

# The Frinton Residents' Association

## REPORT on the Open Meeting held after the AGM on Saturday, 8 April 2017

The Chairman introduced **Councillor Nick Turner** (NT) (Tendring District Council (TDC) Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation) accompanied by **Ian Taylor** (IT) (TDC Head of Public Realm) who were to provide a presentation on the **Proposals for the Refurbishment and Renewal of the area of the seafront around the zigzag path.**

NT reported that the zigzag path, steps and shelter (that was) had reached the end of their best before dates. Rather than just replicate and replace, TDC saw this as a chance to not only maintain Frinton's Heritage, but to enhance and add to it. He stated that as a town, Frinton-on-Sea was only about 130 years old, and that the Founders, Peter Bruff and Richard Powell-Cooper, had left a wonderful legacy - the best Town Planning and Architecture of their day. TDC would like to leave the best Architecture of our day to our Successors. He added that they had realised that not only could they replace the shelter, but also re-design the gardens and paths leading to and from the shelter as this area was the centrepiece of Frinton seafront. NT then pointed out that the cliff stabilisation of the 1900s was also in need of some TLC, and of course, money was needed. Therefore, four departments were working together to deliver a scheme. NT then introduced IT who would outline suggestions.



IT thanked the FRA for inviting them to the meeting, and explained that the shelter at the bottom of the zigzag path had gone into decline and had had to be demolished. He pointed out that during numerous walks along the seafront with the FRA they had held TDC's "feet to the fire" on this issue.



Apart from the shelter, there was a whole range of infrastructure that needed to be replaced: paths, handrails, steps, waste bins, etc. In addition to an immediate need, there was a need for forward planning. He added that in his previous role, he had been in charge of the seafront. He knew that it was a big attraction and deserved more attention than anywhere else. It was the reason that many people came here, from other parts of the UK and Europe. He felt that this area was the gateway to Frinton Seafront with its Award Beach and it was a real tragedy that this situation had occurred. Hopefully, it could now be put right. He reported that research had been carried out and a way forward had been identified, including new ideas.

The proposed approach was:

- Phase 1: Detailed Exploratory Work
- Phase 2: New Structure and other ideas
- Phase 3: Horticultural Scheme

IT stated that TDC appreciated that Frinton heritage was important to everyone, and pointed out that in the past, Frinton had also been innovative. As it was important to get the basics right in the first place, nothing would be in place this season. It had not been possible to retain the area on which the shelter had stood as a public space as this was unstable. There was a need to make it safe, and that area would be planted out for the coming season. There was a lot more to do, and things would move on in the Autumn.





A two-storey viewing platform with seating  
(Concept Design attributable to NPS South East Limited – Architects)

**Proposal for a New Structure – just a concept at this stage**

As the slides appeared onscreen, IT added the following comments.

*The aim for the future is to start bold. We are now in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and accessibility is necessary. The previous structure has been there for 80 years, and we are not able to replace like for like. We could do something similar, but not in the same way as wheel chair access will be required - it would not be acceptable without. We need to*



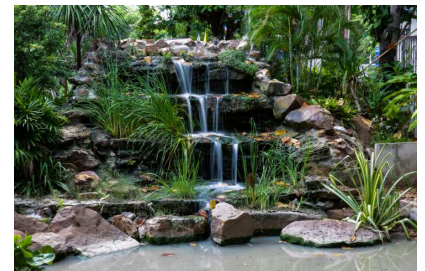
*make the seafront and the entranceway to it more accessible, but still retain access on two levels. Currently wheel chair access to the beach is via the boat ramp.*

IT added that the suggestions onscreen could be modified, but this had proved to be the most favoured approach. These types of things were being done elsewhere in the UK and in Europe. There were areas to the sides that could be retained as they were, but the central area could be managed better with water features and rockeries, for example.



An example of steps incorporating a slope

IT pointed out that Frinton had been very daring and bold in the past. These were very early suggestions, as they did not know yet where they were with funding and costs. However, they were very interested in obtaining the views of residents.



Q: Will there be a presentation on this elsewhere?

