The Friends of Thringstone

'Working together to improve our village'

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Bulletin May 2026

Monthly Litter Pick Total - 87 bags by **7** people against **87** bags by **5** people for the same month last year.

Meeting notes : 6 present, 9 apologies

Membership collections – Thank you to everybody who has paid their memberships and to those who have paid extra in donations. All this is much appreciated. For those who have yet to rejoin, we do hope you will do so. We think that our 6 page bulletin sent out every month is worth £4 alone. Unfortunately, we've found out that one of our members died some months back. 2 other members have decided not to renew and during the last membership year, 4 other members have died and 5 moved away. For those with an interest in such things, our membership cost between 2010 and 2021 was £3.50 after which it went up to £4. This increase was brought about because we did not collect any monies in 2020 due to Covid, and relied on people sending us donations. We feel that at £4 for a year per person, we offer members a very good service, and hope you all feel likewise but if you feel there is something we should cover more, please let us know. This year, in addition to what we normally do, we have had poppy displays, tried to support the Save West Whitwick Valley folk, given money to buy cakes for charity coffee mornings and also worked hard through Thringstone Together to get venues working together and provide an event for June as well as other things. Sarah thanked Nita for all she does for the group, including providing the bulletin and Lesley said it was unfortunate how few people supported the group by attending meetings.

Shrub bed on The Green – Leicestershire Conservation Volunteers will now be coming out to dig up the box bushes to replace with something yet to be bought on 16 May. They are doing this for free. Nita will ask them if they have time to dig out the overgrowth of grass within the bed at the same time. Anne has agreed to purchase replacement shrubs for us to put in.

Graffiti removal – NWLDC are giving away kits for this purposes, but we understand that they are not suitable for brick or porous surfaces like the viaduct and cattle arch in the woods.

Thringstone Primary Writing Competition – the presentation to the two winners of our writing competition for children took place on 13 April. They were Ila-Rose and Antoni. Nita went along with Anne Statham and Hannah Playle from Community Voice to the assembly, where the presentations took place, with teacher Amy Bowers. Photos were taken for May's edition of Community Voice magazine. Well done to all students who took part. Having spoken with the editor of Coalville Times, they are also going to run a piece on this event. It was a lovely hour or so spent at the school with children and teachers who both show a genuine interest in working with and doing things with us going forward.

Thringstone Primary – Nita provided some information and photographs relating to the school in 1967 when it opened, details of its origins in 1844 and of the original school, and a few photos from subsequent years, as the school are presently considering celebrating their 60th anniversary next

year As a result, there is a new page on their website relating to the history of the school. Congratulations to the year 5/6 girls football team for winning the NWL school sports championship finals.

Proposal to fund a bench at Thringstone Primary – Sarah, as school governor, asked if we will provide a bench at the school by one of the governors and explained that most of the benches are now rotten and they are left with just 2 useable ones They are looking at either Reston Bench 3 Seater . Costs vary for these plastic benches, but are around £312 plus VAT or A-Frame Picnic Bench 1500mm which is £435 plus VAT. The school would be able to claim the VAT back The school would be able to put a plaque on the benches acknowledging our donation, and would also put this in their newsletter and social media feeds. The meeting agreed to provide monies for both these benches, and it was left with our book keeper to liaise with the school over payment for these and whether it would be best for the money to come as a donation or in another format. The payment for these will be shown on the next financial statement, all being well.

Charity Coffee morning – The April charity was Parkinsons, and £209.50 was raised. Huge thanks to all who supported the event.

Love your neighbourhood – This event is in June and is NWLDC's project. Nita has registered our litter picking team as working throughout June litter picking, as normal, so we are featured in NWLDC's event calendar.

Field at rear of Thringstone Bowling Club – known as Melrose Recreation Ground, this ground is to be leased by Ingles FC under the Football Foundation Home Advantage Programme to improve local football facilities. It is to be used for junior football, girl's football, tots' football, walking football and some adult training. There may be some improvements made to the changing facilities, and some surface improvements and toilet facilities etc. and there will also be increased site security and an enhanced maintenance schedule. With regard to parking, players and spectators will be encouraged to park at Thringstone Miners Welfare's site and walk from there to the ground, whilst Ingles FC liaise with the Members Club about parking there. A letter to this effect has been posted through all doors locally so residents are aware.

