ranger supervision but it was something that needed to be explored further before any decision could be made. Health and safety issues needed to be addressed, for example, as did first aid training and an assessment of the training in use of machinery which Pete and John had already received through P3.

With regard to seating to be placed at various hotspots which had been previously been cleared by volunteers, Steve said that they were still waiting for further work to be done at the workshop before they could be installed. He agreed that it might be necessary for the volunteers to re-do clearance work previously done and acknowledged the frustration caused by having to do so.

A further example of un-necessary work having to be put in by volunteers was the slope at Dunmow, part of the planned new route around the town, which had been cleared prior to contractors coming on site. Although funds had been allocated to pay the contractors, the work had never taken place and Steve gave an assurance that it would be done by November 2008.

There being no further questions, Chairman thanked Steve once again for coming to the meeting.

Prior to bringing the meeting to a close and on behalf of all those present, Stan said that he wished to put on record the Friends appreciation of all the guidance and support which Nigel had given to all the volunteers over the years. All present wished him well for the future.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm