

# Shropshire Local Access Forum

Date: Wednesday, 24 June 2015

## Shropshire Local Access Forum

**Date:** Thursday, 2 July 2015  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** Bridgnorth Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,  
Shropshire, SY2 6ND

You are requested to attend the above meeting.  
The Agenda is attached

Linda Jeavons  
Secretary to the Forum

### Members of The Forum

<b>Name</b>	<b>Fields of Interest</b>
Trevor Allison	Walking/Tourism
Stephen Bell	Walking/Conservation Wildlife/Disabled Acces
Gareph Boxley	Motorised Vehicular Use/Conservation Wildlife/Disabled Access
Peter Carr	Walking/Canals
Alex Carson-Taylor	Rural Business/Land Owning/Farming/Conservation/Wildlife
Will Chambers	Cycling
Lee Chapman	Shropshire Council
Chris Chillingworth	Walking/Voluntary Activities/Community
Pauline Dee	Scouts and Brownies
Janet Mees-Robinson	Carriage Driving/Disabled Access/Tourism
Steward Pickering	Motorised Vehicular Use/Countryside Volunteer/Walking
Roger Plowden (Chairman)	Landowner/Conservation Wildlife/Farming
Zia Robins	Horse Riding
Mark Weston (Vice Chairman)	Horseriding/Carriage Driving/Voluntary Activities
Leslie Winwood	Shropshire Council

Your Committee Officer is:

**Linda Jeavons** Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 252738

Email: [linda.jeavons@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:linda.jeavons@shropshire.gov.uk)

# AGENDA

**1 Welcome, Introductions and Membership**

**2 Apologies for Absence**

**3 Minutes and any matters arising (Pages 1 - 44)**

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 5 February 2015.

**4 Public Question Time**

To receive any questions, statements or petitions of which notice has been received from members

**5 Declarations of Interest**

**6 Feedback on Annual Performance and User Surveys**

Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Dev Team Leader, will be in attendance.

**7 Access Strategy - 5-Year Review**

Shona Butter, Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader, will be in attendance.

**8 Team Plan for 15/16 Overview**

Shona Butter, Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader, will be in attendance.

**9 New Ways of Working - ROW Maintenance**

Richard Knight, ROW Team Leader, will be in attendance.

**10 Shropshire UCRs**

Richard Knight, ROW Team Leader, will be in attendance.

**11 Shropshire Great Outdoors Website and Branding**

Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Dev Team Leader, will be in attendance.

## **12 Parish Paths Partnerships**

Helen Beresford, Shropshire Outdoor Development Officer, will be in attendance.

## **13 Ramblers Big Pathwatch**

Peter Carr to present.

## **14 Feedback from other Forums and items for noting (Pages 45 - 76)**

### 13.1 Items for Noting

13.2 The following minutes/papers are provided as updates for members:

- (a) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum – 7 October 2014
- (b) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum – 16 February 2015
- (c) Shropshire Cycle Forum – 10 February 2015
- (d) Central Shropshire Walking Forum – 18 February 2015
- (e) Central Shropshire Walking Forum - 15 May 2015
- (f) Southern Walking Forum (now known as Shropshire Hills Forum) – 21 April 2015

### 13.3 Future Meetings

(a) Members are asked to suggest agenda items for the next meeting.

(b) Future dates for 2014/15 starting at 10.00 a.m. are as follows:

Thursday, 15 October 2015

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## Shropshire Local Access Forum

<b><u>Committee and Date</u></b>
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Shropshire Local Access Forum
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23 April 2015
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### MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2015 10.00 AM - 12.45 PM

**Responsible Officer:** Linda Jeavons  
Email: linda.jeavons@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 252738

#### **Present**

Councillor Roger Plowden (Chairman)  
Councillors Mark Weston (Vice Chairman), Stephen Bell, Gareph Boxley, Peter Carr,  
Alex Carson-Taylor, Janet Mees-Robinson, Stuart Morgan, Zia Robins and  
Leslie Winwood

#### **Officers**

Shona Butter, Mapping & Enforcement Team Leader  
Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Development Team Leader  
Emily Harrison, Rights of Way Officer, Legal Orders and Enforcement  
Deb Hughes, Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Manager  
Ian Kilby, Planning Services Manager  
Joe Penfold, Landscape Partnership Community Officer  
Dan Wrench, Biodiversity Officer

#### 17 **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### 18 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

#### **Members:**

Chris Chillingworth, Richard Cotham, David Cowell, Pauline Dee and Dave Tremellen.

#### 19 **Minutes and any matters arising**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 16 October 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to it being noted that:

- Minute No. 4, paragraph 2, should read: “.....incidents caused by the **interlocking canopy** of oilseed rape.”; and
- Will Chambers was now a member of this Forum.

## Matters Arising

- 19.1 With reference to Minute No. 7 (Mid Wales Transmission Line Project) a Member commented that, following receipt of a detailed map, it had become apparent that contrary to what was indicated by representatives from National Grid the route of the MWTL project would run parallel to a bridleway.

It was **AGREED:** That, in consultation with Zia Robins, the Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader (SB) would pass the comments on to the National Grid.

At this juncture, the Planning Services Manager (IK) provided an update on the position to date with regard to the MWTL project. He reported that the consultation exercise was ongoing with all responses required by Monday, 9 February and he encouraged all members to submit comments.

- 19.2 With reference to Minute No. 13 it was noted that CF would provide an update on the Irresistible Offa project and the Volunteer Development Plan during the meeting.

- 19.3 With reference to Minute No. 14:

- CF agreed that she would approach the road cycling fraternity to explain the role of the Forum and to invite any interested parties along to attend the next meeting; and
- SB would check the position to date with regard to appointing other members to the Forum.

## 20 **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

At this juncture, Mr Trevor Allison, Secretary of the Shropshire Area Ramblers (attending as an observer and potential member of the Forum) reported that on the 20 March he would finally complete his mammoth task of walking all of Shropshire's public rights of way. This would culminate in a celebration at the Tally Ho Inn, Bouldon. Any information gathered would be used to inform a database of Shropshire's rights of way network.

The Chairman congratulated him on his achievement.

## 21 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

## 22 **Change in Order of Business**

**RESOLVED:** That item No. 8 (Site Allocations and Management Development (SAMDev) Plan and Planning – How Access is Incorporated/Considered would be considered as the next item of business.

## 23 **Site Allocations and Management Development (SAMDev) Plan and Planning - How Access is Incorporated/Considered**

Ian Kilby, Planning Services Manager, provided an overview of how access is incorporated and considered in the planning process. The following points were highlighted:

- He provided an update on the position to date with regard to the Site Allocations and Management Development Plan (SAMDev) and the five year land supply;
- Explained that the Core Strategy document set out the strategic aims and planning policy for Shropshire. Core Strategy Policies 6, 16 and 17 made particular reference to access;
- Place Plans – there were 18 Place Plans which identified the infrastructure needs of a community. The Place Plans were reviewed annually following consultation with the communities, Town and Parish Councils and infrastructure and service providers;
- Planning guidance was incorporated into two important documents – National Planning Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework (both of which were available on Shropshire Council’s website);
- The planning vision was to encourage more connectivity which would provide for increased access which would then hopefully encourage a reduced dependency on the car and encourage people to walk, cycle and ride;
- Decision Making – when making a recommendation, the Planning Officer would refer to policy and the views received from individuals and groups. The Rights of Way team would be consulted on any appropriate planning applications. Anyone could comment on any planning application via the planning portal;
- With regard to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies, he explained that the community and/or Town and Parish Council would identify and highlight any priorities and these would be prioritised during the annual review of Place Plans; and
- Impact of a development on a right of way was a material planning consideration, and a Planning Officer would weigh up the benefits of any scheme before making a recommendation.

In response to a question, Shona Butter explained that when determining planning applications Planning Officers did use and had access to an up-to-date digital version of the definitive map.

### Mid Wales Transmission Line project

It was noted that all documentation for the MWTL project was available electronically via the following link <http://midwalesconnection.com/>.

Following a discussion, it was noted that SB would be attending a meeting with National Grid and it was:

**AGREED:** That,

- (i) A Focus Group be convened to formulate a response of all the concerns raised by members of this Forum with regard to the Mid Wales Transmission Line Project; and
- (ii) Membership of the Focus Group to include Trevor Allison, Gareph Boxley, Peter Carr, Stuart Morgan and Zia Robins.

#### **24 Open Hills - Proposed Scheme and Access**

Joe Penfold provided an overview of the Open Hills project by way of a presentation, a copy of which would be appended to the signed minutes, and answered questions from the floor.

The Chairman thanked Joe Penfold for his excellent presentation, input and attendance at the Forum.

#### **25 The Use of Towpaths**

It was noted that, in the absence of a representative from the Canals and River Trust, this item would be considered at the next meeting.

#### **26 Irresistible Offa - Sustainable Tourism Project**

Clare Fildes was in attendance and provided an update on two projects, 'Irresistible Offa' a Sustainable Tourism Project and the Volunteer Development Plan.

##### **Volunteer Development Plan**

CF explained the Plan was now complete, a copy of which would be appended to the signed minutes. A new Shropshire Great Outdoors website would be developed and would incorporate the information held on the Shropshire Walking and Riding websites with the cycling and walking information on the Travel Shropshire website. As part of the delivery of the Plan, Shropshire Council was putting together a Lottery bid which would provide funding to get those in the largest communities, eg North Shropshire, Oswestry, Stokesay, Whitchurch, Highley and parts of Ludlow, out and about. The plan was to involve a range of partners, eg Town/Parish Councils, Partnership Schemes, Wildlife Trust, National Trust, schools and ramblers and a range of taster sessions, to include geocaching, were planned. A meeting with all partners was being arranged.

##### **Irresistible Offa**

CF provided an update on the position to date. This current stage of the walking project was coming to an end. The next stage would still be about economy and sustainability and developing the recreational use and access of the countryside was integral.

Ten key themes had been identified - Offa's 360os; Wild Offa; Borderlands Hill Forts; Conflict, Control and Castles; Power, Prestige and Religion; Engineering Marvels; Accessible Offa; Contemporary Offa; Eating Offa; and Cycling Offa.



Key projects – Oswestry and Ellesmere as walking and maybe cycling hubs; Volunteer Development; Development of Shrewsbury to Llangollen bus journeys as a visitor experience; Walkers are Welcome in Ellesmere and Llanymynech; Joined up promotion of heritage and access events; and Montgomery Canal.

A Business Plan for the whole area would be signed-off shortly. In terms of funding, they were hoping to obtain EU funding towards a total estimated budget of £1.65m.

### **How can the LAF help?**

A discussion took place on how this forum could help. CF commented that any letters of support and any match-funding or “in-kind” funding would be welcomed. There was a need to ensure that any work our partner organisations wanted to see done was achieved.

CF suggested that a workshop session be held prior to the next meeting to discuss and think about the specifics and how individuals and groups might help.

## **27 Ploughing and Cropping and the role of Shropshire Council**

In response to comments from members, Deb Hughes explained that there was a programme for sending out reminder letters to landowners which had been quite successful. However, there were repeat offenders and in these instances further action was required.

Alex Carson-Taylor informed the meeting that the CLA local branch issued a newsletter advising landowners of the compliance regulations.

## **28 Outdoor Partnerships Update**

Deb Hughes provided an update on the position to date. She commented that it was heartening to hear how access supported tourism and the local economy and hoped that this would continue in the future. Savings of £215,000 had been achieved and a further £230,000 of savings was now required for 15/16. The service overall had had a 45% reduction in staffing across its core work. The Rights of Way Team had been faced with a big reduction in manpower, which, despite best efforts, resulted in an increasing number of complaints being unresolved. With regard to rights of way maintenance there was a need to ensure the service brought in revenue to support the reduction in the budget and, in line with Shropshire Council’s Business Plan, the Outdoor Partnership service would operate on a more commercial basis with income generation being key to support reduced maintenance budgets.

As a result of the Parish Access Project rights of way had been improved and access to approx. 80% of routes had been achieved; however, current surveys had indicated that this had now fallen. 65% of routes remained open at the current time but the ability to respond to the remaining 35% would be limited.

Bridge inspection data had revealed a continuing problem with large scale structures and not having the funding to resolve issues over the years had compounded the problem. Capital funding had been allocated in the next budget round to help with major structures which hopefully would reduce the need to close routes on the rights of way network where there was a potential risk to public safety.

**29 Feedback from other Forums and items for noting**

**Items for Noting**

Publicity - A member commented that greater publicity should be given to promoting the meetings of this Forum and it was important for all members to spread the word.

**Minutes / Papers:**

The following minutes / papers, which were circulated with the agenda for information, were noted:

- (i) Shropshire Cycle Forum – 14 October 2014
- (ii) North Walking Forum – 27 October 2014
- (iii) Central Walking Forum – 29 October 2014
- (iv) South Walking Forum – 16 January 2015

**Future meetings:**

The following agenda items were suggested for consideration at a future meeting:

- The Use of Towpaths
- Feedback from Highways - unsurfaced public roads
- Ramblers PathWatch project
- Shropshire Highways - an update on the management of the unclassified county roads by rights of way
- Digitalisation of Highway Maps
- Deregulation Bill
- Lost Ways in Shropshire
- Tread Lightly Charity

Future meeting dates:

- Thursday, 23 April 2015
- Thursday, 2 July 2015 – venue to be confirmed
- Thursday, 15 October 2015

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....



Local Sustainable Transport Plan (LSTP) awarded to consult local individuals and organisations on the best practical development of a medium size that links heritage sites in the wider area of the outdoor area.

**Part 1 - Consultation For All**  
 - Forestry Commission Church  
 - 10th March - Initial map and training  
 - 15th March - Site visit and survey tools

**Part 2 - Heritage Identification**  
 - 1st

**The Landscape Partnership Programme**

- From 1st July 2014, the LPP will be managed by the National Trust. The programme will be managed by the National Trust, working in partnership with the local authority.

**Silversons & Cranston Hill Country**

**What is our LPS all about?**

- Introduced by partnership of the Silversons and Cranston Hill WGS  
 - 2000 with original nature and cultural heritage of European and national significance  
 - Managed by a Partnership of interested and relevant organisations  
 - Set up between 2012 and 2013  
 - Project is worth £2.2m, £1.5m from the LPP



**Involving the community**

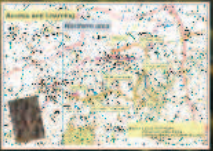
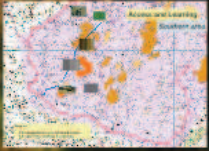
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**Programmes and Projects**

- Silversons and Cranston Hill WGS  
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**Silversons & Cranston Hill Country**

**What is our LPS all about?**

- Introduction to the partnership of the Silversons and Cranston Hill Country.

- 2014 will see a range of national and local heritage of European and national significance.

- Managed by a Partnership of professional and voluntary organisations.

- Delivery between 2014 and 2020.

- Project is worth £2.7M, £3.5M from 16.11.



**Involving the community**

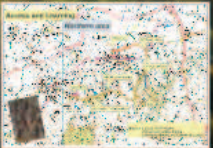
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 - 1st

**Programmes and Projects**

- Heritage Identification  
 - Heritage Interpretation  
 - Heritage Signage  
 - Heritage Training  
 - Heritage Events  
 - Heritage Research  
 - Heritage Conservation  
 - Heritage Education



## Joe Penfold Community Officer

- *Landscape Partnerships Programme*
- *Context of our Scheme*
- *Overview of access projects*

Stiperstones &  
Corndon Hill Country  
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME



Bro Stiperstones a  
Corndon Hill  
CYLLUN PARTNERIAETH TIRWEDD

# The Landscape Partnerships Programme

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- Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund
- For areas of 'distinctive' landscape character
- Must address breadth of heritage and involve local people
- Four main outcomes
- Managed by partnerships of organisations
- For areas covering 20-200km<sup>2</sup>
- About 70 LPS nationally



# Stiperstones & Corndon Hill Country

## *What is our LPS all about?*

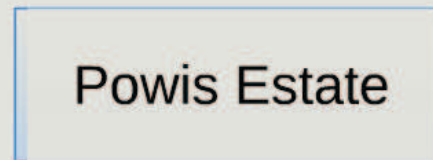
- Dominated by parallel ridges of the Stiperstones and Corndon/Stapeley Hill
- 199km<sup>2</sup> with significant natural and cultural heritage of European and national significance
- Managed by a Partnership of professional and voluntary organisations
- Delivery between 2013 and 2018
- Project is worth £2.24m, £1.35m from HLF



# Who's involved? 18 organisations representing statutory, community and special interests



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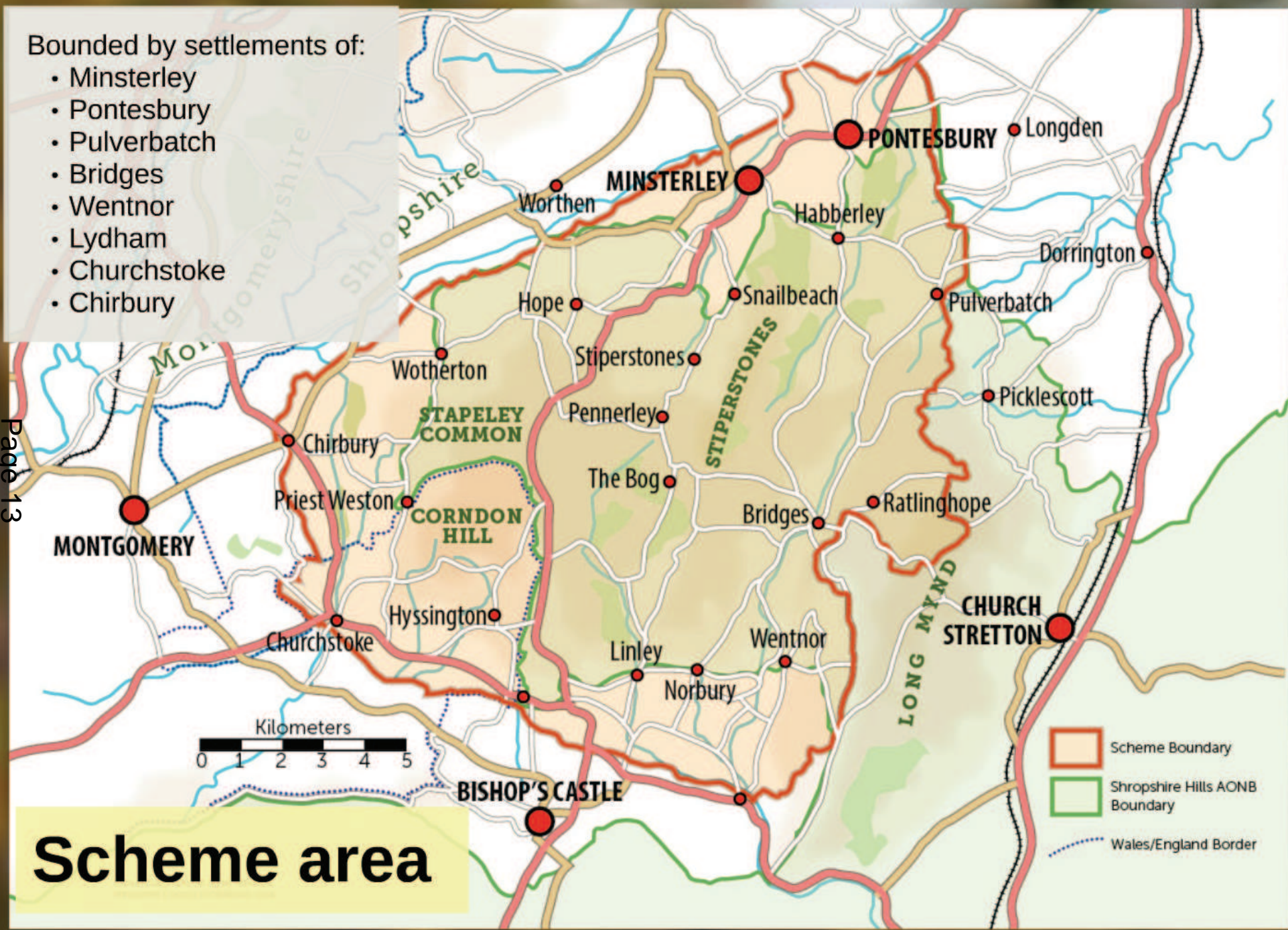




Bounded by settlements of:

- Minsterley
- Pontesbury
- Pulverbatch
- Bridges
- Wentnor
- Lydham
- Churchstoke
- Chirbury

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# Scheme area

 Scheme Boundary

 Shropshire Hills AONB Boundary

 Wales/England Border

# Programmes and Projects



## 1. Scraping Beneath the Surface

- Coal and Transport
- Lead & Barytes Mining
- Rescuing Rocks and Overgrown Relics



## 2. Land Between Lands

- Open Hills, Old Ways & Commons
- Helping Hillforts and Earthwork Castles



## 3. Remarkable Wildlife

- Wildflower Meadows, Pastures and Verges
- Buzz in the Borders
- Ground-nesting Bird Recovery
- Community Wildlife Groups
- Products from the Landscape

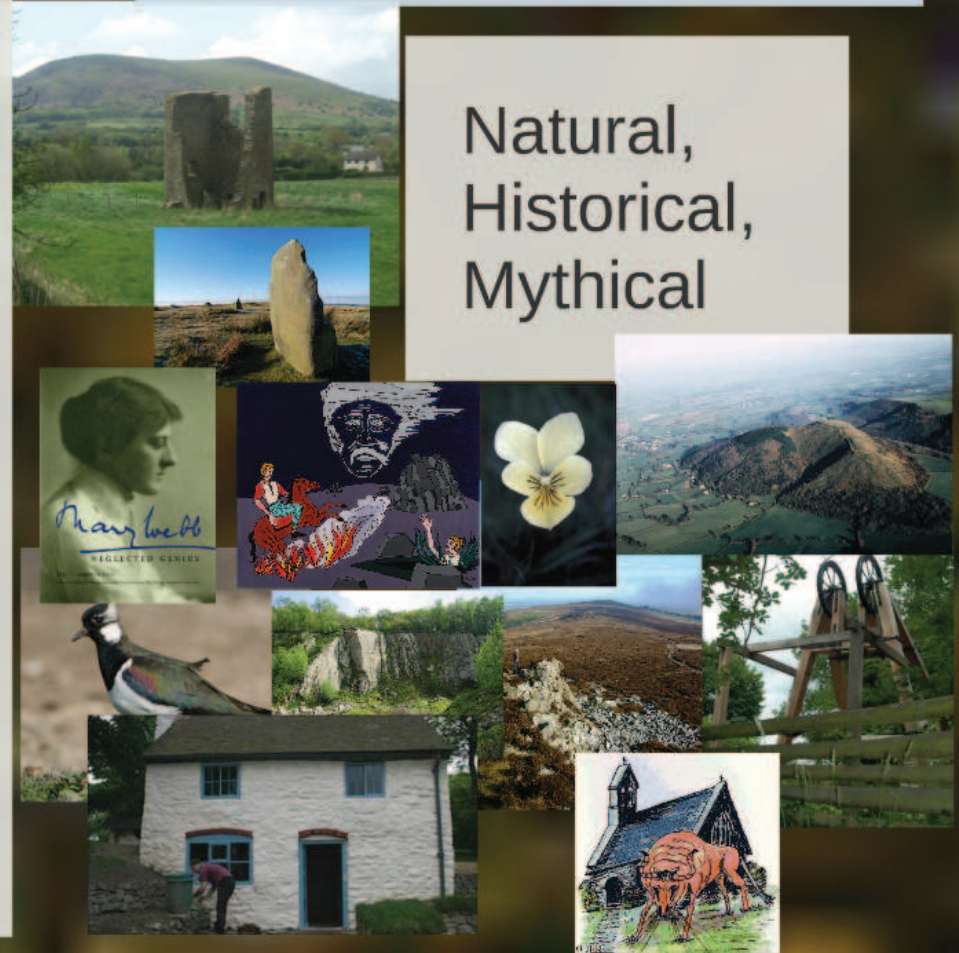


## 4. Resourceful People

- Farming & Smallholding
- Young People & Heritage
- Down to Earth
- Dynamic Hills Training Programme
- Accessible Records

*A special landscape...*

Natural,  
Historical,  
Mythical



- **Conserve and enhance** natural and cultural heritage
- **Community involvement** in heritage
- Increased **access** to and **learning** about heritage
- Increased opportunities for **training** in heritage skills



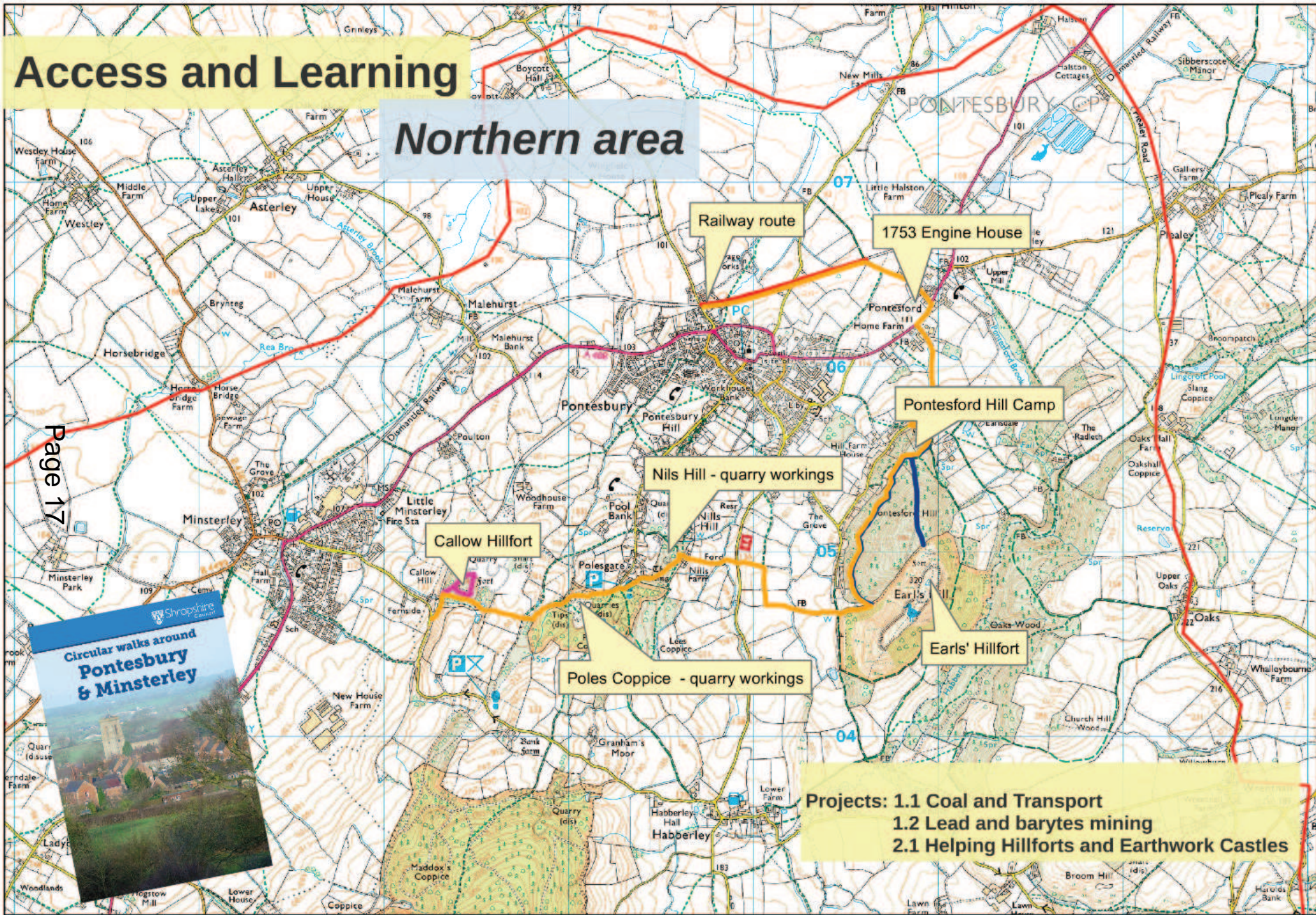
## Four outcomes

- **Conserve and enhance** natural and cultural heritage
- **Community involvement** in heritage
- Increased **access** to and **learning** about heritage
- Increased opportunities for **training** in heritage skills

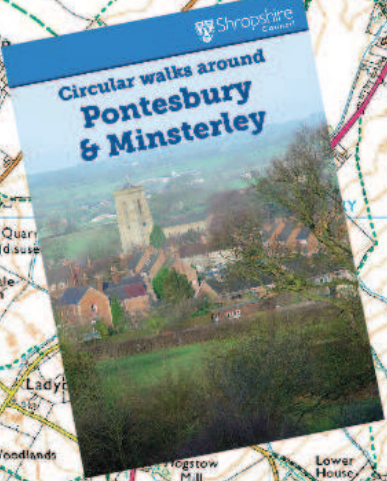


# Access and Learning

## Northern area



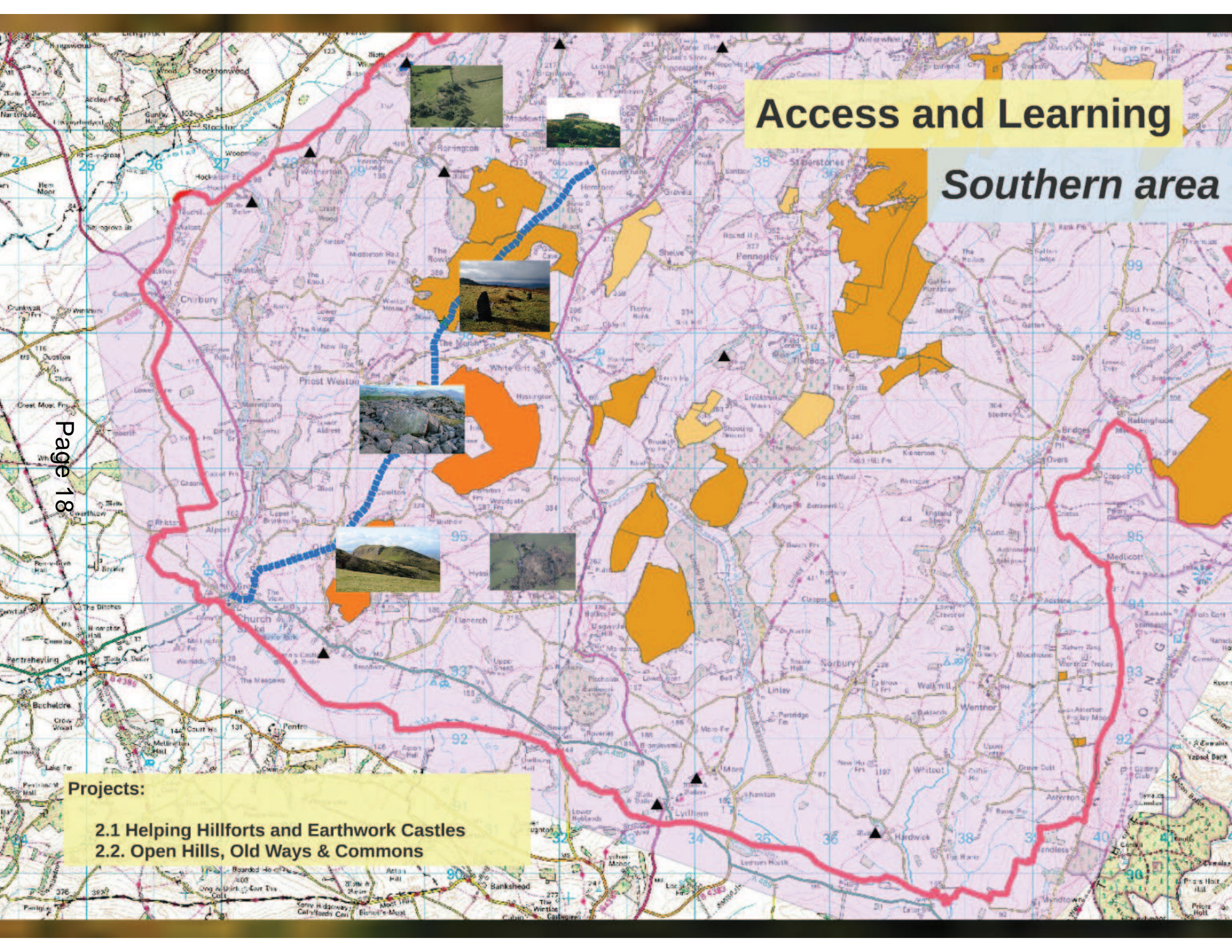
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- Projects: 1.1 Coal and Transport
- 1.2 Lead and barytes mining
- 2.1 Helping Hillforts and Earthwork Castles

# Access and Learning

## Southern area



### Projects:

- 2.1 Helping Hillforts and Earthwork Castles
- 2.2. Open Hills, Old Ways & Commons

# Involving the community

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) secured to consult local individuals and stakeholders on the best practice. Development of a multi-user trail that links heritage sites in the northern part of the scheme area.

## Part 1 - Countryside For All

Pontesbury Congregational Church

30th March - Workshop and training

31st March - Site visits and access audits



## Part 2 - Heritage Interpretation

tbc



**thankyou!**

**any questions?**



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www.stiperstonesandcorndon.co.uk



Stiperstones &  
Corndon Hill Country  
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME



Bro Stiperstones a  
Corndon Hill  
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# Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Volunteer Development Plan- Draft

March 2015

## 1.0 Introduction

The Outdoor Partnerships Team was formed following a review of the Outdoor Recreation Service in 2013/14. It is part of Shropshire Council. The aim of the service is to provide a **'Happy, Healthy, Green, more Active Shropshire'**.

The team consists of:

- Rights of Way- maintenance, including Parish Paths Partnerships
- Parks and Countryside- habitat management and maintenance, including Countryside Wardens and Greenspace volunteers
- Rights of Way Mapping and Enforcement
- Development Team- including Walking for Health and the Shropshire Wild Team

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership is also hosted by Shropshire Council through Outdoor Partnerships but operates under its own identity.

In 2014/15 the team has been partially funded by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and Public Health.

### Priorities

The Outdoor Partnership Teams priorities are to;

- Improve people's **health and wellbeing**
- Support **local communities**, the **local environment** and **tourism economy**

Through the management and development of recreational access in Shropshire **via the Public Rights of Way network, Countryside Parks and Sites, green spaces and play areas and Open Access land.**

Volunteers are vital to achieve a 'Happy, Healthy, Green, more Active Shropshire.' Whether leading health walks, contributing to a Parish Path Partnership group, or helping improve our Countryside sites, volunteers are making a real difference to their local environments and people's health by allowing everyone to access paths and quality environments where they live.

This paper analyses the current volunteering offer of the service and makes recommendations for the development of volunteering opportunities, based on consultation with current volunteers and staff involved with volunteer co-ordination. The aim of this plan is to develop a comprehensive approach to outdoor active volunteering recognising that volunteers are vital to achieve a 'Happy, Healthy, Green, more Active Shropshire'.

## 2.0 Current situation

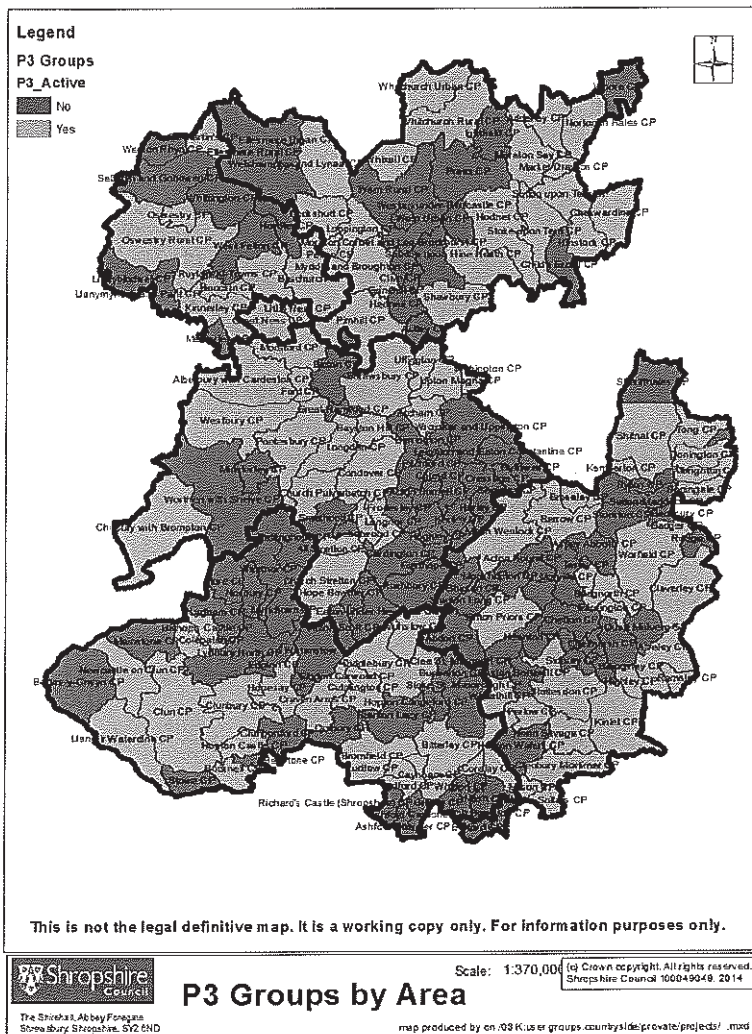
The service currently offers a range of volunteering opportunities:

### 2.1 Parish Paths Partnerships (P3)

The Parish Paths Partnership initiative was introduced to Shropshire over 20 years ago. The P3 groups and individuals called Parish Paths Wardens work on the maintenance and development of public Rights of Way, usually within a single Parish. P3 groups sign an agreement with Shropshire Council and are provided with equipment, training and insurance, along with a comprehensive manual. Most groups link into their local Parish Councils.

