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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7th OCTOBER 2010 AT THRINGSTONE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present: Nita Pearson, Bernard Lee, Jo Johnson, Tam Bream, Roy Hill, Janet Stevenson, Ray Neal, Ann Petty, Pam Clayfield, Brenda Simpson, Roy Hill, Geoff Walker, Ray Woodward, Mike King, Ruth Crockett, Lorraine Whitehurst, Dave & Julie Everitt, Ron Hill, Bob Rushton
Apologies: David Stevenson, Rowena Summers, Jim Wilkinson, Pam Porter, Karon and John Smith

Guest Speaker

Bob Rushton from ECSEC (Environmental and Community Social Enterprise Company), a charity, came to talk about his work helping to conserve the wild life in the River Mease. He explained that his group worked with communities to improve and preserve our environment, and was set up to improve and conserve the environment which was being threatened by development in the Measham and Ashby areas, which was producing high levels of phosphates running into the river.

His interest had been started when he became aware that many species common when he was a boy, such as stickle backs and bullheads, were no longer in the river. He showed photographs of some of the species affected by river pollution, including otters, and said the river is one of only 4 in England still to have loach and white clawed crayfish. They had managed to get the river declared as an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and a European Conservation Area.

They had worked on a survey of the river over 10 years and produced a report on the phosphate levels from agricultural and housing runoff, and wanted to engage local people in the survey to increase understanding of the problem. They were not opposed to all housing developments, but were looking for sustainable ways to combat the problem. The report recommended a long term management plan, but the Environment Agency is under resourced and Severn Trent, as a big business, seemed disinterested. However they are hoping to establish a natural wetland with filters at farm discharge points and septic tanks. They hope that involvement of the farmers and local people in helping to clean up the river will develop interest in sustaining the improvements and were always looking for new members and/or donations.

Geoff Walker commented that one of the major difficulties was winter run off from roads which had been salted and had oil on the surface. Bob thought that the natural solution was reed beds with bases which absorb phosphates and other pollutants and filters at the storm drains discharge points.

Pam Clayfield asked if the phosphate situation was better now, and Bob said it had become worse. NWL did not have data, but it is possible to email the Environment Agency to ask for an analysis of local waters. 0.6 parts per 100 is the danger level.

Pam Clayfield asked if invasion by American Crayfish, which is a problem elsewhere, had been encountered. Bob was pleased to say this was not yet a problem. As with red squirrels, introducing foreign species often drives out the native.

Dave Everitt asked if other local brooks would have such biodiversity. Bob said that there is a Leics. County Council bio diversity officer who had organised a survey of all county watercourses and the River Mease was found to be special. Dave then asked if pressure had been put on Severn Trent to clean up rivers. Bob replied that there used to be local officers

who took a pride in keeping phosphate levels as low as possible in their local patch. Now, however, big business only spent enough money to keep it to the required minimum which is not sufficient to protect sensitive species.

He was then asked if we could do anything to protect our own local waterways. Bob thought that we could try to put pressure on local government and businesses but the best way forward was to get to know local polluters personally and shame them into action.

Bob did explain about water treatment centres, how they had changed over the years, and that the water that comes out of our taps now is of top quality, and is often better quality than that which can be bought in bottles.

Ray Neal asked if he would come and look at our local brooks as it was generally agreed by all present that there is no longer many fish in our own brooks . Bob replied that he would be happy to come and advise on an action plan to sort out our problems and that he would be happy to consider reciprocal volunteering to clean up water courses.

Members wishing to contact Bob or receive further details/offer support can contact him on bobrushton@ntlworld.com or on 07931 524784. The group is also on Facebook.

Reports:

Chair's report Oct 2010

Main achievement

In early 2010, Nita completed two submissions to enter FoT for two awards under Community and Cleaner and Greener through Rural Community Council Leicestershire and Rutland's Village Achievement awards.

The presentations were made in Kibworth on 23rd September, and FoT won Silver in the Community awards and Gold in the Cleaner and Greener awards. Certificates were presented, and as winner of Gold in the Cleaner and Greener award, FoT received a cheque for £75 from Lady Jennifer Gretton, President of the RCC.

Both awards took into account things done over the last 3 years. Community awards covered putting on events, including our heritage roadshows, and newsletter production. Cleaner and greener covered tree and shrub planting, litter picks and environmental achievements.

Well done and thanks to all those members, past and present, who have helped with events, delivering newsletters, litter picks, planting etc., which made the winning of these awards possible.

Nita showed the meeting 2 certificates relating to the awards as above.

The letterhead has been altered to now include the RCC logo and the website has also been updated in this respect. The minute paper will be altered after this meeting.

Nita welcomed 2 new members to the group – Mike King and Ruth Crockett who joined that evening.