Gracedieu Manor Park – is advertising their lawn for outdoor community events, wedding receptions and corporate events of any size. Interested parties should contact hello@gracedieumanorpark.co.uk

Hello Heritage 2026 – We have booked the bar lounge area at Charles Booth Centre for a Hello Heritage event on 26 September. Our topic this year will be schools and school days. This will allow us to offer class photos from years gone by, as people like to look at those to spot themselves and their friends. Whitwick Historical Group are joining us at our event.

Coalville Can – designed us an April logo for use on facebook etc. Made up of four quarters in a circle, the colours chosen were black (which we had to have), green for the woods, yellow for the daffodils and blue for the bluebells. Thank you to all concerned.

Limelight Performing Arts are now offering all their Saturday morning dance classes at Thringstone Members Club. For more details, see their social media posts.

Care Home Proposal 81 Main St – This went to councillors to decide as to whether the planning should be passed or not, and it went through, meaning that there will now be 3 children's care homes within 5 houses in a residential street. Having spoken to 3 different councillors about this, we were told that when the officers recommend to permit, the councillors have to find planning reasons for refusal. In this case the committee couldn't refuse because of clustering which isn't a reason to turn down approval, and when the highways authority do not object as they didn't about the parking etc., any appeal would have been granted. See below on parking issues.

Parking on pavements – **NWL Police** put out the following statement recently: Residents are reminded that if a vehicle is parked fully on the pavement and completely obstructing the footpath, making it unsafe or impassable for pedestrians (including wheelchair or pram users), this can be reported to Leicestershire Police via 101 or online. If a vehicle is blocking access to a private driveway, this should usually be reported to the local

authority's parking enforcement team. However, if the obstruction is preventing a vehicle from leaving and is causing an immediate issue, it may also be appropriate to contact 101

Thringstone Together – A recent meeting was useful in that many things were sorted and actioned. A running order for entertainment was sorted, and stalls and sponsorship discussed. The event licence came through, and other things are being worked towards. The group need volunteers on the day – 20 June – from 10am if that is possible. 3 people from FoT have already expressed an interest in helping, but if anybody else wishes to help out, please let Nita know.

Save West Whitwick Valley Area – a meeting was held on 12 April at which various questions were asked of councillors, relating to infrastructure, congestion, school places, roads, parking etc.. The committee confirmed that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which will include roads, parking, schools etc. will be part of the reg 19 consultation. That will take place between July and September. They also confirmed that the developers will need to contribute to the cost of increased infrastructure in Whitwick.

Chair's report

Promotion – We have **722** twitter followers which is one less than last month and **2,689** facebook followers which is 52 more than last month mainly due to posting the details of the medieval fayre at Gracedieu in June and Nita's advertising of the Thringstone Carnival on 20 June.

Other: Reported fly tip on **Dalkeith Walk** which was in a regular dumping spot.

An honorary membership has been given to Andy at **Ruby's** for all the support they give to us and everybody in the village. Welcome to him.

We were sorry to find out that our member Jill McGregor had died last year and we were unaware. She had been a member for many years. We are also sad to report that our member Maureen Simm died on 28 April. She had also been a member for many years, and we have spoken with her granddaughter to pass on our condolences.

Welcome to **new members** Gary Louis, Sue Nicklinson, Thomas and Gina Weaver, Julie Warner, Sandra King, Gillian Ellul and Trevor Jordan. .

