

FRIENDS OF THRINGSTONE

MINUTES OF MEETING 3 August 2006

In Attendance:

Nita Pearson, Pam Porter, Sandie and Tony Newton, Cllr. Pam Clayfield , Bernard Lee, Lorraine Harrison, Cllr. Rod Evans, Janet Stevenson, Ray Neal, Geoff Walker, Geoff Wilson

Apologies recieved from:

Colin Perrett, Margaret Smith, Rowena Summers, John & Karon Smith, Cllr. Ray Woodward, Chris Mellor, David Stevenson, Jane Wilson.

Minutes of last meeting:

Accepted as circulated without amendment.

Membership Report

Nita said that she had spoken with Pam Porter about the list of lapsed members, and whether they should continue to receive minutes. They had agreed that all lapsed members would continue to receive minutes for the next 2 meetings, and if they had failed to rejoin after that time, their names would be taken off the list, and they would stop receiving minutes. Nita further said that she had written to all those people and suggested they might like to rejoin the group, and had told them of the next 2 meeting dates. Nita agreed to ring Jo Johnson and Jan Cufflin about their memberships, as they had not been seen for a while.

Treasurers Report

No expenditure to report since the last meeting.

Balance bfwd £532.50

Receipts £139.00

Balance cfwd £671.50

Website

As a result of the absence of John Smith there was no report. It was noted that the Website was somewhat out of date and that John would be addressing this as his health improved.

John had sent Nita a mapping exercise on what a new website was likely to contain, but the main emphasis was to update the old website before working on the new.

Hayrake 2006

It was confirmed that this event was to take place on 19 August 2006 commencing at 10.00am and on further subsequent days as required dependant on numbers, progress etc. Volunteers were encouraged to go along to help. Bernard Lee offered to help as did Janet Stevenson. Other people said they would if they were able. Nita pointed out that this is a vital part of maintaining Bob's Closs and needed to be done to prevent all the new wild flowers which had been seen again this year dying off next year. Nita had emailed all the people on our mailing list to ask them to help out, in the hope that this became more of a village event, rather than the same few volunteers helping out every year.

Litter pick July 2006

This resulted in the collection and removal of 12 black sacks, 1 bicycle, 1 fridge (recovered from the brook) and various other odds and ends. Local residents were both pleased and curious at the activity and our actions were explained to those who would listen. The opportunity was taken to recruit future help. It was however noticed that there had not been as much litter as had been collected in the past.

It was noted that we must ensure that all six areas of the village, and indeed any others that remain to be identified, should receive our attention in this way including the Melrose Estate.

NP reported that we will be in receipt of the £100.00 allocation from the 100 Days funding as result of this action, and that a photograph had been taken of some of the group at the start of the Thringstone round of the 100 day campaign. Nita thanked those involved for coming along to this photoshoot and to talk to the Council officers about our community involvement in litter picks and environmental issues.

Councillors' Report

Rod Evans reported that a request for an upgrade of the Melrose play area was being considered at this time, this work to include seats and dropped kerbs leading to a paved area allowing disabled access.

The parking area is to be cleaned up and tidied however the fate of the garages remains under discussion. Some are still in use but others have been vandalized to such an extent as to render them totally unusable without considerable investment.

The housing stock on the Melrose estate is considered to be quite reasonable in the main and most remains in public ownership.

Following a long period of inactivity, there have been no meetings for about six years, the Miners Welfare Trustees have now engaged the services of a consultant to investigate the availability of funding for redevelopment.

Rod Evans stated that work was still progressing on Forest View on The Green and that the court case may still go ahead.

Nita reported that Pam Clayfield, who was going to be late attending the meeting, had said that work to build out the area either side of the pedestrian crossing on The Green was likely to take place shortly, but an actual date had not been given. Pam had also indicated that work to reduce the puddles of water near the Methodist Church on the corner of Loughborough Road when it rains was also likely to be taking place at the same time, and that a 40 mph speed limit was to be introduced on Talbot Lane and also on the A512 near the Bulls Head as it went round the corners.

