



The Friends of Thringstone

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4th MARCH 2010 AT THRINGSTONE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present : Nita Pearson, Brenda Simpson; Pam Clayfield, Ray Woodward, Roy Hil, Janet Stevenson, Gepff Walker, Tracy Foulds, Jim Wilkinson, Bernard Lee, Ann Petty, Colin Perritt, Tony Gillard, Chris Mellor, Pam Porter, Charlotte Corden NWLCVS. Adam Raine, guest speaker

Apologies : Ray Neal, Tam Bream, Geoff and Jane Wilson, Karon and John Smith, Tony and Sandie Newton, Maggie Smith, Lorraine Whitehurst, Dave Everitt, CSO Jim Sorrell.

Guest Speaker : Adam Raine, Friends of Holly Hayes

Adam introduced himself with the help of an illustrated presentation as a trustee of the Friends of Holly Hayes Wood and Coalville Meadows. (64 acres). This is one of two companies. The Friends was established in 2006 as a registered company with a Board of Directors which has enabled them to become the legal owners of the land with no individual owner. The second company called Holly Hayes Wood Ltd was set up for the purposes of fundraising for ongoing maintenance and future purchases of nearby land. They hope to obtain charitable status in due course which will help when applying for grants etc.

Holly Hayes Wood is ancient Woodland with records dating back to 1240 AD. Much of the current planting appears to have been done between 1850 -1918. Coalville Meadows is a designated SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), but has been assessed by Natural England and the National Forest Company as 'unfavourable and declining'. It is hoped to return it to farming.

The Friends mission is to own and safeguard the land for the community, with regular maintenance of the infrastructure, to provide public access and employment opportunities developing outdoor skills. They have 50 memberships (c. 100 people) which raises about £500 annually through subscriptions. This covers public liability insurance. Other money is raised through grants and donations. They have achieved the purchase of the land, development of a constitution, monthly committee meetings, visits to similar groups in other parts of the country, improvement to the infrastructure by repairing the dam and reinstating the pond area, access gates, cleared willows, improved wildlife habitat, signage and education which has resulted in a much improved environment. They hope in the future to instigate a Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust Biodiversity study to identify the flora and fauna, to continue the infrastructure projects and regular maintenance, develop the education and skills training through social enterprise work with the probation service and eventually to purchase the Forest Rock Wood site.

Questions were asked about parking and Adam admitted that there was no designated parking area at the moment. Skills trainees could be taken on to the site in minibuses and private visitors, who were not on foot, would need to park in nearby roads. The social enterprise work was also questioned and it was said that there was a need for facilities such as toilets, shelter and storage. Some of this had been offered but needed planning permission. The paperwork was complicated but they were working on it. They have a website for anyone interested in more information: www.friendsofhollyhayeswood.org.uk

Nita thanked Adam for a most interesting talk.

Reports

Chair's report

Letters received

- Copy letter from Jan Cufflin confirming that £80 was raised at the carol singing organised at the Community Centre in December
- Letter from Marlene Reid Community Action thanking members for donating toys to their Christmas appeal. 300 toys in total were given to families in the district who might not have been able to provide toys for their children otherwise. A similar appeal will run for Christmas 2010, so members might like to start thinking about buying toys now for donation towards the end of the year.
- Letter from EM Airport confirming receipt of bid for planting and that it will be taken to committee in April
- Letter from CSV Action Earth regarding projects available to be funded between 31st March and end of July. Conversations being held on whether to put in for anything this time with the general feeling that nothing should be done this year.
- Information received regarding grants available for tree planting being discussed at some stage with Thringstone Primary School
- Enable Newsletter in hard copy. Available on request.
- Meeting details for NWL Third Sector Forum meeting.
- Copy of Stronger Communities Newsletter from NWLCVS. Copy available.

Emails received

- Several about ASB leading to several emails sent and telephone calls made, plus discussions with people affected, councillors and council
- Several received and sent on woodland management project at Grace Dieu Woods, and subsequent questions raised with site agent
- From Tam Bream requesting consideration be given to a camera loan scheme for people affected by ASB – to discuss
- Details of film club night passed to all members on email
- Various from members of the Impact team at County Hall about ASB
- From RCC about a new awards set up they are organising, to include cleaner/greener communities. Do the membership feel we should apply?
- From and to Witan archaeology, plus meeting held with Nita, regarding archaeology at the Grace Dieu woods site. Meeting held with contractors at Grace Dieu Wood and concerns raised. Further details on request. Witan have also confirmed they have no interest in archaeology at Thringstone Halt.