Letters received:

- From Community Centre asking for completion of forms to continue our regular user membership for 2010/11. Completed and returned
- Letter from Snibston about 2010 gala and inviting us to next year's. Confirmed we hopefully will by email
- Letter inviting us to VAL AGM on 27th Sept sent to committee (nobody available to attend) and enclosing newsletter and training opportunities booklet

- Letter inviting us to Marlene Rise Centre MRC Community Action AGM on 7th October sent to committee. Nobody available to attend.
- From Natural England confirming insurance cover held for walks until 31st March 2011
- Letter saying that the group is being considered for the Queens Awards – we were put in for this last year, but our submission was delayed in the post, and they agreed to hold it over until this current year. Awaiting to be contacted by deputy Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire for discussion as part of decision process.
- Growing Communities magazine and Plantlift booklet from DEFRA for gardening team

Emails received:

- From Steve Badcock enclosing photos of the extension work being done at St Andrew's forwarded to history group for their future archives
- From Geoff Walker saying he had told all his Facebook friends about our Facebook group site and invited people to consider joining. Thanks Geoff. Another article on Facebook from Leon Spence about Thringstone and the group were also mentioned, and Leon was thanked.
- Invitation from NWLDC to join in heritage groups network and attend meeting at Diseworth on 15th September passed to history section – Ann Petty went for group
- From National Forest Org. asking for walk dates for next National Forest Walks Festival (21st May-1st June) to be submitted. Submitted 2 for FoGD and one from us.
- From Litter Action asking group to support initiative to have refunds on bottles so that recycling is more active, and people don't drop such items in the streets etc.
- Various to and from EMOHA about migration project. Discussion point.
- Update from Thringstone Ramblers as to who their new secretary is following their AGM

Emails sent:

- To RCC, NWLDC and Community Centre cancelling our proposed eco event on 9th Oct due to lack of time available to organize properly. Subsequently asked to work with Diseworth group on their event on 12th October. Meeting subsequently held with Diseworth group on 24th Sept at Heritage Centre. Discussion point.
- Various to committee about ongoing issues and forwarding bulletins and eco newsletters
- Completed on line form to register our litter pick fully with CSV Make A Difference Day and received 2 t shirts, stickers, thank you certificates and various other things that can be used to thank cadets etc. for helping with the litter pick
- From Paul Siddals on lorry loading sites for wood felling in Grace Dieu and Cademan woods passed to all on email

- To Swannington Parish Council and Measham Parish Council regarding their RCC Awards to see if we can get together for some best practice swapping. Will follow this up in due course.
- To John MacDonald of Coleorton Heritage Group confirming we are still around and interested in anything he finds on Thringstone. He has spoken several times to Ann on this.

Promotion:

- VIP newsletter for Summer 2010 carries details of the Thringstone Wall Mural on its front cover which also has photo of opening which shows me and Ray Neal as part of the group
- Sent press releases on forthcoming litter pick to Mercury, Echo, Coalville Times, Hermitage FM, Oak FM and BBC Radio Leicester.
- RCC newsletter advertising Diseworth heritage event mentions our involvement.
- Article in this week's CVTimes regarding our awards.

Other:

- Updated our events folder, portfolio, Achievement list, Facebook page and completed Winter newsletter
- Joined us to the Leicestershire Waste Partnership's Master Composters group who want to put more local composting sites in the area
- Attended Snibston Miner's event. Bernard and Ray carried a banner in the procession, and £99 was raised for the group, which included 2 brochure sales. Photos were sent to the webmaster for inclusion on our site. Thanks to Ray W, Bernard and Janet for helping with the stall.
- Happy Hearts Day event on 30th Sept – stall manned by Ray W, Pam C and Nita. £11.50 raised in brochure sales. Many thanks to Ray W and Pam C.

Discussions/decisions

- Christmas arrangements were discussed for the carol singing on 10th Dec at the centre. There will be a procession from the Church to the Centre leaving the church at 6.45 pm. Margaret Staley will provide a tree and Ray Neal will put up the lights on the tree. It was decided not to have any at roof level.
- Nita and Ann are working with Margaret Bell and 'Chick' at the Members Club on the Migration Project which aims to video people who came to the area from Scotland. This is part of a wider project nationwide. Photos of the Rangers Supporters Club at the time it opened will hopefully be scanned for use in a poster advertising the open filming day. The next planning meeting is on 15th October at 2pm at the Members Club. **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP PLEASE WITH THIS PROJECT.**
- The roller banner has been priced at One Stop Promotions at £90 +Vat. They need the art work in PDF format. Geoff Walker was asked to investigate and work with Dave Everitt on this. There was some discussion about pictures and wordage to be used, and Geoff Walker suggested a hazy background of the woods with pictures of village features such as the Booth memorial on the Green, Thringstone House etc. and a minimum amount of wording.