What's On

- 4 May – **Hough Mill, Swannington** – Heritage open day from 11am – 3pm. Live entertainment inc. Morris dancing, maypole dancing and face painting. Refreshments available.
- 9 May – **Coalville Spring fayre**, 10am – 4pm at Marlborough Square, Coalville. Lots of things to do and see plus live music.
- 9 May – **Plant and book sale** from 11am - 4pm at Elverstone Lodge, Stoney Lane, Coleorton. All monies raised go to Coleorton Heritage group.
- 10 May – Thringstone Soul Club at **Thringstone Members Club** 2pm-8pm. £5.
- 17 May – Charity Fun Day at **Hermitage Recreation Ground, Whitwick** – 11am – 4pm in aid of LOROS and Rainbows and in memory of Kim Shillcock.
- 17 May – **Squirrels Open Day with Thringstone Scouts** – 12 noon until 3pm. For children 4-6 years.
- 23 May – **Thringstone Members Club Cabaret night**. £2 on the door. Starts at 7pm. All proceeds going to Rainbow
- 24 May – **Thringstone Members Club – table top sale** to get rid of your clutter. £10 a pitch to include table. Contact Emma on 01530 222737 for more details.
- 25 May – **Oaks in Charnwood** fair – near St James The Greater, Oaks in Charnwood. Starts at 10am. All sorts of things to see and do.
- 6 and 7 June – **Open Osgathorpe** 12 noon until 5pm at St Mary's church, Osgathorpe. Includes access to open gardens. Adults £5.
- 7 June – **Bright Hope Hospice Fun Run** – 2k or 5k with registration from 9am and racing from 10am. Snibston Colliery Park, Ashby Road, Coalville.

- 19 June – **Coalville Theatre Festival** – 4pm-9pm. More details nearer the time.
- 20 June – **Thringstone Together Carnival**, 12 noon – 5pm at Thringstone Miners Social Centre/Ingles FC, Homestead Road. Face painter, bouncy castle, children's games, fancy dress, stalls, live music from Thringstone's own D Day Darlings, U3A Choir, Thirsty Business, Beata and Limelight Performing Arts. Refreshments, bar open. Please support your village event. .
- 28 June – **Gracedieu Priory** – celebrate 20 years of the site being open to the public. Will include re-enactors from Friends of Thomas Grey and the Ferrers household, local stalls, cottage crafts, archery, food and much more. Further details later. 10.30am - 4pm. Free entry.
- 28 June – Coalville Rugby Club, Hall Lane – **Fun Dog show** from 11.30am-4pm. Contact Leicester Sighthounds for more details.
- 8 August – **Charles Booth Centre – family music day**. Entertainment from Alexander, Roots Community Singers, Altered Ego Live, Smiles Academy, Calling Time musical theatre school, Adam Tarleton, Beata and the Oblivious Live music band.

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Financial Report

The first of this year's insurance payments came out of the bank on 1 May in the sum of £7.98 and will be shown on next month's statement

.**Gen Fund held 1st of month** (bank + petty cash + float)	**2661.88**		
Income		**Expenditure**	
Memberships	£696	Broadband	£20.00
Donations	£94	Phone	£85.00
total income received	£790		£105.00
		Total	**£3346.88**

Website

Nothing to report.

Incident reports

- Problems in **Gracedieu woods** with 6 motor bikers coming in and out from the Springfield entrance over the Easter period, some with helmets, others not, and causing nuisance to walkers.
- 15 April – Thefts from **Thringstone Co-op** during the evening period. 2 baskets found the following morning by Bauble Yard, one containing an empty Haribo's cardboard display box and another was full of sweet wrappers.
- NWL Police have said they have received reports about speeding on **Loughborough Road**. They have also had similar complaints about Leicester Road in Whitwick. This has been communicated through Neighbourhood Link (NHL) surveys, e-mails and calls to the Beat Team and discussed at community events. The police say 'We will conduct speeding test operations on these roads, and others that are identified, to ensure drivers (or riders) are not exceeding the speed limit. We will take appropriate action with those caught which can include words of advice, Traffic Offence Reports, fines and DVLA licence points.'
- 21 April – **DVLA officers** were out in force clamping cars which were on roadways and not taxed. This included a car on Dalkeith Walk, one on Booth Road and another on the parking area to Melrose Recreation Ground.
- 25 April – accident on the **corner of Booth Rd** and Loughborough Rd involving a white paddle bike.
- 28 April – 10.53pm – 3 youngsters, seen on CCTV, threw bricks at the window of a house on **Talbot Street, Whitwick** and broke it. It was very close to where a disabled man was sleeping.

