



The Friends of Thringstone

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Visit our website at: www.friends-of-thringstone.org.uk

Minutes for meeting held at Thringstone Community Centre on Thursday, 12th March 2009, at 6.45pm

Present: Nita Pearson, Tony Newton, Chris Mellor, Tracy Foulds, Lorraine Whitehurst, Pam Porter, Jan Cufflin, Bernard Lee, Ray Neal, Brenda Simpson, Ray Woodward, Janet Stevenson, Ann Petty, Dave Everitt, Julie Everitt, Colin Perritt, John & Karon Smith, Diane and Ian Bull

Apologies: Rowena Summers, Tam Bream, Sandie Newton, Jane and Geoff Wilson, Roy Hill, PC Rachael Hughes, CSO Jim Sorrell, John and Helen Dickinson, Pam Clayfield, Jo Johnson, Colin Porcher, Maggie Smith

Nita's Correspondence and publicity report – Letters, emails etc:

- Contact with Citrus Group regarding meeting to discuss **Fox Site** and reply received to be discussed below under previous minutes
- Concerns about the amount of **litter** in the village passed to NWLDC Streetscene Manager and reply received which said that due to staff shortages there would be no litter picks in the area until further notice
- Contact made with Thringstone Primary informing them of **our next litter pick** date of **15th March**
- Acceptance of funding offer from NWLDC for the provision of 7 **Smart Meters** to be loaned out to residents in the village to monitor their electricity usage to be discussed below
- Further details sought on **Hail and Ride Scheme** and obtained to be discussed below
- **Voluntary Action NWL** March newsletter received and emailed to those on email. Hard copy available.
- Contact from Barbara Nunn, Community Opportunities Officer at Coalville Resource Centre, asking about **volunteering opportunities for people with mild learning difficulties**
- Discussions about our **Heritage Road Show** with Ann Petty and date arranged for first one – **9th May** at 12.30pm at George and Dragon until 5pm. Theme public houses.
- Email from Roundhills School asking when our deadline is for the next newsletter. Replied to send anything Thringstone specific by mid April at the outside.
- **RCC newsletters** distributed to committee. Hard copy available
- **Breathing Places e-newsletter** distributed around committee

Promotion:

- Our **May walks** were promoted on Page 10 of the latest **Vision** as being things to do for free, when actually we are asking for donations, but thanks to NWLDC for promoting these to a wider audience
- Article on group supplied to **Village Voice magazine** is printed in Spring issue
- Litter Pick promoted by **school** in their **newsletter**

- Articles sent to **Mercury, Echo and Coalville Times** on our funding success for the Smart Meters. This is already live on the Leicester Mercury Community News blog which is <http://communitynewsleicestermercury.blogspot.com>. Report on our funding success also posted to our own website

Other:

- Email through website from former resident of village, Pat Wright, asking how he can join the group, as he still considers himself a friend of the village although he now lives in Leicester.
- Email direct to Nita from lady new to the village interested in joining the group

Treasurer's Report Tony Newton explained that the report from now on would be presented at each meeting up to the end of the previous month and link with the bank statement. An auditor has been found- Kath Ingall, and the accounts would be audited before the AGM.

February 2009 Balance is £1522.29

Payment has been made of £245 for the smart meters but this will be covered by the grant from the Footprints Challenge Community Fund when received.

A receipt for £9.50 for tent repairs and Christmas tree light bulbs was passed to the treasurer at the meeting.

Tony received a vote of thanks for his work on the accounts.

Publication Report and Christmas Card for 2009 (see below). Publications were selling well especially at the George & Dragon. A stock take will be done to assess reprinting needs.

Web Report John Smith reported that the website is up to date and contains information about the Smart Meters loan scheme. The Guest book showed that the site is being well used and has produced new member enquiries. Given that Pat Wright (mentioned above) does not live in the village anymore and no longer has family in the village, his interest in the group had obviously come solely from reading the website. A vote of thanks was given to the webmaster.

History Report The road show arrangements were going ahead (see below). It is noted that The Star is up for sale again. The Rose and Crown is apparently closed again but the situation is unclear.

Arts and Community Update Pam Clayfield was not present but several activities are planned and members of the group had knowledge of:

16th March Film showing of Stagecoach at the Community Centre

7th April Loose Women group next meeting 7.30pm at the Community Centre.