There are now 58 groups (and 29 Parish Paths Wardens) across the county, co-ordinated as part of their role by four full-time Area Officer posts. The distribution of the groups is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1- Map of P3 groups in Shropshire 2014/15



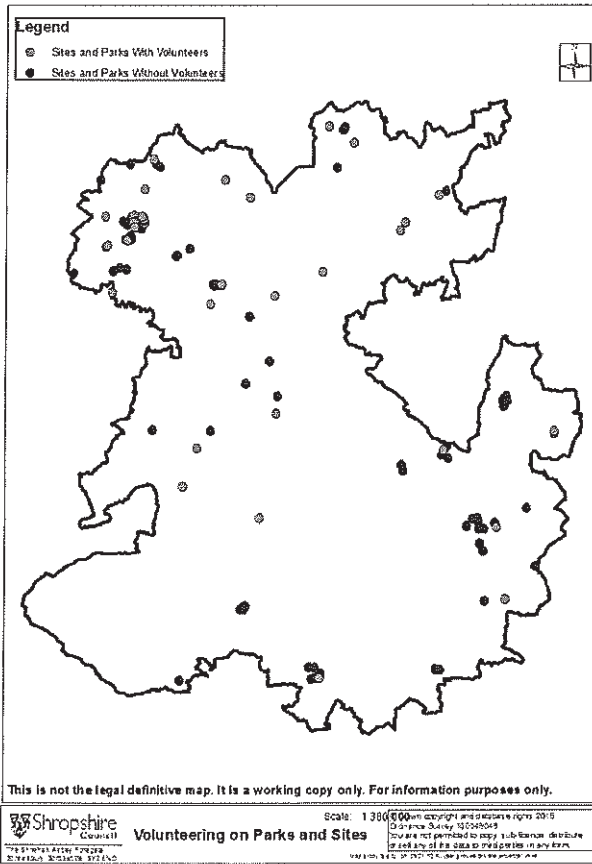
## 2.2 Countryside Sites, Parks and Greenspace Volunteers

There are a range of active volunteers and 'Friends of' groups associated with the Countryside Sites, Parks and Greenspaces. These have developed organically and the groups vary from formally constituted groups to individuals working on single sites. Table 1 shows the range of groups involving site based volunteers. There are almost 300 volunteers listed as part of these groups, although some work on more than one site.

**Table 1- Countryside Sites, Parks and Greenspace volunteer groups**

Site	Location
Abney Avenue Village Park	Albrighton
Birchmeadow Park	Broseley
Ifton Meadows Local Nature Reserve	St Martins
Tollgate Road play area, Ludlow	Ludlow
Arundel Close, Ruyton XI Towns	Ruyton XI Towns
Bridge Inn Field	Ruyton XI Towns
Brown Moss Countryside Heritage Site	Nr Whitchurch
Colemere Countryside Heritage Site	Ellesmere
Corbet Wood Countryside Heritage Site	Grinshill
Hodnet	Hodnet
Merrington Green	Shrewsbury
Nesscliffe / The Cliffe	Nesscliffe
Snailbeach Mine	Snailbeach
Walkmill Meadows	Market Drayton
Whitchurch Waterway Country Park	Whitchurch
Whitchurch Waterway Country Park (Greenfields)	Whitchurch
Wollerton	Wollerton
Bog Mine and visitor centre	Snailbeach
Donington and Albrighton LNR	Albrighton
Lyth Hill Countryside Site	Bayston Hill
Rectory Wood & Field	Church Stretton
Severn Valley Country Park	Alveley
Stanmore Camp	Bridgnorth
Llanymynech Limeworks Heritage Area	Llanymynech
Broadlands Way	Oswestry
Bryn y Castell, Gobowen	Gobowen
Eaton Field & Pond	Oswestry
Henley Wood & Meadow	Oswestry
Linear Walk	Oswestry
Llwyn Coppice	Oswestry
Old Mopsis Community Orchard	Morda
Plas Ffynnon Millennium Green	Oswestry
Oswestry Old Racecourse Common	Oswestry
Railway Pond	Oswestry
Shelf Bank	Oswestry

The Mere at Ellesmere	Ellesmere
Trefonen Playing Fields	Trefonen
Wilfred Owen Green	Oswestry



**Figure 2- Volunteer Ranger Groups on Parks and Sites**

The site based volunteers are either self-governing or coordinated by the four full-time Parks and Greenspaces Officers.

### 2.3 Walking for Health Walks Leaders

Walking for Health has been actively promoted by Shropshire Council for 6 years. There are currently two full time and one part time Walking Coordinators employed to lead on Walking for Health in the Northern, Central and Southern areas of Shropshire.

There are 49 active groups throughout Shropshire. In total over 550 people are walking with a Walking for Health group every week.

Table 2 shows where the groups are and how many people are involved.

**Table 2: Walking for Health Scheme summary**

Town	Venue	Frequency	Day of the week	Level
<b>Weekly</b>				
Albrighton	Crown	Weekly	Wednesday	Two/Three
Alveley	Post Office	Weekly	Tuesdays	Two/Three
Baschurch	Admiral Duncan	Weekly	Wednesday	3
Bishop's Castle	Enterprise House	weekly	Monday	One

Bridgnorth	Westgate	Weekly	Mondays	Two
Bridgnorth	Community Hub	Weekly	Friday	One
Broseley	Medical Centre	Weekly	Thursday	One/Two
Chelmarsh	Village Hall	Weekly	Mondays	Two/Three
Church Stretton	Mayfair Centre	weekly	Wednesday	Three
Church Stretton	Mayfair Centre	weekly	Wednesday	One
Church Stretton	Mayfair Centre	weekly	Tuesday	NEXT STEPS
Church Stretton	Mayfair Centre	weekly	Friday	NEXT STEPS
Clun	Maltings Tearoom	weekly	Tuesday	One/Two
Craven Arms	Millmead Housing	weekly	Monday	One/Two
Ditton Priors	Church	Weekly	Thursday	Two
Ditton Priors	Village Hall	Weekly	Thursday	One
Ellesmere	Canal wharf	Weekly	Wednesday	2 and 3, plus 2 hour walk
Hadnall	Village hall	Weekly	Tuesday	1 and 2
Highley	Severn Centre	Weekly	Mondays	Two/Three
Ludlow	Station Drive Surgery	weekly	Monday	One/Two
Market Drayton	Buttercross	Weekly	Friday	2 and 3
Much Wenlock	The Square	Weekly	Mondays	One/Two/Three
Oswestry	Cambrian railway building	Weekly	Tuesday	3
Oswestry	Gatacre sports pavilion	Weekly	Tuesday	2
Oswestry	Gatacre sports pavilion	Weekly	Thursday	1 and 2
Rushbury	Rushbury Village Hall	weekly	Tuesday	Two/Three
Shawbury	Village hall	Weekly	Monday	1 and 2
Shifnal	Village Hall	Weekly	Tuesday	One
Shrewsbury	Abbots Wood Day Centre	weekly	Thursday	one/two
Shrewsbury	The Lantern	Weekly	Wednesday	one/two
Shrewsbury	Marden Medical Practice	Weekly	Wednesday	Two
Shrewsbury	Ladies Walk	Weekly	Thursday	Two/Three
Shrewsbury	Pontesbury	Weekly	Friday	One/Two
Shrewsbury	Various (Evening Walks)	Weekly (during summer)	Tuesday	three
Wem	Edinburgh House	Weekly	Monday	1 and 2
Whitchurch	Civic centre	Weekly	Wednesday	1 and 2
<b>Fortnightly</b>				
Cleobury Mortimer	Sports and Fitness centre	1st/3rd Weds of month	Wednesday	One/ Two and Three
Shrewsbury	Various (Saturday Walks)	2 a month	Saturday	three
Shrewsbury	Claremont Bank	2 a month	Tuesday	one/two
Shrewsbury	Hanwood	2 a month	Wednesday	two/three
Shrewsbury	Haughmond Hill	2 a month	Friday	Three
Shrewsbury	St Nicholas Church	2 a month	Various	Two
Shrewsbury	STFC	2 a month	Mondays	Two
Ludlow	V. Info. Centre	2nd/4th Tues of month	Tuesday	Two/Three

Ashford Carbonell	Village Hall	fortnightly	Thursday	Two
Ludlow	Upper Fee Housing	fortnightly	Wednesday	NEXT STEPS
<b>Monthly</b>				
West Felton	Village Hall	Monthly	Monday	2 and 3
Prees	Sports Pavilion	Monthly	Wednesday	2
Rushbury	Rushbury Village Hall	monthly	Sunday	NEXT STEPS

## 2.4 Shropshire Wild Teams

A new Development Officer has been recruited recently to work specifically with people with physical and mental health issues. He will be involving around 50 people the next twelve months in countryside volunteering work focused on Shropshire Council sites. There will be opportunities for volunteer team leaders to help with the ongoing viability of the scheme.

## 2.5 Shropshire Hills Walks Leaders

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Team has been working with 5 volunteer walks leaders who led 12 walks in 2014. These volunteers have been offered walks leader and first aid training but they felt they were sufficiently experienced to not need this extra training. 134 people have been on the 9 walks so far.

## 2.6 Mapping and Enforcement Volunteering

The Mapping & Enforcement Team support both officers and volunteers within the Outdoor Partnership Team by providing specialist advice and guidance on all aspects of Public Rights of Way.

The current enforcement policy recognises the importance of issues reported by volunteers in their areas and this influences the priority of an issue accordingly.

The team has good working relationships with a number of the existing Parish Path Partnership Groups, Ramblers Representatives and individual volunteers. For example:-

- Whitchurch P3
- Cleobury Mortimer P3
- Bucknell P3
- Albrighton P3
- Alberbury & Cardeston P3
- Nescliffe Bridleways P3
- Ruyton XI Towns P3

Volunteers often work with officers to check issues on the ground, report problems, liaise over planning consultations which affect Public Rights of Way and provide valuable knowledge of their areas.

## 3.0 Consultation

Throughout September and October 2014, five Volunteer Forums were held in Oswestry, Church Stretton, Market Drayton, Shrewsbury and Alveley. The forums were aimed at key volunteers, who



could represent others and present a broader view, staff from the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Team, the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Team and other partners. 74 people attended the events in total. Attendees were asked to make suggestions to address how the team might:

- Recruit new volunteers?
- Better manage/ co-ordinate volunteers with less staff time?
- Promote volunteering opportunities more effectively?
- Provide more support and training?
- Work better with other outdoor volunteering organisations?
- Ensure better evaluation and recognition?
- Ensure better local prioritisation?

The results of these meetings are available by contacting Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships.

At an Away Day for the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Team in November 2014 the staff were asked to consider the top priorities for action against the following three objectives:

- Increase the number of volunteers involved in existing groups
- Increase the number of new volunteer groups, especially Parish Paths Partnerships and on our sites
- Increase self-supervised volunteer activity, with the suitable paperwork, training and equipment

The results of these discussions are also available.

A summary of all these consultations and other discussions is shown below.

### **3.1 Promotion:**

- Word of mouth is the best advertising and better ways are needed to help volunteers already involved to spread the word.
- Better promotion and promotional materials are needed, with staff and volunteers attending local groups and events to promote opportunities. More promotion on site also recommended. Must be eye catching.
- Easier to find and more comprehensive online information needed about volunteering opportunities and how to get involved. Work with other organisations to have complete offer.
- Make sure staff are up to date with opportunities across their area.
- It was felt that branding should be less corporate and not directly promoting Shropshire Council. This would make it more appealing to the general public. Consider promotional clothing, including high visibility (although opinion was split on this).
- Comprehensive database of volunteers needed for easier communication and directory of other groups.
- Stress the benefits of volunteering- including social interaction, feeling of satisfaction and health benefits.
- Use local media e.g. parish newsletters, press releases in Shropshire Star etc.

- Work more closely with other organisations that promote volunteering e.g. The Qube, Rural Community Council, Wildlife Trust, National Trust.
- Employ a graduate placement or Intern specifically on promotion.

### **3.2 Processes:**

- One team contact needed per area. Build relationships.
- Volunteer groups need to be able to work more unsupervised in the future.
- A more complete volunteer pack, with outline roles and job specifications would help clarify opportunities, details on insurance, example risk assessments, points of contact. Clarity needed on volunteer co-ordinator role.
- Development of one or more 'A Teams' of volunteers with specific skills who are willing to travel further around the county and come together to tackle more complex jobs. Pool of tools and equipment to help with this.
- Database/ blog to help people share skills.
- Joint training and skills sharing with other organisations.
- Better feedback on reported faults and RoW complaints needed.
- Members only on line blog or similar to encourage sharing of ideas and expertise. Could also hold relevant files. Regular e-newsletter aimed at existing volunteers. Consider local networks.
- Transport of equipment onto site can be an issue.
- Volunteer expenses should be reimbursed.

### **3.3 Target audience:**

- More young people- colleges, Duke of Edinburgh Award participants, schools.
- People involved in other local groups e.g. WI, Young Farmers Clubs, History groups.
- Target people who are about to retire.
- Unemployed and people with mental and physical health issues that want to get into employment.
- Businesses to take advantage of corporate volunteering.
- Cup of tea and a flapjack!

### **3.4 Evaluation and recognition:**

- Annual event needs to continue.
- Volunteer of the year award or similar.
- Better training and the potential to gain qualifications.
- Press releases and other promotion locally about what has been achieved.
- Publishing results of surveys etc.
- Event evaluation recorded and publicised.
- More visits from senior managers to see work being done on the ground and gather feedback.

### **3.5 Training:**

- Programme of standard training needed- First Aid, brushcutter, hedge cutter etc.

- More advanced training made available e.g. hedge laying, stone walling, coppicing, species identification and surveying techniques.
- Website development and blogging etc.
- Needs better, more joined up promotion.
- Work with other organisations to maximise opportunities.
- Training could be with in-house staff, not necessarily with paid trainers.
- Accreditation to be made available, although it may scare some people off.
- Make sure there is also a social element to the training.
- Study trips to learn from work elsewhere.

### **3.6 Other volunteering opportunities**

The most popular opportunities for volunteering in other things were websites and promotion and corporate volunteering.

## **4.0 Volunteer Development Plan 2014-2018**

The results from the consultation and other discussions have been considered and the following plan for the future is proposed.

### **4.1 Vision**

In five years' time there will be a well-developed and widely promoted volunteer effort across the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships service; helping to look after, and improve access to and management of Shropshire's countryside and green spaces

Volunteering outdoors is recognised as a healthy occupation that can make a real difference to mental and physical wellbeing of individuals. The volunteering groups are inclusive, with health and countryside professionals working closely together for the wellbeing of those most in need and that young people have more opportunities to get involved in volunteering that is designed for them.

### **4.2 Objectives**

The following objectives have been recognised as priorities for the future:

1. Increase the number of volunteers involved in existing groups
2. Increase the number of new volunteer groups, especially Parish Paths Partnerships and on our sites
3. Promote volunteer opportunities better and more effectively, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate
4. Increase self-supervised volunteer activity, with the suitable paperwork, training and equipment
5. Develop a number of 'A Teams' of volunteers who can be called on to tackle more complex jobs
6. Increase business involvement through corporate volunteering
7. Create volunteering opportunities around non-physical work such as website or event management
8. Increase the number of young people involved in Outdoor Partnerships volunteering

### 4.3 Targets

By 2020;

- 70% of all Parishes will have an active P3 group
- 70% of key sites and greenspaces will have active volunteers supporting and delivering site management plans , including those with physical and mental health issues
- All groups will be able to work independently, with guidance from Shropshire's Outdoor Partnership staff
- 20% increase in the number of walkers involved with a Walking for Health Scheme or similar
- 50 new walks leaders trained
- 3 'A teams' will be active across the county
- 3 Young Ranger programmes will exist across the county
- A pilot approach with three businesses using countryside sites for corporate volunteering will have been tested
- 6 volunteers will be helping in the administration of a web based volunteer forum and event organisation roles across the county
- 6 Walks Leaders, focused on key sites

### 4.4 Action Plan

It is clear from the consultation that there is no such thing as a standard volunteer! The offer for volunteers therefore needs to be flexible and able to be tailored to individual's requirements and to the volunteer tasks.

The action plan has been split into two phases to make it more manageable.

#### 4.41 First Phase Development

The strategy is to start with some general activity and a few pilot approaches in different parts of the county. This will enable staff to test different processes and get feedback from volunteers on how well they are working. Evaluation of these pilots will be important to decide how we proceed in the future. The aspiration for completion of the first phase is end June 2015.

#### a. General actions

To enable this to happen there are some general actions that need to take place. These are:

- Sorting out volunteer policies, training manuals, example risk assessments, volunteer roles and agreements. Confirmation of insurance cover will be part of this. This will build on the current P3 handbook and agreements.
- New branding for each of the groups:
  - Parish Paths Partnerships
  - Shropshire Volunteer Rangers
  - Shropshire Wild Teams
  - Shropshire Walks Leaders

- Youth Rangers

Walking for Health has national branding and this will continue to be used.

- Ensuring there is enough equipment for the groups.
- Creating a new general volunteering leaflet for the service and display equipment. This will set out clearly the opportunities available across the service.
- Development of the bi-annual volunteer newsletter
- Development and dissemination of case studies, illustrating good practice and sharing ideas
- Working with organisations such as the Rural Community Council, the Qube, the Ramblers, U3A, MacMillan, National Trust and Shropshire Wildlife Trust to help promote these opportunities.
- A new Shropshire's Great Outdoors website will be developed incorporating the information held on the Shropshire Walking and Riding websites with the cycling and walking information on the Travel Shropshire website. A member's only section may be created, where volunteers can exchange ideas and experience and all the relevant documents can be stored. An events calendar will also be made available.
- A database of all volunteers is being created and will make communication with the volunteers more effective.
- Annual volunteer event and recruitment day.

These actions will be led by the Development Team Leader in consultation with other members of the team.

## **b. New project development**

### **Natural Happiness Initiative**

Whilst the service has been able to employ two new Development Officers, through allocation of funding from Public Health, to help with the recruitment and management of volunteers, the current set up does not adequately address the needs of volunteer development for Parks and Greenspaces. There is an aspiration for a new project specifically to target areas of Shropshire that suffer most from health inequality and encourage physical activity through active volunteering on their local greenspaces. This project would also focus on the development of volunteering for young people through Youth Rangers groups.

Clare Fildes will lead on the development of a new partnership project to address this.

- Discussions with Parks and Greenspace Officers and volunteers to understand key site heritage requirements and how they can be better supported by volunteers
- Joined up development of project with key partners, such as Public Health, Leisure Services, voluntary organisations, relevant Town Councils and other providers of publically owned green space
- Discussion with funders to ensure the most appropriate funding is identified
- Project ideas worked up in collaboration with Officers and volunteers, complementing work of the Development Officers
- Project application to be submitted

### **Irresistible Offa**

A new business plan has been written to develop Phase II of the Walking with Offa project. This applies to the west of the county and will involve developing the visitor economy based on the high quality natural and cultural heritage assets, in co-operation with other organisations and businesses along the Welsh-English border. One of the key themes for Phase II is volunteer recruitment and development. This will most likely include:

- Support for Rights of Way volunteer maintenance groups
- Community 'adopt a path' schemes
- Offa's Dyke Path National Trail volunteers
- Equipment
- Support for healthy walking

### **Actions**

- Clare Fildes is leading on this and is a member of the Walking with Offa Steering Group, Nigel McDonald is representing the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
- Discussions are occurring with a range of interested parties, especially in north eastern Shropshire. These will continue to ensure the project is addressing local needs
- Setting up a regional focus group for the northern part of the border to, amongst other things, help focus on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site and maximising opportunities with surrounding areas
- Submission of funding bids in 2015. Funding currently being considered includes LEADER, other EARDF funding, Intereg and Heritage Lottery Fund.

### **Severn Valley Country Park**

A new project to revamp the Severn Valley Country Park is being developed. This will probably include:

- Development as a walking and family cycling hub for the area
- New promoted routes showcasing local heritage and connecting to other interesting sites
- New signage and interpretation
- Improvements to the kitchen and potentially, an extension to the building to house a new classroom

A Stage 1 bid to HLF's Parks for People will be made in September 2015 following more consultation with partner's organisations, users of the park and volunteers.

### **Eastern Oswestry Greenspace**

A bid to HLF Our Heritage fund will be made to improve the management and understanding of the heritage within Shropshire Council owned sites in Eastern Oswestry. The details of this still need developing in consultation with local people and volunteers.

### **c. New Parish Paths Partnership groups**

Helen Beresford is leading on the development of new P3 groups. The initial focus will be on:

- Ellesmere (Urban and Rural) and Welshampton- working with Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) staff and the local Community Enablement Officer. The LPS is delivering a Down to Earth community project in Welshampton, which will enable us to trial a number of funded taster days as a new approach to identifying potential volunteers
- Worthen and Shelve- working with Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme staff
- Chelmarsh
- Alveley (linked to development of SVCP as a walking hub)
- Kinnerley
- Rushbury
- Uffington
- Sellatyn & Gobowen
- Llanfairwaterdine
- Mainstone
- Clee St Margaret
- 6 new Parish Paths Wardens – possibly based in the following areas where P3 needs more support
- Wem Rural
- Wistanstow
- Cardington

The process will be as follows:

- Presentation to SALC re opportunities for new P3 groups
- Development Officer supporting Area Officers – groundwork days as part of training sessions or support for new/establishing P3 groups where there are capacity issues
- Identify recent community demand-led works in the Parish and/or instigate new works to stimulate interest in local ROW
- Approach the Parish Council and local member to ensure they are on board with the proposal
- Talk to other community groups in the area, in partnership with other organisations
- Arrange a no-obligation taster day that is widely promoted using existing volunteers, other Council staff, partners, local media and local notice boards. Ideally, the taster day would be associated with a specific project that local people care about.
- Gauge level of interest and hopefully start a new group from there.
- Support new group set up and local priorities for ROW usage and access developments - The expectation at this stage should be that the group will become self-supported and that one or more Coordinators are identified.
- After period of time Development Officer to handover group to Area Officer
- Signpost volunteers to other opportunities where appropriate, for example sites or Walking for Health.

#### **d. Existing P3 groups**

The expectation across P3 groups is that all groups should be self-supervised. Those that aren't need to be identified and worked with to encourage them to become self-supervised. The team will continue to support local P3 in ground works and will occasionally where needed work alongside them, or arrange for direct links to Probation led ground works.

The process for this will need to be flexible as groups will vary but could be:

- Have a clear Volunteer Coordinator role description and agreement in place.
- Identify the key individuals who would be willing to become Coordinators.
- Arrange work placements, for those who are willing, with the RoW maintenance team.
- Arrange any training requirements, including leadership training.
- Promote to P3 groups opportunity for support for works via Probation project

We need to encourage all P3 groups to identify their key local routes and add this to the Councils database and GIS system so that local access priorities can be supported by the rest of the team in relation to potential enforcement actions or complaints prioritisation.

We need to capture all local P3 groups aspirations for developing their local network offer. This will involve support to groups either individually or as larger project groups to access external funding. Helen will help develop projects and external funding bids.

#### **e. Self-supervised Volunteer Ranger groups**

The management of sites tends to be more complex than P3 activity, requiring knowledge of habitat management and the impact of the weather and seasons. There are also many different types of groups managed in different ways, from independent, constituted groups to key individuals.

The key requirements for these groups appear to be:

- Management plans, provided by the Parks and Greenspace Officers to indicate annually what work volunteers can be encouraged to undertake.
- Volunteer Pack- similar to the P3 one but tailored to be relevant to sites. Confirmation of insurance.
- Training- work with a regular contractor who will act as an on the job trainer for key volunteers willing to take a lead in these groups. Identify and arrange other key training requirements.

With the exception of the first activity which is needed for all sites, the suggestion is for each Parks and Greenspace Officer to identify one group to work with to trial this approach, whilst a new project is being developed.

- Corbet Wood
- Stanmore Country Park
- Eastern Owesry Volunteer group



#### **f. Recruitment of new volunteers to existing groups**

A targeted approach to new volunteer recruitment will be taken based on the pilots described above. The Parks and Greenspace Officers and the Area Officers will be supported to advertise for new volunteers.

Priorities will be on:

- Eardington Nature Reserve
- Corbet Wood
- Whitchurch Waterway Country Park
- Walkmill Meadows, Market Drayton
- Brown Moss
- Colemere
- Nesscliffe
- Snailbeach

#### **g. Youth Rangers**

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Team are leading on the development of the first Youth Rangers schemes in the Shropshire Hills, primarily through the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Team developing the first schemes in the south west of the county.

Cath Landles is working with Richard Morley from the South Shropshire Youth Forum on a bid for the Young Roots Heritage Lottery Fund for a Clee Hill scheme. If successful, this will involve 15 young people from the Clee Hill area and will commence Spring 2015. They have been invited to submit a full application following a successful Expression of Interest.

The other priority area in the Shropshire Hills is Church Stretton and the development of a Youth Rangers scheme here will be the next priority.

Jon Bielstein is developing ideas for the Stiperstones and Corndon area, liaising with Cath and Richard. The development of Youth Rangers here will begin in 2015.

#### **Actions**

Cath and Rich to submit a full application form to Young Roots for Clee Hill following consultation with young people in the area.

Jon to develop action plan for Youth Rangers in the Stiperstones and Corndon area in 2015.

Development team to include (wherever relevant) development of Youth Rangers on other external funding bids.

#### **h. Walking for Health**

Shropshire is currently split into three areas covered by the three Walking Coordinators. These areas need reviewing as part of this development process to make sure that each of the Coordinators has a similar number of groups and walkers. There is also a more creative approach to new groups needed that targets other demographic groups. For example, 1 in 10 children starting school in the UK are now considered obese and family walking or school groups could well be an effective new target group.

The key issue with Walking for Health is identifying the walks leaders. The process and training is all in place once these have been identified.

Following new criteria from Walking for Health nationally, local criteria for 'Next Step' walks has been agreed and shared with the groups. This means some existing two hour walks can continue to be included alongside the Walking for Health promotion.

The priorities for new groups are:

- Ruyton IX Towns- Liz Evans
- Craven Arms- Helen d'Albert
- Bayston Hill- Mick Dunn
- Erdington- Mick Dunn
- Shrewsbury- Mick Dunn

Further development of existing groups and those that are struggling for leaders will also be targeted:

- Clun and Bishop's Castle, Church Stretton Grade 1 and Ludlow TIC- Helen d'Albert
- Ellesmere and Welshampton- in conjunction with other volunteer recruitment. Taster sessions will be carried out using different approaches, for example a Sunday Stoll after church or a lantern walk, working with the school and encouraging families. If walks leaders can be identified through these activities, new groups that come under the Walking for Health umbrella but not overtly branded Walking for Health could be initiated.
- Wem, Market Drayton, Oswestry - Liz Evans. Working in collaboration with the new Big Local project and targeting existing groups such as Gobowen Old Friends, Weston Rhyn Good Companions and the community meals service at Selattyn and Gobowen.

### **Action**

- Accreditation of existing Walking for Health schemes.
- Structured, county wide promotional campaign to encourage more walkers and walks leaders on existing schemes, using more innovative techniques such as taster sessions/ attending events.
- Targeted approach to developing new groups, with extensive advertising and promotion through other local groups/ societies.
- Establish contact with all community care coordinators within GP surgeries, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy contacts
- Compile list of local useful contacts for promotion of walks
- Listing on 'Do It' website through the Rural Community Council/ The Qube

- Continue to provide walks leader training, support and advice
- Management of webpages, social media and database

#### **i. Walking for Life self-guided walks**

A series of short walks, suitable for Walking for Health participants, were developed some years ago through the Walking for Life project. These are still available but have not been updated and checked recently and some may be out of date or poorly waymarked. Maintaining these to encourage participants to walk between Walking for Health led walks is a priority.