A: (NT) This is the first stage. The elections came in the way. This is now number one on the list of things to be done. TDC have not taken ownership. We want to ask for ideas, and then we can go back and start doing the real work.



Q: Do you have a budget?

A: (NT) I have a way forward - an idea for nil cost to ratepayers. There will not be any commercialisation of the Greensward. We had a £23m budget up to 2010, but that is now down to £7.5m. Only now we are having to close public toilets. We have not got the funding from commerce or ratepayers. Funding will be coming from extra developments elsewhere.

Q: The charm of Frinton is the natural seafront. I do not think we want a tower – it is too obvious. I do not think it is the place to put it. It does not fit into Frinton.

Q: (Katie Andrews) Do you not think that the tower and the approach would be a temptation to vandalism.

A: (NT) There are ways round that these days.

Q: Are there other designs to choose from?

A: (NT) At present, there is nowhere to sit and be protected from the elements.

Q: This is obviously purely a concept at present as you have to work out costs and viability. You have to have disabled access, and I agree about natural policing and that it should be robust so that it looks after itself. However, there is the underlying problem with clay cliffs - that might be the more expensive part.

A: (NT) Quite right. We are having a topographical survey carried out next week and boreholes are being driven. We are fully aware of the possible problems and we are looking into it.

Q: I understand it is early days, but do you have any idea of timescale?

A: (NT) It is to be completed before the 2019 elections.

The Chairman thanked NT and IT for an interesting presentation, which provided 'food for thought'. He said that it was good to see that it was going ahead as that area of the seafront had looked a mess for sometime.

He then introduced **Elaine Downs** (ED), Face-to-Face Supervisor, Frinton, Walton & Brightlingsea Libraries who was to provide a presentation on **Library Services**.

ED explained that she was going to talk about the services offered at Frinton Library and online, together with the efforts made by Essex Libraries to ensure the services offered remained relevant and accessible.

In order to provide a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Service and to ensure customers received first-class provision from their local library, five Universal Offers, complemented by the Children's Promise and the Six Steps Promise for Blind and Partially-Sighted People, had been developed by the Society of Chief Librarians and Essex Libraries were working towards these. She then described the variety of offers in more detail.

### **Reading Offer**

To provide reading choice, each month a list of recommended books was published on the Essex Libraries' website – something for everyone, she said as an example of a psychological thriller appeared onscreen! The offer includes:

- Books and reading resources in a variety of formats, eg standard print, large print, giant print and Braille, spoken word (Audio books for those who want to listen to a story), e-books and e-audio books available for download from the website free of charge;
- Support for Book Groups who can order multiple copies of books free of charge (over 700 groups in Essex hold meetings in libraries, in their own homes and on the move). She added that people could join an existing Frinton Book Group, or set up their own;
- Promotions and activities, eg World Book Night, and the Summer Reading Challenge;
- Services for specific audiences, eg visually impaired, families, Home Library Service;
- Author events, Essex Book Festival (run by an independent charity in March each year with over 200 artists and authors involved) and the Essex Poetry Festival;
- Community space.

### **Information Offer**

To bring together government and non-government sources of information that have been researched by library professionals and thereby ensure a level of quality assurance. This offer includes:

- Enquiry service in every library - ED explained that every day staff received enquiries such as "How to find a plumber?" and they would then assist in finding someone who could help;
- Essex Reference Library Online – can be accessed on line or whilst in the library. This could assist with children's homework and it was free of charge;
- Health information;
- Business advice & support;
- Parent information.

ED reported that often experts visited local branches, from organisations such as “Action on Hearing Loss” and Essex Police, who could provide information and assistance, plus Councillors held surgeries there. A popular enquiry was with regard to family history on which a range of resources were available. Essex Libraries subscribe to the family history websites “Ancestry” and “Find my Past”, and customers could access these sites free of charge in the local library. Magazines to read online and 19<sup>th</sup> Century newspapers from the British Library were also available for free.