Pam is investigating belly dancing/tea dancing/line dancing, and a visit to a dog track. Diane Bull said she knew of a Jive teacher and will speak to Pam direct.

22nd April Ray Sutton's lectures on Art and Literature will start at the Community Centre

Councillors' 5 minutes

Dave Everitt welcomed Ray Woodward as the new village councillor and said how good it was to have someone involved in village life to represent us. As a member of the Scrutiny Committee, Dave had brought the question of parking on grass verges to the attention of the Council. He had pointed out that holes and trenches caused by cars parking were causing problems for pedestrians and those with buggies, and would also give rise to problems for the mowing team. Nita agreed to talk to the county council about a particularly large hole on Loughborough Road grass verge near Thringstone Members Club, as she had been in contact with them before about damage in the same area.

Ray Woodward thanked those who had voted for him. He looked forward to working with Dave as a team for the benefit of the village. The Fox site situation was a case in point. Dave was on the planning committee so could not comment on developments. However Ray could listen to people's concerns and pass them on so that Dave could vote in accordance with village opinion. (see below)

They were exploring the idea of Councillor's surgeries. Nita asked for dates & venues to be supplied before the deadline for the next newsletter which is 10th April. These surgeries would also be promoted on the website.

Another issue for concern is the dangerous traffic calming at both ends of the village, by The Bull's Head and at the top of Whitwick Moor, which was being discussed with the County Council. The parking bays just outside the village, being so close to the traffic calming, made the situation there difficult for those entering/exiting their cars, and for those coming through the traffic calming. It was hoped that the minimum change near The Bull's Head would be a change in priorities for traffic.

Ray had been to the Coalville Forum meeting, which had been very poorly attended as far as members of the public were concerned. He suggested that there was £20,000 worth of funding for these groups which it may be possible to access, and was hopeful that the Thringstone Community Forum, mentioned in previous minutes, might still happen so that Thringstone could apply for funding from this pot of money.

From Previous Minutes

- **The Fox site** It was agreed that a possible way forward was for the Citrus Group to come to an open meeting, which our group would be willing to facilitate and advertise to villagers to go to if they wish.
If Citrus Group let Nita know when they would be available to meet with a selection of dates in an evening, she could then check with the Community Centre on availability, and get back to Citrus. She could also contact the media so everybody knew about it, as it isn't really just our members, but the wider village who would need to be informed.
Ray Woodward said he would investigate whether the resubmitted plans were substantially changed, and who had designed them.
Bernard had been to the last planning appeal, and had been very unimpressed with the chairman, who had showed complete lack of interest, and had in fact ignored comments from the floor.
Whilst we like to be kept informed of things, Friends of Thringstone are merely facilitating any meeting that might happen, not being a part of any discussions or decision making.
- **Local development framework and proposed eco-town.** Copies of a letter were given out from Leicestershire County Council to the Deputy Director of Housing and Growth, New Homes and Sustainable Development in London. This detailed plans for an Eco town to be built between Coalville and Shepshed which had been dignified with the working title of 'Coalshed', and had not been widely publicised, despite the letter having been written nearly 12 months ago. It was felt that this showed complete contempt for the residents of the area.
A Coalville Times article reporting comments from David Taylor about the poor consultation procedures on the LDF was read, and made available to the meeting to see. It was noted that no councillors were on the platform at the consultation meeting nor were they prepared to speak from the floor.
Members are urged to write to the Council with their comments on the whole LDF process before the deadline of 5pm on 23rd March. A sample letter, written by John Smith, was made available for people to use as a basis for their own letters if they wished.
Only 856 letters have been received by the council from the whole area and this was felt to be unrepresentative of the strength of feeling.
Diane Bull pointed out that a worrying aspect of the plans was that Thringstone and Whitwick are not listed as sustainable villages, separate from Coalville, although they complied with almost all the criteria. If it were necessary to have a Parish Council to achieve this status, we should look seriously at going down this route in the same way as is being currently considered in Whitwick.
- **Police Report** An email had been received from Rachael Hughes listing the crime reports for the past 14 days in Thringstone;
3 shed burglaries on Loughborough Rd –some leads obtained.
Theft from a motor vehicle on the Bulls Head car park – no suspects
Damage to a motor vehicle on Clyde Court – youths spoken to but no charges levied.

Theft of an un-useable motor bike from a garden in Glebe Road while the owner was on holiday

Damage to cladding of a garage in Springfield – no suspects/witnesses

Residents are asked to report any incidents of under age drinking. The shops in the village have been passing the plain clothes test purchases, but gangs of youths who appeared to be underage have recently been seen walking down Main Street drinking from beer cans.

- The **Smart meter loan scheme** is now working following a successful funding bid to NWLDC. Pam Porter is co-ordinating the scheme and explained that 7 meters have been purchased. These are now available for loan for periods of three months or less, although NWLDC had suggested a loan period of no more than 8 weeks. Nita will check with NWLDC if our loan scheme, being longer in period, would cause problems with the resultant statistical analysis following completion of paperwork by users. The meters are simple to set up, but there is help for anyone who has difficulties.
The meters enable residents to assess their usage of electricity. Meters were given out to members who expressed an interest. A cost of £35 will be levied against anyone who does not return the meters in good working order.
- Taking part in the **Footprint Challenge**. Three members volunteered for this: Nita, Janet and Karon. Nita will report back to NWLDC and ask if there is any form-filling to be done before we start monitoring our CO2 levels and feeding these into the NWLDC's statistical database.
- **Green Transport Week** 13-20th July There was no interest in an extra walk.
- **Charles Booth's grave** renovations update. The faculty decision was still pending. Jan was asked if more than one quotation for the work had been obtained. Nita agreed to check this with Alan Burgess.
- **Litter Pick this Sunday** at 10am from The Green. Pam said that the Council were unable to provide many sticks, gloves and bags so would people please bring their own. Collection points are as before: Melrose Gate, Rangers, Turolough Gate and Community Centre car park. If the gates to the centre are closed, Lorraine agreed that bags could be left just outside. Jan said that the church were doing a working party tidy around the church and its footpaths on 28th, so there is no need to look to do that area.
- **AGM** venue. It was agreed to have picnic at the community centre inside or out depending on the weather. This will be organised at a later date and form part of the action plan (see below).
- **Hail and Ride Scheme** – There is apparently an obligation in Thringstone on bus drivers to stop for anyone who requests them, which has been in place for 20 years. It was felt this was causing delays in the timetable and Arriva were moving towards set bus stops. If anyone has any complaints about the positioning of these stops please complain direct to Arriva, although Nita did agree to raise the issue with the county councillor who had been involved with the issue and talked to Arriva, as they had indicated to him that consultation would take place with residents affected by new bus stops, and this does not seem to have been the case.

Action plan for 2009

Nita had been asked at external meetings if the group had an action plan, so that everyone knew what was going on for the next 12 months. As this has not previously been discussed, it was felt important to rectify this, as an action plan would not only be useful to the group, but the media could know in advance of things taking place, posters could be done, and those requesting details of our future planning could be shown something.

1. **Walks programme** starts 5th April. Ann Petty volunteered to help Nita.
Handouts/posters were given out to advertise these walks.
2. Bernard was asked to speak to Pauline Bolstridge about 3 **signs for our flowerbeds** to be provided and in place before July. They could be similar in design to the one made for