History report

- Nita helped a member by providing details of families who lived in **Fox Terrace** from 1911-1939 as part of her family history searches. Nita also helped a member with her **Fortnam** family tree from Blakesley's Row which was the name for the houses from 132 Main St down to the council houses.
- Nita was asked by Sarah from Coleorton Heritage to help look up details of **Rev William Hunt** of Coleorton Church who died in 1736 having left his post, after 27 years, in 1727. Before he went to Coleorton he was rector in Whitwick from 1691 until 1700 but lived in Thringstone and seems to have been buried there. Nita found his will and sent it to them for their archives and further research as well finding him in a listing under Orton Cole in the 1719 poll books..
- We posted on facebook details of the pay packet, found in the box, relating to **Albert John Kirby,** mentioned last month who lived on The Green at what is now the blue house. For 44 hours work in August 1923, he earned £3 17s 5d which is equivalent to around £298 in today's terms. This means he was working for £6.77 per hour. Nita posted this on facebook, from which people told of their first pay packets and it was nice learning more about people from this.
- Following on from above, Nita has had several conversations since our post relating to the **Kirby family** of The Green, and had paid herself for help in finding out more on the life of **Mary Jane Kirby** nee Hallam from the Leicestershire Records Office. Mary Jane was originally a Hallam, and brought up at Calcutta Pumping Station in Talbot Lane, Swannington where the family looked after the pumping engine. It transpires that Mary Jane first entered the Ashby workhouse in October 1921. She was self-referred and was not taken by family. She seems to have been discharged 4 days after admitting herself, and there are a further 6 times she went into the workhouse covering December 1921, September until December 1922, August 1923 to January 1924 when she went to Narborough Asylum which eventually became Carlton Hayes Hospital. This fits in with Albert John Kirby, her husband, being asked to pay for her upkeep in the asylum in 1924. She was logged in as a person of unsound mind, although of temperate behaviour. She said she saw the 'Engine of the Lord' and saw people with missing limbs and babies with broken bones. She had no idea how old she was. In fact her date of birth changed from 17 May 1878 to 1877 and 1879 to 1880. She was regularly found on her knees praying. She returned to Ashby workhouse for short spells in July 1924 when she was again ill, and August 1924. In November 1924 she was there again, but stayed until May 1929, going back again there in 1934 until the workhouse closed in 1936. We know from the 1939 register that she was in the Loughborough workhouse, by then under the name of the public assistance facility, by which time her date of birth had changed again to 1881. It is currently unclear where or when she died. We also discovered the grave of **John Kirby**, Albert John's father who died on 2 October 1923, and that of **Arthur Everard Kirby** who died on 5 Feb 1912. The graves are side by side and the crosses have fallen but the inscriptions are still visible. Within Arthur's grave is a stone to the memory of his sister Ethel's husband Thomas Alexander Haywood of Griffydam who died on 2 June 1947 at the LRI. He worked for Bearings Disposal Ltd. and died of head injuries as a result of falling off his bike in Griffydam when cycling home on 29 May. He was trying to avoid running over some children and was buried at Thringstone.
- Following on from above, we have also been discussing Mary Jane's daughter **Reenie Kirby** who lived in the cottage on Cinder Hill. She was often visited by people including Austin Sykes and David White from the Methodist church, and also local children. One wall of her bungalow was all sticks which she used for the fire. The bungalow had no water within it, and Reenie used to get water from the brook. It also had no electricity or proper drainage. After her father's death, she couldn't sleep in her bedroom, in which there was a large religious picture, because it was in such a poor condition and slept on the sofa. Wearing a long coat and wellington boots, she used to go to Ted and Evelyn Chamberlain's shop on Main Street to buy red hair dye, but rather than wash it in, she just combed it in. She was very friendly with Emma May Wallbank who was a couple of years older than Reenie and who lived at 6 Henson's Lane. Emma May died on 2 April 1984 after which Reenie had few friends of her own age although Bessie James used to try to help her out. A very religious person, the death of her father Albert John Kirby prompted Reenie to frequently visit his grave, but she was also found lying on it after dark and had to be removed. The grave is not far from the entrance to the