### **Health Offer**

ED explained that a range of resources were available from book lists to self-help, together with a home library service for people who could not get into the library as everyone should have access. Volunteers deliver books to people’s homes and if anyone knew of someone who could benefit, she asked them to speak to staff at the library. She then listed the many different types of health problems covered, and described the types of events being held at local libraries, ie the Tendring Alzheimer’s Society had held an event the previous week at Walton Library. The offer included recommended reads by health professionals, or books recommended by GPs, as well as booklets put together by Essex Libraries on specific subjects, such as cancer. The following list then appeared onscreen:

- Libraries offer local, non-clinical community space
- Community outreach/expert advice and support
- Self-help
- Target audiences – mental health, dementia, young people
- Information and signposting
- Public health promotion activity
- Social and recreational activities to support health & wellbeing
- Volunteering and community engagement opportunities

ED added that Memory Support Cards were available for customers experiencing memory problems caused by stress or illness, enabling them to continue to borrow books without worry as no fees would be charged if books were not returned on time.

### **Volunteering at Essex Libraries**

ED explained that as well as developing skills, meeting new people and contributing to the community, volunteering could be beneficial to both mental and physical health. There were a range of opportunities for volunteering at Essex Libraries, from supporting children’s reading during the Summer Reading Challenge to delivering books to people who could no longer get to the library themselves. At Frinton they were currently looking for volunteers to support the Community Coffee Mornings, and at Walton Library there are opportunities to support the Work Club and Computer Training sessions. She asked those interested in providing assistance to pop into the library to find out more and pick up a registration form.

### **Digital Offer**

ED explained that this included:

- Free internet access in every library
- Free Wi-Fi in every library
- Clear and accessible online information about library services
- Staff trained to help customers access digital information
- Opportunities to get online or develop skills

She added that people could bring in their own laptops, or use the library computers, and printing facilities were also available, together with training sessions provided by volunteers who would help people to use computers - from the basics of switching on a computer to being safe online.

## **Learning Offer**

ED explained that a wide range of subjects for both adults and children were covered and these included:

- Free study resources – books & online
- Free learning resources – online courses, text books
- Study/learning space for children, young people and adults
- Information about free and low cost opportunities to learn
- Opportunities to explore and be creative
- Places where communities and individuals could develop, share ideas and learn together

She added that people could borrow books on a range of learning topics, from arts and craft to business management, or pull up a chair in the library, this being a safe space for adults and children to explore and learn about the world around them. Over 400 courses were available (from Universal Class), or it was possible to learn over 80 languages (with Transparent Language) free online, plus opportunities to study in the library with workshops, classes and activities taking place there. For instance, Nifty Needles met at Frinton Library on the first and third Friday of the month, from 2.00 pm until 3.30 pm.

ED pointed out that for those who had a creative flair, there was exhibition space available in local libraries; photos, watercolours, etc, could be displayed on the walls.

## **Children's Promise**

ED explained that Essex Libraries offered a variety of services for children from birth upwards. From the earliest point, ie when a baby's birth was registered, which typically now takes place at an Essex Library, they would be offered their own library card. It was hoped that this would then open up a wonderful world of resources for children as libraries offer

- an exciting environment which fosters reading for pleasure
- imaginative digital opportunities for building skills, knowledge and creativity
- a range of inclusive and diverse fiction and non-fiction and other information resources to support literacy and learning
- a wide range of literacy and cultural experiences including reading and book-based activities
- involvement in service development decisions and opportunities to volunteer
- services and activities that support health and wellbeing

As an example, ED pointed out the Baby and Toddler Rhymetime sessions where children could go into the Library to share stories and rhymes; the value being to help with development of speech and social skills. Such sessions took place during term time in Frinton Library on Thursdays, from 11.00 am until 11.30 am.

ED added that other events for children that are run by Library staff and volunteers include class sessions for schools and an Easter craft event at Frinton Library. Partners also run events. The Summer Reading Challenge takes place each year during summer holidays, and last year Essex Libraries welcomed 45,000 children and their families. The theme that year was Roald Dahl characters and was entitled "The Big Friendly Read" (a play on his book, the BFG). Children read six books over the summer holidays, and collect rewards including stickers, a medal and a certificate. It's free to take part and helps maintain the children's reading levels over the summer holidays.