Treasurer's report – Tam Bream

Following on from the AGM in June, Tam was pleased to report that he has finally been able to give David Stevenson the accounts to look at and was sure he will advise if there are any areas of concern or suggestions towards improvement. He was happy that the accounts are reconciled with the bank statements and the accounts as at the 22nd September stand at £2,587.28. We have since received £75 for a Gold award Prize from the RCC and a further £21.50 was banked that day.

We have only since end July spent £88.13 for the T shirts which were handed out at the last meeting and £38.93 for plants bought by Bernard. We are unsure as yet how much it will cost for the snack lunch after the litter pick. We were working on it costing about £50.

The areas of income are Membership £252 compared to £155 last year, Events £396.31 to date compared to total last year of £398.31, Publications £46.50, Donations £18.50, Walks £56 and Sundries £75.00.

Publications report – Roy Hill August 2010

Roy has been unable to check sales at the George and Dragon but there have been no sales at the Community Centre this month .

There have been 5 sales at events (thanks were given to Ray W who made all these sales):

Snibston: 1x Born & Bred 2; 1x Village trail 2

Happy Hearts Day: 1x Born & Bred 2; 1x Memories 1; 1x Memories 2

Web report – John Smith

John was not at the meeting and there was no report, but Nita said that the website was up to date with all photos and award details.

Arts and Community Report – Pam Clayfield

Banded Together at the Community Centre, telling the story of the Whitwick pit disaster, had been a great success.

Pam Clayfield is representing the group at the Community Arts Forum on 9th October.

There are a lot of activities going on in the village and district during the autumn.

Community Centre

1st Mondays - Cinema Club This will now be monthly and 4 month advertisements can be seen on the board in the bar.

Ray Sutton's talks are continuing weekly - History on Tuesday evenings at 7pm and Art and Literature on Wednesday afternoons at 2pm.

20th October - A Centre Stage production by the Hijinx Theatre Company called Ill met by Moonlight. Tickets from the Centre or the Whitwick Coffee shop.

10th November - Village Quiz organised again by Mike Statham. To enter a team please speak to Lorraine or Janet Christopher at the centre. FoT already have a team entered.

11th & 12th November Murder Mystery evenings at the Centre £5. 2 different endings.

10th December Carols round the tree and singsong in the bar. Starts 7pm. Procession leaves the church at 6.45pm.

Advance notice - Panto in January will be Puss in Boots

Members Club

31st October Halloween Kids Disco 1-6pm.

St Andrew's Church Geoff Walker spoke about the continuing need to fundraise for the new kitchen and toilet at the church. The toilet had been opened today (7th October) and the kitchen foundations were laid. They still needed £80,000 and he asked for the support of the village, although everyone had already been extremely generous.

10th October – Harvest Festival

12th October - Jan's Amble to Blackbrook Reservoir. Meet at the monastery 10.30am.

16th October –Auction at Methodist Church Hall. 2pm Viewing 10am-12noon.

28th October - SNUG in church 1.45pm-2.45pm. Everyone welcome for tea, chat, bible story and play.

31st October - Churches together service 6pm in church

11th November – armistice day service

George & Dragon

30th October - Comedy evening

22 November - Cayman Reef Fashion Show

30th November - St Andrew's Night celebration

6th December - Christmas flower arranging with Alistair £5

22nd December- Brass band & Mince pies 7.30pm

24th December - Carols

31st December New Year's Eve party & entertainment £20 to include carved buffet

Snibston & Whitwick

14th & 28th October - Whitwick Historical group will be conducting 'Spooky Walks'. Meet at Whitwick Old Station 7pm. Soup and crusty bread afterwards. £3

28th October - Snibston Miners' mornings- Restructuring the Russian Coal Industry. £3.50 inc. coffee and biscuits

History Report – Ann Petty

Ann had been to a Heritage network meeting made up of local museums, like Kegworth, Diseworth, Moira Furnace, Ashby, Castle Donington, Coalville Heritage and Whitwick. Most of the discussion was about how the museums could generate interest and asking how they publicised themselves. The Ashby Tourist Information ladies were very good at advertising anything and everything they could. They showed a new leaflet called Treasures Unlocked, (Nita showed a copy), which shows pictures of a church and a local landmark, which could be useful. They also asked for us all to link our websites to TIC (Tourist Information Centre). They also said we all could forward our newsletters to them and they will be added to their site. The best site to get onto for promotion is www.somewherenicetogo.co.uk

A few of the museums were also on Facebook and Twitter. Ann has asked her daughter to start a Facebook site for Gracedieu, but is still waiting.

An unknown lady at the meeting, asked for volunteers to help with a new brochure for a trail that could take in a number of sites in NWL which could be visited during a day. It was undecided as to whether to have a theme or not. Maureen Partridge was volunteered, so NWL should be represented. It was mentioned that the two halves of the NWL district (north & south) have very different interests.

Nita showed a leaflet of a similar trail in Notts, which Ann had brought.

Most of the discussion was about us all linking together and helping each other.

Councillor's Report- Ray Woodward

There is ongoing casework concerning repairs and housing issues.

There are outstanding planning applications concerning the Waldrum site with a meeting on 21st Oct.

Sunil at the post office has re-submitted his amended plan for flats above the shop.

There was a meetings about the Gracedieu Road hardstandings with the De-Lisles on Sat 2nd Oct and a further one with other parties is planned.

Ray had attended the Footprints Network meeting on behalf of group at EM Airport to see how they are trying to reduce their carbon emissions. They had been shown the new terminal for low cost flights which had been built to high environmental standards with many 'green' features.

Nicola Stanhope of Kegworth Police was present at Happy Hearts Day, and there was ongoing discussion with both the police in Coalville and Kegworth about the anti social behaviour in the woods.

After a conversation with Ray Neal, Ray Woodward had contacted the estate agent responsible for the sale of the Rose & Crown premises and had been told that there are 6 or 7 different companies/developers who have submitted bids. There is nothing definite yet and the legal position is yet to be established if it is not to be re-opened as a pub.

Police report

There was no police presence or report.

From previous minutes

Next litter pick

The next litter pick is on 30th October. Two groups of cadets (army and air), the youth club and the scouts are likely to be involved as well as our own membership. Hi viz vests, litter pick sticks and bags are available. Nita has arranged with the Members Club for a snack lunch to be provided at 1pm. All members are invited to join in. Meet at The Green as usual at 10.00am. The T shirts, which were printed with our name, are still available for anyone who does not have one for events and members are encouraged to wear them for this litter pick please.

Nita is liaising with the cadets and other young people over numbers for the snack lunch, and hopes to be in a position to get names for these youngsters, so that they can be supplied with a certificate of thanks through CSV with whom we are linking this event. Posters have been put up, including at the school, who may be involved, and press releases done, as mentioned earlier.

Memorial Flower Bed

Nita advised the meeting that after considerable discussion and consultation it had been agreed to abandon the idea of making the flower bed on the Green into a memorial, as it was seen to be causing too much controversy. There was some discussion about appropriate planting for this bed and Bernard and Ray Neal were asked to use their expertise to purchase shrubs and bulbs and Bernard's ideas of having shrubs in the middle were thought good. It was further agreed that there is no real need to continue to use native species only, as this added to cost.

John Dickinson is hoping to plant old species of bulbs at the priory and will be asking for volunteers to help with the planting soon. Ray Neal had already spoken to him and assured him of FoT support.

Eco Event

Nita, Ann Petty and possibly Pam Clayfield are working with the Diseworth Heritage Group on an eco event at Diseworth on Tuesday 12th October from 10am – 6pm. Nita had been earmarked to work with the Diseworth group on this, and help attract stall holders, schools etc. Thringstone School had been approached, and whilst transport had been arranged, had not taken up the offer to attend.

FoT have a stall, Ann is doing a display board, and it would be most welcome if members are able to come along and support this event, and help with the stall manning. Please contact Nita on this. Nita did say that Jo Ling from the RCC, who are also helping with the event, said she would help man the stall if people needed a break.

AOB

Newsletters

Nita said that the Council have increased the price of printing our newsletters from £73.31 for 1500 copies to £123.06. This means that with four issues per year it will cost the group nearly £500 for a free village newsletter to be delivered.

It was not thought that this was sustainable and we are looking for a new printer who can do it for a more reasonable price. They need to be A4 double sided and folded.

Geoff Walker offered to get a quote from the Baptist Church in Loughborough.

Mike King said he had an old laser printer at home and could try to run off that number for the price of the toner. Both ideas will be considered, but as the timescale for the last issue of 2010 is short, it was agreed

to pay the Council for this one and raise the point with them that voluntary groups cannot sustain that level of cost for something they provide for free with no funding stream.

Water and electricity usage

Nita had information from Severn Trent on how to save water and reduce costs, and stickers to put on splashbacks/near taps reminding people to turn their taps off to save water, for members to take. Spare supplies of these were given to Pam Clayfield to take to Hermitage FM.

Nita also had Big Switch Off posters to hand out. Some were given to the Community Centre to display, others were to take to Thringstone Primary and there would then be some spares should members want these.

Down To Earth

Members are reminded that we are doing a BBC Radio Leics. recording of this programme on 10th February at the Methodist Hall, and we need 16 members to submit gardening questions, in writing, by early January. Please give this some thought, as without questions, the programme could be pulled. Questions to Nita please as soon as possible.

Next meeting. 4th November 6.45pm at Thringstone House Community Centre