

Friends of the Manor
Tuesday 24th February 2026 – The Manor Centre
General Meeting Minutes

The Meeting opened at 6.35pm

1. **Welcome** – The Chairman made opening welcoming remarks

Those present - Robin Sutton -RS Chairman Neighbourhood Watch and Dog Walkers, Robert Windle -RW Vice Chairman Whittlesey Sports Association, Julie Windle -JW Minute Secretary, Robert Boddington - RBodd, Rosemary Marson (Rose M), Roy Bridson (R Brid)- Angling Trust & Small Fry Fishing Club, Geoff Howes- GH Manor Field Park Run / Thorney Running Club, Alan Bessant -AB Whittlesey Rifle Club, Peter Bibb (PB) Whittlesey Cricket Club / Tennis Club, Shona Kitchener, (SK) Joe Jennings (WEFA) Andy Stimson (AS) Jonathan Stimson (JS) Roger Brown (RBrown) Peter Davies (PD) Streetpride, Richard Marson (RMar) Whittlesey Small Fry Youth Fishing Club. Phil Hughes (PH) FDC. Stuart Orwin (SO) Whittlesey Rifle Club

Apologies Cllr Roy Gerstner. Cllr Steve Count (SC) Cllr Barry Wainwright (BW) Julie Shortland (JS) Tony Raynor (TR) Dave Ransome (DR) Whittlesey Rifle Club, Cllr Eamonn Dorling (ED)

Chairman's welcome - RS welcomed everyone.

Minutes of the previous meeting 11th of November 2025 There was a correction to the Treasurers report. The balance is £769 proposed acceptance PD seconded RB.

Matters Rising

Counsellor Steve Count attended the previous meeting and answered questions put to the meeting in writing to the chairman.

SK future projects for the friends of the Manor need to be discussed at the next meeting on the agenda.

Treasurers report ED had circulated the report this afternoon to RW who passed on to the membership

Manor Centre update Phil Hughes updated the members on the latest developments he said that the pathway project is paused for the time being we will know more later in the year. GH confirmed it is a pathway not a running track GH supplied a map of his proposal for a pathway.

Phil Hughes continued, Fenland District Council Cabinet yesterday agreed to fund legal work in preparation contract documents, should the Council agree in June to move ahead to construction. Some early enabling work planned for June and July will now be part of the main contract works as the cost for that enabling work was additional to the anticipated contract cost.

Currently the estimated construction cost is £17.6 million. Detailed design works to take place in the next few months. Fenland District Council made an expression of interest to Sport England for a £2 million Grant Sport England then invited an application and have visited the facility. By May we should probably know whether they are agreeable to a Grant or not. The Combined Authority also will be approached for financial support. Elected members at Fenland District Council require a commercial kitchen at the back of the sports hall which should encourage larger community focused events ensuring that the new facility provides a more rounded community focus.

Sport England have highlighted improved accessibility considerations details to be addressed regarding the Swimming Pool and larger changing rooms.

In June Fenland District Council Cabinet will make the final decision on the project. The budget has not changed in the last three months. Lawyers have been instructed to prepare necessary contract work prior to a June Cabinet decision.

The plan is for the dry side to be demolished in January 2028 once the pool is finished in December 2027 it is expected the Pool to be shut from August 2026. Centre users will be kept in informed of the progress as soon as a revised programme is available.

RW mentioned CCTV as this was a concern from the early meetings of the Friends of the Manor, will it be improved with the new building? Phil Hughes said there will be ample CCT in the new building including AI technology to assist the lifeguards. RW also asked would there be protection from travellers coming onto the land with gates or barriers ? Phil Hughes said there will be a barrier as current.

RBrown said the Thursday Social Dance group is to finish their hire at the end of March, they have found an alternative venue, they are going to the Indoor Bowls Club on Station Road.

It is anticipated that the Skate park will be closed September 26.

December 2027, the new Swimming Pool to open

It is anticipated that in January 2027 the paddle courts a new skate park will be opened.

RS circulated the Manor Leisure redevelopment notes.

RW asked what is happening to the flower bed. Phil Hughes replied no work on it this year it'll just be cut RW asked could this be a project for the Friends of the Manor in the future years.

Rob Boddington asked is all the funding being found at the moment?

Phil Hughes said that the Council has recently approved the budget for 26/27 and funding is highlighted in the budget for Fenland Inspire!

Projects of which the Manor is one.

Local government reorganisation will happen in May 2028

Rob Boddington proposed a vote of thanks to Phil Hughes for attending and taking questions.

The Manor pathway was discussed earlier. RW asked RS to approach Phil Hughes regarding costings and specifications for the pathway and maybe we can apply for a grant possibly Burnt House or Glassmoor Bank.

Events RW mentioned that the new flip book for Whittlesey events this has been circulated to the group.

Antisocial behaviour RS said there was very little antisocial behaviour to report.

High Sheriff Awards.

RW talked about the process for nominations, Nominations to RW, RW, to send to the Mayor of Whittlesey and then that would be passed on once approved to the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire.

Any other business

PB is now part of a Project group which is looking to twin with the German Town, Walldurn. Any support is welcome.

AB mentioned Saxon Gate issues and that the County Council are minded to approve the latest application. The Environment agency report shows discharging water to Saxon pit and the Bower that the toxicity is showing high levels. They will be a coach going from Whittlesey to the County Council meeting when it is discussed.

RW commented on the good lighting on the entrance to the Manor complex however there are some potholes still to be filled in the car park.

Proposed future date change for the meeting Tuesday 9th June to be changed to Wednesday, the 10th of June due to a Whittlesey festival meeting date clash. (All accepted the date)

The meeting closed at 7.50pm