ED also described the benefits of volunteering for young people as being great for developing communications skills and for their CV. She asked if anyone interested could be directed to the website as they would love to see young people at the local library.

## The Six Steps Promise

ED explained that Essex Libraries had signed up to **Six Steps**, which outlined the standard of service that they should be offering blind and partially sighted customers. This included many facilities already mentioned, ie

- providing audio and large print titles
- access to eBooks and online information
- computers with access technology to help you get online
- computer training sessions with tablets and computers
- help finding other local and national services that provide both reading services and support for daily life.

## Community Coffee Mornings

ED explained that Coffee Mornings provided an opportunity to meet other people. Coffee and tea was available free of charge and guests came along and talked about the services they offered. They take place in Frinton Library on Fridays from 10.00 am until 12.00 noon.

ED added that Friends' Groups were also starting up, but were still in the early stages. However, for those who would like to find out more, information would be published in the local library.

ED then reminded those present of the location of Frinton Library, and asked them to spread the word. The contact details of Essex Libraries then appeared onscreen:

- <http://libraries.essex.gov.uk> – offering an opportunity to sign up for Essex Library newsletters
- Twitter - @Essex Libraries
- Facebook – Essex Libraries
- Telephone - 0345 603 7628

There were no questions and after the Chairman had thanked Elaine for coming and providing so much information, he joked that now he had more understanding of 'books for dummies' with children being registered at birth for library services.

The Chairman then explained that in view of the fact that there had been some crime in Frinton recently, he welcomed the next speaker, John Wright (JW), Chairman and District Co-ordinator, Tendring Neighbourhood Watch, who was to speak on “**Neighbourhood Watch – its origins and where it is today**”.

JW thanked the FRA for the invitation to speak, explained that it would be possible to answer questions after the presentation, and stated that the organisation had its origins in a very dark place. He then reported on its history as follows.

At 3.15 am on the 13 March 1964, a young lady known as Kitty was walking in the Queens District of New York. She was raped and murdered. The perpetrator was caught, sent to prison and died there in March last year. People had heard the attack taking place, but did nothing. After it was reported in the New York Times, the local population formed groups to watch over the neighbourhood and report suspicious activity. In 1972, the US Sheriffs' Association revitalised the watches nationwide. Then, in 1982, in the village of Mollington, in Cheshire, a similar group was set up known as “Home Watch”. Now it is Neighbourhood Watch – the largest voluntary movement in the UK covering four million households. Although very active in the early years, by 2007 many groups had folded because of lack of interest.

The benefit of Neighbourhood Watch is that as an organisation it can share best practice and it has a voice at national level. In 2007, the national organisation formed its headquarters in Leicester, and last year Essex County Neighbourhood Watch gained charitable status. It is a worldwide organisation operating throughout Europe, and in October 2014, the European Neighbourhood Watch Association was formed, originally involving 19 countries. The movement has now evolved to include a wider community safety incentive, and Tendring Neighbourhood Watch was formed at a

meeting in the 1980s in Dovercourt. Originally, the police had a huge input, but today they do not. Then there was little co-ordination in the organisation, but that has all changed now. With the help of modern technology, we can get the message across. The Essex Community Messaging (ECM) service is used to cascade information and a weekly newsletter is sent out that includes information on recent scams, etc. Local Crime Reports for Tendring also help with running the scheme.

Each year there is an AGM where Officers and the Executive Committee are elected. The Chairman has a two-year tenure of office. Neighbourhood Watch is a self-funding organisation that also receives a yearly grant from the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) of £675 to cover the whole of Tendring. The Street Co-ordinator is the most important person, but each group is individual to itself and the community it serves; they decide how best to keep the community safe and how to keep members informed. Full face-to-face training and assistance is provided to get the group up and running.

Neighbourhood Watch is an organisation for people who have pride in their neighbourhood and, where possible, assists people who are less able to help themselves. A welcome is extended to all members of the neighbourhood.