- Robert Newton and placed in the Community Centre garden. Once prices have been obtained, Bernard will contact Tony about the cost.
3. Members were asked if they wished FoT to link with other village events to do a joint venture. Jan suggested the **Flower Festival** at the church and said she would let the group know when this was taking place to discuss and add into the action plan.
 4. The **Heritage Roadshow** starts on 9th May at the George & Dragon 12.30 –5pm with the theme being public houses of the past and present. This event could be a membership opportunity, so Nita will be there to deal with that issue. Nita and Ann are organising further road shows, so contact them with ideas for other dates/venues.
 5. **National Forest Walk Festival** 16th May – Moira YHA. Volunteers are needed in the event that Friends of Thringstone can have a stall to promote our walks brochures. Pam Porter offered to help Nita.
 6. Open Gardens. No one had contacted Jan about opening their garden. It was agreed to combine the Opening of Bob's Closs with a picnic and the **August Hayrake**. There could be a plant stall and Jan was asked to speak to Jo Johnson to see what plants she has, although the plants stored with Jo will probably be more use at the Grace Dieu Event.
 7. **Patio at Community Centre** – Funding is being sought for this project. Lorraine suggested that it was presented as a series of smaller projects for which small grants could be found. She wanted to apply separately for money for the gate, the path etc. It was agreed she should go ahead with some funding bids where she had details of money available. Bernard has obtained some quotations but Ray Woodward said the funding applications needed to be from constituted groups, and as the cost could be considerable, it might not be possible for our group to do this. Diane Bull agreed to help Bernard and Pam Porter with applications and link with the community centre and Ray Woodward who is supervising the patio build.
 8. **Grace Dieu event** 5th July 12.30 until 5pm with set up earlier. Sandie is happy to do this and Bernard, Ray Neal and Pam Porter will all help, with Bernard and Ray Woodward to set up the gazebo and take it down. The Gazebo is stored in Ray Woodward's shed. Roy Hill is collecting bric a brac for this event. Nita had spoken to John Dickinson about increasing our pitch at the Grace Dieu event, but costs were too prohibitive and room for a larger stand unlikely anyway due to the interest in the event from local groups and charities, following the cancellation of this year's Picnic in the Parks.
 9. Are there any other local events we can go to with our booklets? – Oaks country Fair was suggested and a transport event at Snibston. Pam Porter will find out about the Oaks and Ann Petty about Snibston, although it might clash with the National Forest walk festival.
 10. It was agreed to support the **School summer Fete** again this year. Sandie will find out when this is and report back.
 11. **East Midlands In Bloom competition** – judging will be 6 – 17th July – it was suggested we buy some more plants, and consider bedding plugs and grow them on. If not used, these could be sold at the Grace Dieu event. Bernard agreed to talk to Pauline Bolstridge about this, as last year she let us use her greenhouse for growing plants on and to Tony about any extra money needed.
 12. **Litter pick dates** – It was agreed that we need to forward plan so these can be properly advertised in newsletters and in media. Prospective dates, subject to agreement with the NWLDC's rubbish collection team are:
 Sunday May 17th, Saturday 13th June – for EMIB preparation, Sunday 28th June – also for EMIB preparation, Saturday 12th September, Sunday 22nd November
 It was agreed that Tony source the prices of some litter pick sticks and gloves for the group from the internet, as he had been successful in locating items for us in the past at a considerably cheaper rate than could have been found locally.
 13. **Christmas cards** – It was thought that we need to get copy to the printers by July. Jan will enquire who the church use and when their deadlines are. Suitable photos are

requested. Karon Smith has one, as has Ray Neal and there may be others. Please send any to Nita as soon as possible.

14. It was agreed to support the **School Christmas Fete** again this year. Sandie will let us know when this will be.
15. It is hoped to set up the **Christmas tree** this year on 11th December. It was also agreed to combine the Carols with a small Craft Fair, if possible. It was suggested that mulled wine be sold by the jug rather than the glass. Our group are providing the tree, lights and labour. Nita will talk to Lorraine about times for this event, and what room is available, and report back to a future meeting, at which point in time any carol singing could also be discussed. Bernard agreed to talk to Margaret Staley to enquire whether we would be able to have a tree from her this year. We already have the lights.
16. Some **more planting** is needed down Millbank. Bernard felt heathers were needed. He also said that some of the plants down by the Church Wall had been damaged due to a child riding its bike the full length of the planting, which cost FoT in excess of £500 to provide for the village. It is hoped that the plants will survive this assault. He will talk to Tony about any money needed for purchase of plants.

AOB

1. Nita read out an article from the Coalville Times regarding money being required to keep St Andrew's running properly, and suggested that people who wished to help contact the church.
2. Jan Cufflin had some free tickets to the organ concert at St Andrew's to give away. These were offered to the members at the meeting to take away if they wanted them.
3. Following the discussions above, an action plan will be drawn up, and presented to the next meeting for viewing/consultation.
4. Lorraine gave Nita details of a small grant available, through Morrisons, to CSV Action Earth. Nita agreed to put in a bid for planting to help with replacement of damaged/dead plants in the areas we planted originally
5. Karon Smith said that people were already coming to the village because of the Geosites links mentioned at the last meeting, and were commenting on the plaques and village history.

Date of next meeting 16th April 2009 at 6.45pm at Thringstone Community Centre. Speaker will be Andrew Barnes from Energy Saving Trust.