Emails sent

- Further enquiries made about repairs to sustrans track and how to get the safety fencing over the brook replaced/repared and the old fencing out of the brook. Railings subsequently removed by members of FoGD, but Ray Woodward to talk to NWLDC about maintenance agreement for sustrans track.
- To Committee and members with updates on situations and things happening in the village
- To steering group involved in youth project about funding and asking if the young people and/or members of the steering group can do a short presentation to us on their proposals for the art work to the wall within the Miners' Welfare complex
- Emailed NWLDC about litter dropping education projects with schools. Reply received and circulated to committee.
- Asked John Merison if he could do another talk on energy saving light bulbs now available. He is coming to the next meeting
- To volunteers willing to try recipes. Two volunteers have subsequently agreed to work on recipes for us.
- To Andrew Poole at Leics. County Council submitting two walks for the Leicestershire Walking Festival which runs from 4th September through to 12th September.

Promotion

- Mention of FoT in Community Centre's Focus magazine as being winners of the quiz and also of the group's remit. Thanks Lorraine
- Walks in May promoted as part of National Forest Walks Festival and in their programme. Draft hard copy available.
- Walks launch on 14th March promoted in Echo, Coalville Times, Leicester Mercury and National Forest and NWLDC websites, plus Hermitage FM. Promotion for litter pick to be done later this month to same sources.

Other

- Attended Whitwick Action Group mtg.
- Meeting with Helen McNulty, Snr. Youth Worker to discuss ASB arranged and postponed, following further developments and subsequent meeting arranged with Ray W to involve all agencies.
- 2 of our litter pick sticks given to Grace Dieu group to help clear woodlands of litter
- Gloves donated to the group from Tam to help with litter picks
- Photographs taken of rhododendron valley before work began to remove same. If anybody wants any copy pictures, let me know.
- Evening of haunting stories organised with FoGD group to take place at G&D on 24th March with cost to be £7 to include food. Posters available.
- Distribution of posters provided free of charge by NWLDC for litter pick which is taking place on 27th March with the Newfoundland dogs. More volunteers needed to further promote this.
- Call from Thringstone Ramblers wishing to take out membership of the group and promote their monthly walks. They are taking this to their March meeting for further discussion. See AOB.
- Attended councillors' surgery at Thringstone Members Club
- Went to meeting at County Hall to discuss our participation in the Leicestershire Walking Festival in September.
- Attended TARA meeting. Details available upon request
- Phone call from Highcross Bursary Grants to say we have been awarded money. See AOB

Treasurer's Report – Tam Bream (in absentia)

Opening balance £1,351.77

Withdrawals £30

Paid in £75 (booklets, advert in Bauble plus a membership)

New balance: £1,396.77

A cheque for £135 has just been issued, and there is currently £5 to pay into the bank.

Nita's petty cash prior to this meeting stood at £20.87, but we will be paying money out of this for the catering for the litter pick.

Publications report – Roy Hill

There has been one sale of VT1 in the month of Feb (value £2.50) but further sales have taken place at the Community Centre in early March, as a result of purchases by The Royal British Legion. Stock levels were low, and 25 copies each of VT1, 2 and 3 have been purchased. Whilst stocks of BBI are low, these will not be reordered until later in the year. Roy will get some stock of these from Nita and reorganise the George and Dragon supplies.

Stock Report -

	Community Centre	George & Dragon	Nita	Central Stock	TOTAL	Proposed order
Born and Bred 1	3	6	6	0	15	20
Born and Bred 2	3	6	6	36	51	
Memories 1	5	6	6	11	28	
Memories 2	5	6	6	18	36	
Village Trail 1	5	6	6	2	20	20

Village Trail 2	5	6	6	2	19	20
Village Trail 3	5	6	6	1	18	20
Sub-totals	31	42	42	70	187	

Pam Porter asked if booklets could be displayed when the litter pickers came for lunch on 27th March, as she knew of several newcomers who would be there. It was pointed out there were already brochures on sale at the Community Centre on the bar in display cases, but promotion of brochures will take place.

Web report – John Smith (in absentia)

The Guest book is still not working. He is working on it. He will put guidance on the website concerning the notification about WiFi security as this was an important issue. We thank Fran for alerting us to this.

Arts and community report – Pam Clayfield

- Attended a meeting organised By Voluntary Action Leicester.(VAL) earlier this month. A wide cross section of organisations were present and I gained useful contacts which potentially could sign-post young people to become actively engaged in future environmental projects organised by F.O.T. A "brainstorming " session produced lots of ways forward in regard to improving networking with the voluntary sector throughout the county. It did seem to me that communication with VAL needs to be stepped up and allow other youth oriented organisations to become better informed and thereby be more effective.
- Ray Woodward has agreed to work with Marlene Reid Centre on an Easter treasure hunt on Tuesday 30th March.
- Hermitage Radio continues to flourish and I have persuaded a number people from Marlene Reid Centre. to have regular slots on Jon's live afternoon show. Officers from the district council inform the listening public about various issues related to their work, e.g. What's On in the area and other topics of interest.
- I have become a Trustee at the Marlene Reid Centre and attended a strategic business meeting on 1st March. Charlotte Carden (Development Worker for the Stronger Communities Team) agreed that there was a lack of joined up thinking between voluntary groups in the area. It is important that in times of difficult finances that we avoid duplication of effort and resources.
- I am particularly interested in a proposed community transport federation which will be up for discussion sometime in the near future.
- Film Club is still on-going, the next film being Rocket Post on the second Monday in March followed two weeks later by Merchant of Venice, with an acclaimed performance by Al Pacino.
- On Monday 1st March 8pm the Royal British Legion had an open evening, with fish and chip supper and John Price our film organist was playing the organ in the Bar Lounge, where the get together took place. They now meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month.
- 15 people are booked on the Kelmcott trip.
- The Gurkhas are proposing to hold their annual BBQ at the Community Centre
- Janet and David Stevenson are giving an illustrated talk at the Community Centre on their trip up and down the Pennines by Narrow boat last April. It is a meeting of the Leicestershire Branch of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) but anyone else is welcome. Thursday March 11th at 7.30pm. Donation of £1 to the IWA would be appreciated

History – Ann Petty

- I have been making enquiries into the ownership of the area we know as The Pinfold, and spent £4 on finding out the name of the owner of the field, which we already knew. It was agreed that FoT should reimburse Ann for this.
- I went to look at the archaeology in the Grace Dieu Woods before the contractors came along. I went down a week ago to see what was happening and was surprised at the results.
- I found some information on the Velvet Path (the old walkway through Grace Dieu Woods) and passed this to Nita who has confirmed with Witan that they are aware of the area.
- I have been going to Ashby Museum on Wednesdays, and with the help of Ken Hillier and John MacDonald, am looking for any information on both Gracedieu and Thringstone. I have been given some copies of photos of Thringstone Mill, the Junction House and part of the canal tramway.

- I have spoken to Elaine Etchalls about the Brookside Inn which Ray Neal mentioned might have been on Brook Lane, but can find no mention of it anywhere. If anyone knows anything about this pub please contact Ann. Bernard said he had heard of it, and Charlie Fortnum knew of it.
- I am still going through the back issues of the Coalville Times and am finding out some interesting facts about Thringstone, thanks to Ron Goacher.
- Ron has nearly finished compiling details of about 130 notable burials at St. Andrew's for the prospective booklet we have discussed before, covering the period 1862 and the first burial through to 1969. Amongst those buried are people who died of typhoid, which was rife in the village for a while, someone who was killed by a pony and cart and a murderer from 1909 who killed his wife with a hot poker whilst intoxicated then hanged himself. Both are buried in the churchyard. We are hopefully meeting up with Ron at the end of March and will then see where we go with a booklet.

Councillors' 5 minute report

District Councillors – Ray Woodward

- Arranged and attended two meetings at NWLDC to discuss anti-social behaviour, with a further meeting (this time to include housing dept) being planned.
- Arranged and attended the councillor's surgery at Thringstone Members Club which proved useful.
- Various housing issues - many people who have left the village in the past now wish to return to it, and need social housing provision
- Have spoken to Planning Enforcement about the Fox site, and understand that the Citrus Group have not replied to the letter sent asking for them to look at the site and tidy it. As a result, the council are looking to put together at Section 215 notice which will force the company to tidy up the site. It is not out of the question that the building will be demolished.
- Dealing with various repair/maintenance and neighbour issues
- Spoke to a company whose van is often parked by the traffic calming to ask if they can suggest to the driver to park elsewhere.
- Attended planning meeting to discuss the future of the Miner's Welfare site on 2nd March. A 65 name petition was submitted to the meeting and a speaker from local residents gave the case against the future development of social housing, but planning approval was granted.
- Attended the TARA meeting and will try to attend the next one arranged
- Following letters sent by the housing department to people whose properties front onto the grass verges on Loughborough Road, the amount of parking on the grass verges seems to have reduced drastically.
- The planned meeting with NWLDC to discuss the maintenance of the sustrans track was postponed, but we are going to try to rearrange this.
- We are still looking into trying to force the hand of the owner of the listed building on The Green to repair his property to an acceptable standard.
- The Queen's Head's premises license has been surrendered. No further details are known.
- Following an email from Nita, there is to be a meeting with the gardening team and officers from NWLDC to discuss the memorial garden and removal of some of the existing planting.
- Council tax for the year has been approved. Details available.
- An email was sent to the contractors at Grace Dieu woods about various issues.
- Large recycling bins are to be situated in the village – one near Thringstone Primary and the other by the phone box on The Green. These can also be used by those doing litter picks.

County Council report -Tony Gillard Whitwick Councillor and County Councillor for Whitwick and Thringstone.

1. 4 bollards by the John Street shop. These will be installed in April. They will be Impactapol posts and black with a reflector band, and go from the house next to Kay's shop up towards where the footpath narrows.
2. Knee rails for the grass verges along Loughborough Road to prevent parking on the grass were being discussed. A letter to all the houses had improved the situation but there is still one offending household.
3. The 'Dolphins Nose' (build out) changes to the A512 Junction, by the Bull's Head, was the result of an accident investigation. It is still a live document and the legalities are being investigated. It will be put out for consultation, to include FoT, but it was hoped the work will begin in the second

quarter of the year. Concern was raised about access from the Ashby end of the A512 into the village.

4. Pam Clayfield asked about the proposed Neighbourhood Forums. Ray Woodward said he would investigate.

Police report

Jim Sorrell sent his apologies and the crime statistics for the village over the last 30 days.

Burglary other than dwelling	5
Damage to motor vehicles -	11
Damage to dwellings	6 (3 arrests)
Harrasment	2 (1 person cautioned, 2 nd case withdrawn)
Actual bodily harm	1 (with suspect)
Theft of pedal bike	2
Common assault	1 (suspect dealt with by restorative justice)

Nita commented that there was no mention of various Anti Social Behaviour reports which she knew had been made and for which there were incident numbers.

She again urged everyone who observed such behaviour to report and get an incident number so that it became part of the crime picture in the area. Without an incident number it is not classed as a full report and action taken.

Geoff Walker said that he felt too much of an issue was being made of what was normal childish behaviour, and that a far more important issue was the question of dog fouling on public pathways. Ray Woodward and Nita both replied that they were aware of this and that it was a serious matter. However, some of the young people's behaviour was beyond normal naughtiness and was becoming a danger when missiles were being thrown at property and/or individuals and certain households becoming regular targets. It was noted that footpath stencils regarding dog fouling etc. are now on the footpath by St Andrew's.

From previous minutes

Gardening update/litter pick arrangements for 27th March 2010

A dead cherry tree has been removed by NWLDC from The Green, opposite Ruby's. It was removed after inspection at which it was deemed to be a health and safety issue.

Two shrubs have been stolen from the planting by the church wall. Nita reported this to the Police and Jim Sorrell has subsequently been to see the area in question.

Due to inclement weather, it has not been possible to do much in the way of tidying or planting.

