

Flitch Way Action Group



connecting the Flitch Way

FLITCH WAY ACTION GROUP

(Registered charity no 1172012)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 20th February 2023

Present:

Trustees: Stuart Withington Co-Chair (SW), Shaun Pledger Co-Chair (SP), Sarah Hodgson Secretary (SH), Sandra Reynolds (SR), Valdis Belinis (VB), David Beedle (DB)

Guests: Cllr Susan Barker (SB), Cllr Graham McAndrew (GMcA), Martin Crisp (MC), Essex Bridleways Association Bridleways Development Officer, Dave Webber (DW) Bishop's Stortford & District Footpath Association

Apologies: Sandra Lloyd Treasurer (SL), Alexander Armstrong, Stephen Skinner, Lesley Gillman, Julia Wilson Essex Bridleways Association, Stan Davies & Alan Trigg Friends of the Flitch Way, Alan Treby, Helen Baker ECC

Absent: Trudi Hughes

The meeting, chaired by SW opened at 6.35pm.

The minutes of the AGM on 21.02.22 were approved.

SW extended the Trustees' best wishes to SL for a speedy recovery and welcomed our guests. MC outlined his role protecting and developing rights of way with equestrian access in Essex. He kindly offered to liaise with Shirley Anglin and Rob Lee at ECC PRoW. SB offered to facilitate a meeting with UDC and ECC. SW gave the chair's report. SW is to be sole chair with SP continuing to serve as a Trustee. Reviewing progress made this year, SW highlighted the recent change in FWAG's Constitution to add links to Stansted Airport transport hub and welcomed the inclusion in the draft s106 Agreement for the Moors Fields planning application allocating substantial funds to the existing Flitch Way and funding the Chelmer bridge required for our link route.

SL's treasurer's report was reviewed and approved in her absence.

In accordance with the Constitution, the committee resigned and was reappointed.

AOB: SB reported that Sarah Tomlin is Highway Liaison Officer [replacing Rissa Long?]. There are signs of movement on the Smiths Farm development with potential for a review of the (now possibly outdated) proposed Hoblongs gyratory system which includes a Pegasus crossing for our route.

GMcA raised the possibility of a joint Essex / Herts meeting. East Herts Council are reviewing their District Plan and working on their LCWIP. There will be consultation with residents and interest groups including FWAG. He outlined plans for a cycle route between the airport and Harlow and referred to other routes connecting Roydon, Rye House and the Lee Valley.

Stansted Airport is updating their sustainable transport plan. It is common knowledge that the airport should do more to encourage sustainable travel. There is potential for electric bike hire and charging points, and better cycle parking. SW highlighted the potential for an easy cycle route to the mid stay car park. GMcA emphasised the importance of s106 Agreements. Active Travel England are to be statutory consultees on larger developments. The government's recent allocation of £200 million for active travel may perhaps be used to improve rural connections.

MC suggested involving the ELAF. SR outlined her experience of sitting on the ELAF. SH referred to the need for bridleway links to match the existing Flich Way and to ensure inclusion of all non-motorised vulnerable road users and avoid discriminating against grass roots equestrians (almost all female) in favour of cyclists (predominantly male). The advantage of bridleways over cycleways being that as definitive routes they are shown on OS maps and are available in perpetuity to all users whether local or visiting.

DW explained that whilst there are good examples of walking/cycling routes within new developments in Stortford, there is little or no connectivity to schools, shops, transport etc.

FWAG is hopeful that in time they will achieve their aim to create a walking/cycling link into Dunmow town centre.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm.