



# THE FRIENDS OF CHARNWOOD FOREST NEWS



## Summer 2013

Website: [www.focf.org.uk](http://www.focf.org.uk)

**Mission Statement:** To work towards the preservation of the countryside and local environment of Charnwood Forest Regional Park for the benefit of those who live within it, and for those who visit, and for future generations.

**We aim to be an effective, informative and influential voluntary organisation.**

## Old Codgers and Young Upstarts

Yes, you're right, this is definitely all new. Members are seeing changes in how we do things and of course they are hopefully to benefit our beloved Forest. But more of that later.

Meanwhile, what's a Committee? Any Committee? An average view might be that it comprises 10% of Dopers and 90% Committee Fodder - the Old Codgers. During the past year or so, our Committee has been giving a lot of thought to the future and to how **The Friends** should be run. We could follow the same old comfortable rut, leading inevitably to a decline as we all get older and step aside. But NO! We wanted to revitalise and prepare for the future, and so ....

Chairman **Dick Howard** asked **John Kettle** to join the Committee. Not one for letting grass grow under his feet, John urged us into action and promptly asked **Helen Kessling** to become our new Events Co-Ordinator. This was necessary to replace **Clifford Jones** who had done us proud during the past 10 years but retired from the task in March. *Thank you Clifford.* The Admin roles had become cumbersome so **Douglas Maas** continues as Secretary and we welcome **Louise Hartshorn** as Membership Secretary.

This enabled Doug to find time to produce this Newsletter which should be sufficient to give Members most of the updated information they need. And please don't forget to keep an eye on our revamped website - [www.focf.org.uk](http://www.focf.org.uk) - which **Toby Manning** is managing. He can only include on it what others send to him. It is well worth a look. And so our revitalised Committee welcomes the addition of our new "Young Upstarts".

Now what, you are asking, is the reference to "Old Codgers" all about. Ever since Committees began - maybe the village elders sitting around a tree, deciding how their village should be managed, there have been the Elder Statesmen, the wise heads keeping their community on a steady

course. They are vital to wise decision making. We now have a well-balanced Committee to take us forward. We hope you agree.

## TALKS and WALKS

### Our activities for you to enjoy

Indoor meetings take place at Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall at 7.30pm, finishing about 9pm followed by refreshments. Your guests and other non-members are welcome at our talks (for whom we make a small charge of £3 at the door).

To assist our preparations and to help you in case of any change to the arrangements, please tell us you are coming: [Kesslings@btinternet.com](mailto:Kesslings@btinternet.com) 01509 891390  
**It's a big help ... thank you.**

#### Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June

VISIT to BRADGATE PARK DEER SANCTUARIES hosted by **Peter Tyldesley MRICS** who is Land Agent and Surveyor to the Bradgate Park Trust. 10am to 12noon. Appropriate clothing and stout shoes recommended.

#### Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

TALK: CHARNWOOD FOREST LANDSCAPES, CHANGES IN A LIFETIME by **Tim Adkin**, the Access to Nature Officer at Charnwood Borough Council.

#### Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October

TALK: LATITUDES II - TO THE END OF THE WORLD by **Peter Crichton**

#### Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November

MEET THE MEMBERS DINNER at The Village Restaurant, Newtown Linford 7.15pm to 7.45pm

#### And for next year ...

#### Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January

TALK: THE FUTURE OF LEICESTERSHIRE QUARRIES by **Geoff Mason**

#### Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March

AGM followed by TALK: THE FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL FOREST by **Lynne Richards**, Head of Fundraising and External Relations, National Forest Company

## Mountsorrel Quarry Planning Ahead

Our Chairman, **Dick Howard** reports on a visit to the Quarry which he, **Paul Day** and **Kim Turner** made in April as part of the consultation process, on behalf of Friends of Charn-



wood Forest, to see first-hand their proposed extensions and the effects they might have on local communities and the countryside.