Guests and Speakers for the future

It was felt that we should give consideration to this question: Various suggestions were made and names put forward :-Rural Countryside Commission, Neil Talbot, Leicestershire Wild Fowl Trust, The Whitwick Historical Society, the Bowls club, and Grace Dieu Cricket Club to name but a few. Nita will follow up on these, but if any other members have thoughts on the subject please don't be slow in coming forward. Nita said that she had approached Alan Burgess, new vicar of St Andrews and hoped that he would get back to her to say whether he was available to come to a future meeting as a speaker.

Nita said there was a possibility that other council officers would be invited in the future, as following the restructure, other officers were now in post. Nita agreed that it is important to continue to invite local police to our meetings.

Future expenditure planning

Having a healthy balance at the bank is very good but as a group we should attempt to spend these funds for the improvement of the village and the benefit of the residents. Numerous suggestions were made as follows

Signage

1. Drury Lane. The council will make a one off contribution of at least £50.00. Nita has already spoken to Coalville CVS about a rustic sign, and will continue to follow this up and order it, if the cost is agreed to be acceptable by committee. Nita will find out from the airport whether the cost of the sign can be funded from our grant monies, as this item was not on the original request submitted.
2. Bauble Yard. The residents are to be written to by council officers again, as no replies had been received before. The owner of 10 Main Street to be written to by the council to obtain his written permission to a new sign going on the wall of his property, which is tenanted at present. The Council are interested in possibly helping with funding for this. Pam Clayfield to chase.
3. Marking of buildings of historic interest to support village walk project.
4. Village entrance marker signs incorporation reference to The National Forest. It is possible that the National Forest Company will fund 50% and Pam Clayfield and Nita will follow this up, but it was noted that each sign is £600 plus VAT.

Planting Etc.

1. The grass to the side of Drury Lane needs to be leveled and re-seeded. Nita asked the group whether they were in agreement to her contacting the airport for funding for this, and some heathers which need replacing, the originals having been stolen. All in agreement.
2. There is possible money available to local communities who form part of 'the specials group'. This includes Thringstone. Nita had done a letter, circulated around the committee, of things that people within the village would like to see funded, and this had gone to John Richardson, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, for him to look at prior to a future meeting of council members. This included planting of trees and shrubs.
3. Planting and tidying on the Lillybank, which is council owned should be considered. Nita has already made arrangements for a meeting to be held with county council about future planting around the village, and would keep everyone informed on this.

Publicity

Reports were received of various items which had appeared in local newspapers including The Leicester Mercury and more local publications and local radio (BBC Radio Leicester and its website) regarding works, functions and other activities in which the group has involved itself in particular Ray Neal's appointment as the first Community Guardian.

Cuttings from these publications were circulated and the passed to GW for filing.

Friends of Grace Dieu

Nita read out the agenda for their next meeting, but said she was not attending. Rod Evans will report back to NP as he is involved with both organizations.

Calendars

Orders will be taken for these at the next meeting. Jan Stevenson will be dealing for the group. Money for calendars should be brought to the next meeting by those placing orders.

Newsletter

There was a consensus that we should have an Autumn Newsletter covering recent activity, forthcoming events and plans etc. Nita to write. Thoughts and contributions welcomed. It was suggested that there might be an advert for the calendar, but this was not felt appropriate as there could then be too many ordered. Jan Stevenson is to place an advert for RSPB in the next newsletter. As an existing active member of the group, it was agreed to give her a discount on the usual cost of advertising. It was agreed that the council would be asked to print the newsletter again at the cost of £87+ as before. Pam Porter would co-ordinate this.

History Project

Nita will apply for a one off grant to fund the publication of a leaflet/booklet from the council. As part of this grant, 3 copies of the current bank statement need to be provided. Pam Porter agreed to get these to Nita as the deadline was the end of August.

