



**Friends of Essington Meeting**  
**10<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Present:** Angie Whittle, Dot Radford, Colin Richards, Pete Ward, Jon Hanson.

**Note:** Prior to the meeting Clem and Ange had received an email from Revd. Helen Duckett (new vicar at St. Johns) asking if she could come to one of our meetings. We were going to discuss this in AOB, however she arrived as our meeting was starting and all agreed that she could stay.

**Apologies:** Freddie Homer, Wayne Whitehouse, Neil Wheeldon, Adrian Nicklin, Clem Whittle, Tracey Taylor.

**Record of last meeting:** Approved by PW, Seconded by AW.

**1. Matters arising from the record of the last meeting.**

**Projects**

**Calendar 2022**

Very successful sold out quickly, accounts to be finalised.

**Calendar 2023**

PW suggested that the photographs submitted should be categorised every 3 months. NW, in an email, said that he was happy for a person (or persons) to be the nominated adjudicator on reviewing which pics are worthy of consideration for inclusion.

**Tree Planting**

This is a long term project aiming to green up some areas in need of TLC with great benefit to the environment.

Bovis Homes sites to be planted Essington 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Wombourne 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

Bovis Homes have a dedicated team for tree planting and we can have any input we like, just visit the site, help out or take photographs. These tree planting sites were initiated by the FOE and Bovis are now planting other sites across the country. The Broadlands site will be investigated and be planted in the next season.

The original suggestion of planting on the Cannock Road was refused and has now been transferred to the corner of Cannock Road and Moseley Road and down the Cannock Road towards the industrial estate island. 30 trees will be planted on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February at 10am, some local residents have been asked to help along with Benniman Construction and any help from the committee would be appreciated.

The trees to be planted are 10 each of *Carpinus betulus*, *Acer campestre* and *Quercus robur*. Prior to this the area will be strimmed as approved in the previous meeting. The other sites on the tree planting scheme will be further investigated when the time gets nearer to planting.

As PW commented at the last meeting about developers and the council, hopefully from our lead on the Bovis sites it may encourage the council to insist that the developer includes tree planting in their planning. The trees have been supplied FOC

from the Forest of Mercia with a maintenance plan and have visited the sites to see suitability and the types of trees. They will also be delivering the trees on Thursday and helping with the planting. The Highways Department have visited the sites and have given their approval.

### **Bulb Planting**

WW to resend bulb planting scheme but basically this is following the tree planting scheme with suitable bulbs for the different areas. The first area where the trees were going to be planted down the Cannock Road would lend itself to the planting of crocuses. This needs further investigation.

### **Bulb Planting this season**

1. The bench and the bottom of Windmill Hill planted with crocuses CR & DR.
2. The entrance to Hilton Cross Industrial Estate Island, planted with daffodils with help from Bennimans construction.
3. Broad Lane Essington/Bloxwich border planted with daffodils NW & JH.
4. Halfway up Broad Lane by the traffic controlling chicane with help from local residents.
5. Bottom of Old Hampton Lane planted with Alliums and Snake's Head Fritillary.
6. Broad Lane around the Springhill sign - this area was strimmed, planted with daffodils and the sign cleaned CR & DR.
7. The bottom of Blackhalve Lane - the Staffordshire sign - area was strimmed, planted with daffodils and the sign cleaned CR & DR.

AN sent out the Local Plan Review and response about Broad Lane. We can only add that it is in need of some vast improvement and in our small way have tried to brighten the area with the bulb planting - various items were discussed. The whole area needs a litter pick among other things.

### **Triangle**

Looking good with daffodil bulbs coming up.

AN looking at various timbers for the structures - he will keep us informed.

### **Windmill Hill Bench and Bottom of Old Hampton Lane**

Tony Stanley to continue maintaining these areas for the next year.

### **Orchard**

This is an update from an email by NW:- Myself, Jon, Wilson and Paul spent several hours cutting back the surrounding trees and hedges, and pruning the fruit trees. We have agreed with the Facilities Manager and the Caretaker that we will visit monthly to keep on top of it. Next time we visit we will install the sign. I will arrange to collect it from Colin before then. Myself and Jon are happy to be considered the stakeholders for this project. We will feedback any developments. CR replied to NW with a thank you to everyone involved and he also thanked them at the meeting.

### **Lock-up**

More work needed. PW to reinstall the repaired Yale lock.

### **Brownshore Crossing**

The side of crossing is an area we have tried to encourage wild flowers with no success. We have now had the area cut back CR & DR have planted Yellow Rattle and a suggestion was made that we purchase some wild flower plugs - all agreed.

## **Volunteer Hours**

Could everyone who does not attend the meeting send in their volunteer hours to DR. Please include people whom you know who give their time freely and should be recorded in the volunteer hours.

## **Website and Event Calendar**

AW reported that they continue to update our web site and any new photos of our activities etc would be appreciated. Also our domain name for the next 3 years has been purchased.

## **Membership**

The membership form requested by JH was produced at the meeting but had not been used for many, many years. It was discussed by the committee that maybe a way forward would be to have an associate or helpers list- ongoing - NW.

## **Himalayan Balsam**

Open Spaces Team have been informed and we have been told that they are dealing with it. Everyone should be aware of this invasive species and report it if seen in other areas.

## **Future projects**

### **Annual Spring Clean**

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April Essington and Westcroft.

### **Laptop and projector**

All agreed that these were getting old and needed replacing. WW to obtain prices.

## **2. Environmental Activities**

### **Fly-tipping**

All please keep reporting any incidents.

### **Banners**

1 new banner now in the lock up for everyone's use.

### **Wood Hayes Road/Old Hampton Lane junction**

It was suggested that this area could do with a footpath, making it safer and tidying the area up. Everyone was asked to have a look and their thoughts please.

### **Bird and Bat boxes**

AW to contact Scott Brown to see if he is interested in giving us a talk.

## **3. Social Events**

### **Quiz Nights**

Next quiz date - Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March WMC.

## **4. Correspondence**

- Email from Revd Helen Duckett (dealt with earlier).
- AW received email off a lady interested in helping with our projects - AW to contact.
- AN sent email about Essington Show on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May asking if FOE wanted a stall.

## **5. Any other business**

- Email from NW (sent to committee) expressing his concerns regarding landfill at the second phase of the new golf course.

**Date of next meeting - Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2022 7.30 in Church Hall.**