Granite, in one form or another, has been mined at Mountsorrel since Roman times. Although it has a long history there are still around 95 million tonnes of reserves within the existing perimeter. Only about 25 million tonnes are able to be extracted which at current rates of production will last for the next 6 years, a very short time in terms of mineral planning.

To maintain the future of the quarry, further planning consent is required to extend the perimeter to open up additional production within the existing 494 acre site. Lafarge Aggregates, the owners of the Quarry, have proposed three options of which Option C is their preferred choice and is the option that we went to see and discuss.

To gain access to the new reserves about 6 million tonnes of overburden has to be removed creating initially new landforms but later being used as infill in the deepest part of the quarry. There will be no nett loss of woodland and there will be an additional permissive path up to the Albert Stone.

We were pleased to hear that the Primary Crusher will be moved off the skyline into the quarry from 90 metres to 17 metres above sea level which will have the effect of reducing both noise and dust, and will not be visible. A conveyor will be used to carry the crushed rock to the surface and acoustic covers will be incorporated to further reduce noise. There is a further environmental advantage with the crusher within the quarry in that the trucks do not get to the surface.

We witnessed the improved use of electronic delay detonation as 25,000 tonnes were blasted from the rock face with barely a tremor.

● A consultation booklet was issued in May 2012 and several Open Days at the Quarry have been organised. The next series of public consultations are to be held at Mountsorrel VH on 5 - 6 July and Quorn VH 12 - 13 July. To contact the quarry for further details ring 0844 561 0037

## STONEYWELL LATEST

The big task of ensuring that Stoneywell Cottage is maintained is



well underway. Internally, plasterwork, electrics, heating and security are all receiving attention. Externally, the recent picture shows there is

plenty of scaffolding in place to ensure that the maintenance to the fabric of the building is effectively carried out. All this is being done with great care to conserve the building.

Meanwhile, The National Trust has held two Welcome sessions for volunteers. We understand that almost 200 have signed up to assist with the preparation and operation in due course.

Consultations on the planning applications submitted by the Trust, including those for the car park and the stable block, closed in mid-May. The various observations submitted can be seen online at the Charnwood Borough Council's website. Of course, there were many expressions of support but also some strong objections to the proposals. We now await the Council's decisions in due course.

● The Trust plans to open Stoneywell to the public early next year.

**ALMOST GONE** Next door to Stoneywell, Ernest Gimson's pair of cottages, latterly known as Chitterman House, have all but disappeared into big piles of rubble. Planners require that the facade be incorporated into the new modern-style structure, hence the scaffolding to keep it up. But we do wonder whether a puff of wind might blow it over.



## “Countryside being Stolen”

Members of Loughborough South West Action Group (LSWAG) have been provided with the following message by their Chairman, Patrick Keogh:

Just to let you know that our fears concerning the vulnerability of other sites across the south west following the decision to grant the Appeal at Bramcote Road (Loughborough) were fully justified.

● Bloor Homes intend to build 100+ houses on the fields leading to Half Way House and the Outwoods and will be holding a Public Exhibition at Rainbows Hospice, Lark Rise on Monday 20th May between 2.30 -7pm. **Please try to attend.**

LSWAG is totally opposed to this development which, once again, is on land designated as an 'area of particularly attractive countryside' (APAC).

We believe the site to be more visually sensitive than Bramcote Road and there is no doubt that it will have a negative impact on the area. We also fear that success here will be followed by even more applications on other sites across the south west.

We urge you to make your views known - our very best and most beautiful countryside is being stolen, whilst huge areas of brownfield sites lie undeveloped. Nicky Morgan MP has very kindly arranged for the Planning Minister Nick Boles MP to visit us on Friday 19th July. We will let you have more information about the visit shortly.

## Who's Who?

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### *Foot Note*

This Newsletter will be published about every 3 months. Any other announcements or information will be sent in between to those Members with email addresses. If we haven't got your email address and you could let us have one (yours, a friend's or a neighbour's maybe?) it would be a big help. Thanks. Please tell Louise (as above).