It was generally felt that there was a need for the group to broaden the historical aspect of its work in order to raise the profile of the village which has suffered in the past from a lack of interest from the local authority not enjoying the benefit of a Parish council to plead its case. Nita and Ray Neal had started to talk to older villagers about their memories of the village pre-war, and Nita had typed up a 16 page transcript of one conversation with Charles Fortnam. He was editing this before he returned to Australia, but the transcript was available for inspection if anybody was interested. The idea is to possibly put some of these recordings on the website in sound bite form so that people can listen to them, and also to link this in with a local group interested in keeping local dialects alive, and to possibly link with the local primary school. Nita is to contact the head after the school holidays.

The Springboard Centre is very interested in recording for posterity the local dialect(s). We will need to have additional volunteers to interview and record local people who speak in the local dialect and share their memories of times past with us. Several people volunteered their services including Geoff Walker, Lorraine (provided the interview can be at the community centre), Sandie, Ray Neal and Nita volunteered to transcribe the tapes.

Ray had also been talking to the man who lived at what was historically known as The Star beer house in Main Street. He had found various items in his garden, and John Dickinson had been approached to do a further dig there.

Nita has done a 6 page mini history of the village which has already been forwarded round the committee for inspection. Ray in the meantime has been talking to lots of villagers down Brooks Lane and Gracedieu Road and several were interested in being involved in a history project and it was hoped would come to future meetings.

Some people had found historical items when doing their gardens, and Nita said that she had told John Dickinson about this, and he would be getting in touch with the relevant people to talk about further work and what had already been found.

Nobody at the meeting expressed an interest in taking the lead on the history project. Nita said that she and Ray could not be responsible for this additional item as they were already heavily involved in most other things, and it was left that this be discussed at the next meeting.

Sandie Newton agreed to get some printing costs for a history trail walk leaflet to see what sort of monies would be required.

NP will progress the 'Village Trail' document and send her suggested route to all by email for their comments in time for the next meeting.

Planning Matters

Concern was expressed over the possible demolition of Mrs Maloney's bungalow at 111 Loughborough Road which was earmarked for development and the rumored proposed development exiting onto John Street. Pam Clayfield undertook to investigate and report back.

General discussion on this took place, and it was agreed that the amount of development at that end of the village could put serious strain on the existing drainage and sewerage systems. This was noted by the councillors.

Concern was expressed as to whether the old sewers could cope with the extra load. 5 houses are to be built on the land adjacent to 111 Loughborough Road, and a further 3 on Mrs Maloney's property, making 8 in total in one place alone. It was further reported that planning was likely to be granted to demolish the bungalow at 67 Hensons Lane, and build up to 5 properties on that.

Concern was expressed at the extra volume of traffic at that end of the village, especially since it came close to the traffic calming measures in place. Pam Clayfield agreed to raise these concerns to County when appropriate, and see whether some of the existing traffic calming could be altered.

Bulls Head

It was reported that the Bulls Head had been sold by Whitbreads and was to become a Bass pub. Nita had already told the people from Friends of Gracedieu that this was happening, as it could affect parking for the priory

Social event

It is proposed that we meet for dinner at The George, Coleorton in September. Sandie will coordinate and arrange.

AOB

Geoff Wilson reported that the present Post Office operator is actively engaged in persuading the Royal Mail to close him down as he feels that he can make better use of the space. This is apparently an ongoing situation but it was generally felt that the village should not be without a post office and that the powers that be should be apprised of our feelings on the matter. It was also felt that another shop in the village would welcome the opportunity to include a post office service in their business. Nita agreed to write to the post office ombudsman about this issue, and raise concern on behalf of the village. It was noted that Belton post office is also to close.

Bernard Lee reported that he had been approached by an elderly lady who lives on Clover Place about poor lighting near her property, which was making her afraid to go out. Nita agreed to report this to the relevant officer at the council. Bernard further reported glass on Hensons Lane recreation field and it was reported that there was a

lot of glass on the Sustrans Track. Nita agreed to write to the officers on these issues as well.

Pam Porter handed Nita an application form for the Glorious Gardens competition taking place, and Nita agreed to submit Drury Lane to this.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at TCC on 14 September at 18.45