### **Why should you get involved?**

The benefits are that

- ❖ it brings people together to develop a community spirit (JW then provided an example of his own group to prove that it did work)
- ❖ it is a visible sign that residents care about the area
- ❖ it helps to deter crime
- ❖ it provides access to clear information and swift reporting
- ❖ it helps people keep themselves and others safe
- ❖ it reduces the fear of crime
- ❖ most insurance companies give a reduction if you belong to Neighbourhood Watch

The Neighbourhood Watch brand receives a licence from the Home Office and this has now been given to Head Office – we now have a new sticker. There are regulations regarding the signs on lampposts. They have to be on metal posts and we have to apply for planning permission for each sign. We cannot put them on telegraph poles, but there is no restriction on private property, apart from that the person must be registered with the Local Neighbourhood Watch District. We are all covered by Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance, and

### **!!! NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH IS FREE !!!**

JW reported that Tendring Neighbourhood Watch had become rundown recently because of a lack of leadership, but two years ago he had become Secretary. At that time, he had received a list of co-ordinators that showed that numbers were down from 450 to only 45, most of whom were in the Clacton area. He had increased that number to approximately 100. He added that Neighbourhood Watch was staffed by volunteers and that they had achieved many successes recently: drug offence arrests, identification of suspects and rogue traders, reporting suspicious occurrences to the police. He added that it stood out that areas that have an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme have very little or no crime.

JW concluded by saying that Essex Police had not asked for manpower and funds to be cut, and that it was now up to ourselves to look after the people of Tendring.

Q: JW has been sending me weekly letters and memos containing a lot of crime information. I have also seen the local crime rates, and Frinton and Walton are faring well, although I understand that there are only two or three schemes in Frinton. I recommend JW. Looking after your own street is not too much to ask. I am considering setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Walton Road, but how do we get in touch with someone?

A (JW): Leader and contact details are available here.

Sgt Pete Gerard (PG) then endorsed JW's work, and stated that Frinton had a fantastic community. However, a case in point provided a classic example: 'ne'er do wells' from Clacton on their way to carry out burglaries in Frinton got no further than Second Avenue before mindful residents informed the police. The police could not get these type of messages out beforehand, but JW could. PG added that, certainly if you are interested in your street, you should buy into it. With regard to commercial crime, PG stated that it appeared that Townrow had been targeted by travelling criminals. As a result, extra resources had been deployed in the area. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to arrest anyone, but the possible culprits had been spoken to. Recent crimes where sheds, garages and cars had been broken into may have been committed by travelling criminals from Clacton. PG offered to arrange for someone to come and look at properties in order to provide advice on security aspects, if required. With regard to vehicle crime, he recommended that people be security conscious and lock their cars as insecure vehicles were involved. He added that although we do live in a safe area, residents should not become complacent. The police would tackle the villains, but he asked that the message be passed on – if it is an easy target, they will keep coming.

Councillor Jack Robertson (JR) reported that he had been in discussion with Chief Inspector Russ Cole (RC) at a meeting of the local Crime & Disorder Working Party as PCSOs had mentioned that Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras were very useful – if the car is on police records the PCSOs are informed by telephone and radio. He had asked RC for two cameras to keep an eye on vehicles entering and leaving Frinton & Walton, and RC had agreed. It was felt that this was a good idea as the majority of the crime was attributable to criminals coming into the area (not down to those living here) and it would be possible to refer to lists of vehicle registration numbers in future. JR received a spontaneous round of applause from the audience indicating that they agreed with this course of action, and he stated that he would continue to work on this.

PG added that it was not necessary to broadcast where the ANPR cameras were located, and felt that if they were available, they should be used as they were a fantastic tool with which to investigate crime. It was a great opportunity and RC was very keen on it.

NT was ambivalent as he had experienced a situation where he had reported the number plate of a suspicious vehicle and although information had been available, it had not lead to further action.

Q: What exactly do PCSOs do, particularly in respect of the money paid by residents?

A: (PG) PCSOs are normally on duty from 8.00 am until 10.00 pm, but their hours have been extended recently and they have been patrolling through the night, up to 2.00 am, because of recent crime. They are funded by the Town Council, but the extra policing has not been funded by the Council. Their powers include prevention of cycling on footpaths, serving alcohol illegally, etc, but these powers are being reviewed to see if they can be enhanced. The consequence, however, is that enforcement action by them may abstract them from overt patrolling as they would need to process paperwork and possibly attend court. It is important that they are out in the community pushing crime down and we do not want to take them off the streets. Their best tool is their discretion. They are precious to the community and should not shy away from the enforcement activity. They do try to reconnect with youngsters.

The Chairman, Neil Churcher (NC), then introduced **Residents' Issues** and reported on the meeting held between the FRA and ECC Councillors and Officers in Chelmsford on 21 March 2017.

He stated that the issues discussed included potholes, pavements, trees and street lighting/lamp posts. A similar meeting had taken place a year ago, but nothing had come from it. The recent meeting had been arranged with the help of County Councillor Mick Page (MP), and at the meeting it was thought that the FRA representatives were speaking with the Essex County Councillors/Portfolio Holders for Highways and ECC Highways Officers. He reported that so far nothing had come from that meeting (although the FRA were promised that they would have answers by the end of March!) and it had now emerged that the Highways Officers actually worked for the company subcontracted by ECC to undertake highway maintenance, Ringway Jacobs. They had the overall contract – they looked at the roads/pavements, and decided where, how and when to carry out the repairs. This had resulted in the FRA looking at this again as examples were



available of where it had been stated that works had been undertaken when they had not. Resurfacing was being done on some tarmac surfaces, ie on The Esplanade.

The FRA had given those at the ECC meeting a list of 110+ dangerous pavement situations well within the scope of ECC guidelines on what constituted needing repair, and discussed badly potholed roads in some detail, but no action has been forthcoming. NC said that he had suggested that perhaps in the future, the FRA, together with Town and District Councillors all go to a meeting with ECC to see if they could obtain action.

NC was now not sure if it was an ECC Highways Officer that the FRA had been speaking to about the results of the consultation on improvements to Connaught Avenue, but all the information had been given to ECC and it was hoped that the FRA would have a meeting shortly with the Officer who they had originally dealt with on this issue. He then posed the following questions. How do we take this forward? Who is responsible for changing the regulations? The FRA needed to find the answers.

He added that the FRA had been told that there was a budget available for signage, and they had asked for road markings to be replaced to show who had priority at road junctions. With regard to the parking situation in Connaught Avenue, lines around the pinch points needed to be replaced. Also, signs needed to be clearer because no-one could see them.

NC pointed out that the FRA had been told by ECC that they had a Capital Investment Programme for Highways and the FRA had asked if they could have input into the budgets for road and pavement repairs. Apparently, scanners are used to analyse road surfaces and identify/prioritise repairs, but it has not been possible to find out how many scanners are available. The questions NC would like to ask were: "Is there any co-ordination between County and District?" "If they put a scanner on every single rubbish truck, would this help?"

On a separate issue, NC reported that the dead trees in Connaught Avenue that were the responsibility of ECC had been replaced, but this had taken some time, and that the list compiled by the FRA Committee Member responsible for gathering information on trees, Elaine Rowland, had now been passed on to Tendring District Council.

NC concluded his report by stating that the FRA still needed help from residents. He asked if anyone had any ideas on how the FRA could take this forward, to please let the FRA know, or if you saw things that you did not like, please report them to us. He added that a lot of work had been going on behind the scenes, and because residents did not see anything happening, it did not mean that FRA Committee members were not trying.

NT thanked the FRA for the amount of work its Committee members put in, and reported that the list of missing trees had been passed on to the TDC Head of Horticulture who had had a meeting with the County Tree Officer. He had seen a scanner going along Second Avenue and had asked North Essex Parking Partnership how they did it. He explained that Veolia was the out-sourced provider of the refuse collection service, and therefore, their trucks could not be used for scanning roads. He had asked the TDC Engineer to send the list provided by the FRA on dangerous pavements and potholes to North Essex Highways, as he wanted it logged and sent back to him. He pointed out that as ECC was about to go into purdah until after the elections in May, he did not expect that anything would be done until early Summer.

IT added that the TDC Public Realm department involved different tiers of local government. It was made much worse when services were out-sourced to people like Ringway Jacobs with staff being transferred to that company. On-street parking used to be delegated to TDC by ECC, but then it went back to ECC who then out-sourced it to North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP). NEPP were originally given a budget for "lines and signs" (indicating parking restrictions), but this had now been withdrawn, which made it difficult because these now had to be financed from parking revenue. He believed that TDC were still in touch with residents, and offered to inform the FRA of who were the people responsible, or TDC would liaise with the authorities on their behalf.

Q: ECC are very good at confusing people about the roads and pavement, and they asked me to take photographs when I had a fall recently. However, compensation does not take away the pain. Twenty-three photographs have been taken of bad pavements in Hadleigh Road, etc. The roads are also an absolute disgrace. ECC regularly inspect and know where the problems are. They need a ten-year plan to get it done. When we vote in the next County Councillors we need to ensure that they are willing to stand up and make sure that this is done.

FRA Committee Member, Alan Eldret (AE), explained that the FRA had incorporated photographs supplied by members of the Parish Church into the list submitted to ECC as well as raising those issues with ECC. At the meeting on 21 March, ECC had recognised that there were roads that needed to be repaired, and the FRA had stated that these needed to be included in the budget. The FRA had offered input, but as of last week, ECC had still not finalised the 2017/18 budget within the Capital Investment Programme for Highways. He added that it was the fact that the service had been contracted out that was the problem, but there still ought to be a plan to put things right eventually.

Q: What responsibility do the builders have for repairing roads. There are so many problems in Wittonwood Road.

A: (AE) The FRA have been asking for a long time for a condition to be put into planning permissions and we are lobbying ECC to put it right. Councillor Mick Page is hoping that the County Engineers will have another meeting with Persimmon Homes and he is trying to get that sorted out.

Q: I notice that there are no young people at this meeting. Is anything being done to try and encourage families?

A: (NC) The FRA membership is for households (and we send out a newsletter to all 5,000 households in Frinton to encourage membership). It is not easy to get young people involved, but we do try. We are on Facebook and Twitter (and we have a website). Any suggestions would be welcome.

John Smock (JS), Chairman of Ontrack Rail Users' Association, then spoke about the proposal to close all local rail ticket offices except Clacton, Frinton and Wivenhoe. He reported that at a meeting with Abellio he had been informed that 200 letters and submissions had been sent to the Government Quango and the consultancy period had now been extended. He reported that 38.5% of local people do not have access to a computer and the new ticket machines might be card only. Having a ticket office meant one more person available in the station, and by closing ticket offices, help for vulnerable people was being removed. Further meetings would be taking place on this issue. He added that our train service (in East Anglia) had been 'dumbed down' – we do not have a good service in comparison with the number of population, and if the Government want more housing in this area, the population will increase. JS pointed out that the "Ontrack" AGM was taking place on 13 May 2017 in the Methodist Church Hall, and Councillor Mark Platt would be present.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman pointed out that on 19 and 20 June, from 11.00 pm to 6.00 am, the level crossing at the top of Connaught Avenue would be closed, that those wishing to object to the closure of the NatWest branch in Frinton on 25 September 2017 should write to the branch, and an event was taking place in McGrigor Hall on Sunday, 9 April, from 2.30 pm to raise money for a new roof – tickets would be available at the door.

He then encouraged all those present to join the FRA, if they were not members already, and pointed out that Catriona was available at the back of the hall to collect subscriptions. Problems with potholes, pavements and street lighting, could be reported to Ken, health issues to Jenny and planning issues to Alan – all of whom were also at tables at the back of the hall. Tree problems could be reported to Elaine (sitting by the door). Finally, he thanked everyone for attending and pointed out that discussions could take place with other Committee members before they left.

Report produced by  
Jeanette Phillips  
Honorary Secretary  
Frinton Residents' Association