If anybody is planting any seeds for the summer, can they please bear in mind that we will need plants for our stalls at Picnic in the Parks at the end of June and the Grace Dieu Event in July. Janet Stevenson has agreed to co-ordinate the PIP event, and Roy Hill the Grace Dieu event. Please can you liaise with these members over plants if you can help.

A litter pick has been arranged for Saturday 27th March at 10am at The Green. Llynda Baugh's dogs will be there with a cart, and full publicity has been generated, including posters. If you want a poster to put up somewhere, please see Nita. We are planning to have jacket potatoes available for litter pickers to eat (free of charge), with choice of 2 fillings, at 1pm at Thringstone House Community Centre. Janet Stevenson has agreed to help with the food preparation, and Sandie has taken details of the litter pick down to the school for them to inform parents. Pam Porter is working on the routes we should follow which will be available before the litter pick starts.

Junior FoT/Meadow Project etc.

Nita has heard nothing from the school on this, and has no idea at all where things are with regard to the meadow project or Junior FoT.

Grannie's recipes

Sandie Newton and Janet Stevenson have tried out a couple of recipes, and Sandie is working on others which will be available for members to try out. Nita has already tried out (by eating) the resulting food from the two recipes provided by Fran Skinner, and thinks these are OK to use in any book produced. Sandie has tried some recipes from another source, but these were not successful.

G&D Evening with FoGD on 24th March

After discussions with the George and Dragon, and with the Friends of Grace Dieu, an evening of haunting stories will take place at the George and Dragon in Thringstone on 24th March to start at 7.30pm. The cost for the evening will be £7 to include buffet meal. John Dickinson from FoGD is working on the presentations to be made, posters are available and several were taken for display. Media promotion is to be done by FoGD. Numbers need to be managed to no more than 30 people, so there will be a pre-book system through the G&D.

Update on Woodland Management – Cademan and Grace Dieu Woods

Some trees have been removed near the rear entrance to Grace Dieu school to facilitate access to the pylons. This work was, we believe, carried out by E-on.

Removal of the rhododendrons has begun and continues. The rhododendrons are being shredded and it is hoped that the area will recover, as at the moment, it looks a mess.

As mentioned earlier Nita has been in touch with Witan Archeology over some archaeology we need to preserve or at least catalogue, and understands John Dickinson, Ann Petty and Bill Newton will monitor this situation.

Nita has full information from one of the partner agencies involved in this work, which is available for members wishing to know more about the works to be carried out at both sites.

AOB

Provision of camera to use in matters of ASB

Tam Bream has suggested that a camera be acquired for members to borrow to take photos of ASB.

There may be issues here regarding infringement of personal liberties. The meeting did not think this was a good idea as most people have their own digital cameras or cameras on their phones.

Individual and company memberships

As mentioned earlier, Nita has been approached by Thringstone Ramblers (part of The Ramblers Association) about membership. We do not have, as yet, any company membership prices, and whilst this latest contact may be a one off, it may be an idea to think in terms of agreeing that company memberships with a company membership rate be considered by the group and put to the AGM.

It was proposed last year that we consider putting to the AGM that we increase our membership fee to £3.50. Nita has looked at other membership charges by local groups, and these range from £10 down to £5, with corporate memberships being in the region of £25-£35. Nita will investigate further the wisdom of company and/or corporate memberships being available, as it would be necessary to detail advantages to such members and to the group as a whole.

Membership monies are supposed to cover the cost of producing The Bauble, but, with current membership numbers, this is running at just over £100 short and is one of the reasons we continue to seek advertising for The Bauble. By increasing the membership cost to £3.50 and keeping existing membership numbers, we will still be unable to fully fund the cost of newsletter production, but it will go further to reducing the shortfall. It was agreed to take this matter to the AGM, together with the introduction of a family membership at £6.

Highcross Bursary Grant

We are to receive a cheque within the next month for £1,000 from the Highcross Bursary Grant. Nita read out a list of areas where this could be spent, and the item was opened up for discussion. The meeting agreed that the best option was to work with the school on an environmental project. Nita will contact Ella about this.

Date of next meeting Thursday 1st April 2010, at 6.45pm at Thringstone House Community Centre. Guest speaker John Merison.