church, on the left hand side behind the first row of gravestones. It is just a square marker for Albert John Kirby and Reenie, who is properly Emma Joyce Irene Kirby. Reenie was born on 4 March 1913 and died on 22 October 1992. Albert John Kirby was born on 11 January 1877, although the 1939 register says 1880 and he himself filled in the 1911 census saying he was 30 years old when he was older. He died on Christmas Eve 1967. Reenie was not sent to school by her father in 1921 (this is borne out by newspaper reports of court cases), and it is not clear that she went to school after 1921, but she was exempted from school from the age of 14 anyway. There were all sorts of village rumours about the actual relationship she had with her father, but nothing was ever proven. Whilst some local children were fascinated by Reenie and visited her, others were less so and called her The Witch and found her smelly and rather frightening, possibly because of her appearance and the fact that she was very fond of cats and had several. Reenie's grandmother was Emma Kirby who died on 23 January 1940. She lived with Albert and Reenie lived at the bungalow on Cinder Hill after they left The Green. Emma left Albert £10 when she died. Albert John Kirby left £420.

- **March 1933** – **Charlotte Mary Watson,** wife of George Henry Watson of Talbot Lane took **John Wilkins** of The Green to court over an incident with a bicycle. She had received injuries through what she saw as his negligent riding on 21 March and wanted £50 in compensation. Dr McGarry from Osgathorpe had been called to see the lady, and said there had been a great deal of bruising to the right leg, ankle and foot, the area was very swollen and she had been in much pain. In court in June, Dr McGarry said it would take another 5 of 6 weeks before Mrs Watson would be able to return to work. Mrs Watson had been attending Loughborough Hospital previously for problems with her shoulder, but that the problems with her ankle and foot had come from the specific incident with the bicycle and was more than a sprained ankle. Mrs Watson, 52, said she was returning from Thringstone House at 9.30pm with **Mrs Illsley from Talbot House Farm,** with her daughter behind. She was walking to Sandholes when she was knocked down and fell on the grass. She had been confined to the house for a month, and still walked with the aid of crutches. She had not had a fall previously, and could not say if the bike had lights and did not step in front of him. Mrs Illsley from Talbot House Farm said they were walking on the right side of the road, and Mrs Watson had been on her left. Mr **Lionel Perry, a cyclist from John Street**, passed them and said to Mrs Watson that there was another cyclist coming and almost immediately the collision occurred and Mrs Watson fell on the grass. Mrs Illsley said she could not say whether Mrs Watson had stepped out when the first cyclist had passed and it had all happened very quickly, but that Mrs Watson was able to walk home with assistance. **Miss Millie Watson** said she had heard her mother scream, but had not seen the incident. Mr Perry said that said that he was riding his bicycle down the hill, went past the 2 ladies, and that there was enough room to safely pass. Mr Wilkins said that the first he heard about the charges was when he received solicitors letters in April and May and said that there was always a lot of traffic on that stretch of road, yet the ladies had chosen to walk with their backs to the oncoming traffic. He said that he had been riding for 40 years without incident. He rode his bike to work at New Lount Colliery and was cycling to work. He did have a light on his bike, and gave the ladies plenty of room and rang the bell as he was coming down the hill. Just as he reached her, Mrs Watson turned in front of him, and he couldn't avoid her, and knocked her sidewards. There was a space of about 3 or 4 feet and he could have got past easily had she not turned. The judge agreed that Wilkins was responsible, but that the damage was very much over-estimated at £50, allowing £3 for special damages and a further £10 for general damages plus costs.

Date of next meeting 4 June at 7pm at Charles Booth Centre. This will be our AGM. All welcome to attend.