Creation of possible new routes include;

- Albrighton
- Alveley
- Shifnal
- Broseley
- Bishops Castle
- Church Stretton
- Craven Arms

#### **Actions:**

- Check existing routes. Identify those that are no longer relevant i.e. are from medical centres or residential homes that no longer exist.
- Survey and arrange infrastructure and way marking improvements as necessary.
- Identify some new walks where there is a local need. Existing Walking for Life walks are only from the main towns.

#### **j. Shropshire Wild Teams**

Simon Brown has been recently recruited to lead on the development of volunteering on sites, targeting those people with specific mental and physical health issues. Simon will be working closely with other Shropshire's Outdoor Partnership team members to develop the groups. A new vehicle, with hygiene and toilet provision for the teams has been ordered and will enable work to be done on a variety of sites once it arrives. It is envisaged this will be by May 2015. Before then work will be limited to those sites with toilets and kitchen facilities only, as a standard minibus will only be available.

The current plan is:

- Completion of paperwork and agreements
- Evaluation plan in place
- Steering group developed
- Equipment purchased

- New branding in place
- Identify three initial groups, targeted first at Shrewsbury and Ludlow. The groups will have two introductory sessions before commencing volunteering tasks.
- Provide training for volunteers and for professionals- countryside management skills for volunteers and health professionals and better understanding of working with people with mental and physical health issues for countryside professionals.

The targets to end June 2015 are:

- Engage 32 target participants in countryside management volunteering activities
- Introduce target participants to 9 new skills/ knowledge
- 6-8 environmental professionals supported in working with target groups
- 4-5 service providers supported to engage with environmental projects independently

A key focus is ensuring these groups can continue without dedicated staff support following a six month programme. This expectation will be set from the start with participants, support workers and countryside staff. The aspiration is for the support staff to be able to continue organising the work, whilst the countryside staff become more able to include people with mental and physical health problems into their existing volunteering groups.

The progress of this work will be evaluated with help from the Public Health team and recognised evaluation tools.

#### **k. Walkers Are Welcome**

The following towns now have Walkers Are Welcome status in Shropshire:

- Ludlow
- Clun
- Bishop's Castle
- Cleobury Mortimer
- Church Stretton
- Much Wenlock
- Wellington
- Oswestry
- Whitchurch
- Ironbridge

A previous Shropshire Hills Walkers Are Welcome brochure also included Knighton.

#### **Action**

- A new booklet covering all Walkers Are Welcome towns in Shropshire will be completed by end March 2015.
- Have local discussions with interested parties in Shrewsbury, Ellesmere and Bridgnorth to see if there is interest in becoming new Walkers are Welcome towns.

## **1. Mapping and Enforcement Volunteers**

The Mapping and Enforcement Team would like to expand on the existing partnership approach by increasing the number of volunteers who are able to check issues on the ground and report back to the team. This is invaluable for effective monitoring and issue resolution. This will be encouraged by working with established P3 groups, ensuring they have sufficient training and understanding.

### **4.42 Second Phase development**

The second phase of this plan will pick up a number of objectives, once the activity described above has been completed. These include;

- Develop a number of 'A Teams' of volunteers who can be called on to tackle more complex jobs
- Increase business involvement through corporate volunteering
- Create volunteering opportunities around non-physical work such as website or event management

The timescale for this is August 2015- end Dec 2016.

#### **a. 'A Teams'**

Volunteers were generally enthusiastic about the development of 'A Teams' that can be called upon to work on larger or more complex projects.

#### **b. Business volunteering**

There are some interesting possibilities for approaching businesses about working more closely with the Outdoor Partnerships Team. Following on from work conducted by the National Association of AONBs, a process has been defined for approaching businesses. There are now two active environmental business networks in Shropshire: the Meres and Mosses Business Environmental Network (BEN) and The Business Environmental Support Scheme for Telford (BESST).

Pugh's Funeral Directors has sponsored the development of the Shropshire Way previously and they should be approached again, along with other selected businesses to consider sponsorship opportunities.

#### **Actions:**

- Presentation for businesses about the health benefits of physical activity for staff
- Develop toolkit to help businesses develop a healthy working policy and/or action plan
- Develop opportunities for business sponsorship e.g. Pugh's Funeral Directors
- Test process defined by AONB Partnership on several target businesses next to key parks and sites and discuss mutual benefits of getting more involved

#### **c. New volunteering opportunities**

There was some enthusiasm for opportunities to be offered around:

- Web site and social media updates
- Event organisation
- Administration

These could be made available through existing groups or within the office. These opportunities will be considered at a later date once the other activity has been finalised.

**Action:**

- Arrange a meeting with volunteers already involved with social media and those who have an interest in becoming more involved, to consider the best way to use social media to communicate with the public and between volunteers.

#### **d. River Severn project**

There is an aspiration amongst several sectors to develop activity around the River Severn for economic benefit. This would include the improvement of the Severn Way long distance path and the development of volunteering around the Severn Way. Clare Fildes has met with Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Shrewsbury and Shropshire Waterways and Leisure group and Bridgnorth Area Tourism Action Group to discuss possibilities.

**Actions**

- Shropshire Wildlife Trust are working on an application to HLF to fund ecosystem services. The aspiration is to match this with an application to the EU structural funds for the delivery of economic benefit, which would include improvements to the Severn Way, especially around the market towns and Shrewsbury, and more engagement with volunteers and businesses. A bid will be submitted to HLF by End June 2015

#### **e. Walking Forums**

A review of the current Walking Forums is needed to ensure these are working as effectively as possible. It is hoped that forums would act as a focus for joint working across the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships service, bringing together bodies interested in walking in the great outdoors; access, green spaces, health and wellbeing, tourism and the wider countryside offer.

There is an aspiration for the groups to demonstrate:

- More effective joint working across the service and with partner organisations
- Help share learning, training, skills, promotion and activities, so making better use of increasingly scarce resources
- Enable more effective local decision making and project development

One suggestion is to make groups more locally based and the following areas are suggested:

- Shrewsbury and surrounds- Nesscliffe, Hadnall, Uffington, Dorrington (links with proposed River Severn project)
- The Shropshire Hills- to include Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Bishop's Castle, Pontesbury, Minsterley, Much Wenlock, Cleobury Mortimer (links with Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country LPS, Powys, Mortimer Country).
- Severn Valley- Bridgnorth, Shifnal, Alverley, Highley (links with proposed River Severn project, Ironbridge, Bewdley and Kidderminster)
- Northern Shropshire and Borderlands - Llanymynech, Knockin. St Martins, Gobowin, Whittington, Ellesmere, (links with Irresistible Offa development, Wrexham, Denbighshire and the WHS at Llangollen, Powys, Cheshire and Meres and Mosses LPS), Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Tetchill, Hodnet (links with Staffordshire and Meres and Mosses LPS)

More consultation is needed before any changes are made.

These groups could feed into the Local Access Forum, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Destination Development Partnerships. Sharing between the groups would happen at the northern and southern staff meetings.

## **5.0 Other comments**

This Volunteer Action Plan will form part of the delivery of the Shropshire Countryside Access Strategy. It is a working plan and will be expected to change as ideas develop. A partnership approach will be adopted, working with other organisations and networks that work with volunteers and looking for opportunities to pool resources where possible. Feedback from volunteers will inform the on-going delivery of this plan.

Evaluation and monitoring will be integrated into delivery. Current performance indicators will be used as a baseline against which to measure progress.





### **SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)**

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2014, at 5.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

#### **1. Attendance:**

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Chair. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BWG, Joint Secretary. Judy Dickenson, Church Preen & District. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Gaynor Evans, Jan Baldwin & Margaret Dutton, Broseley Bridleways. Gill Eyre, BHS South Shropshire East, South Shropshire. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen BWA. Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere. Carol Williams, Long Mynd & Dist BWA. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council.

#### **Apologies:**

Anthony Francis-Jones, Telford BWA, Vice Chair. Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group. Pam Youille, Underton, Bridgnorth. Margaret Dutton, Broseley Bridleways. Mark Weston, BHS

#### **2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Chair.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

##### **(a) Wind Turbines – update on applications.**

It is noted that, as agreed at the last meeting, a response was put in, following BHS guidelines, on the application for a 327ft (99.7m) wind turbine near Tetchill, Ellesmere. Highways objected due to its possible impact on users of the main road. The blades would be heated to stop ice forming. There have been reports of normally bombproof horses bolting when turbines start up. There has not been a decision yet on this application.

##### **(b) Shropshire Highways**

It is reported that there is still no news on progress on the digitizing of the old Shropshire Highway Maps. There are great concerns over this, as these old paper maps are the only copies. Anita Corfield Jones is currently looking after these. There have been staff changes at Development Control. There are just 3 Area Managers, Mark Wooton covers the north, Richard Harman, Central and Gemma Lawley the south. Andy Savage has been seconded, and is not being replaced. There is no Team Leader, as they took voluntary redundancy. It is thought that there are plans to outsource next year. A previous outsourcing of work had left too many omissions, with Zia being told then, that a percentage of errors is acceptable, but, with highways, it is important that every road is properly recorded and registered.

##### **(c) Canal Towpath Consultation**

It is noted that the new 'Towpath Guide' is due to be launched in Autumn 2014, and that a summary of responses to The Canal & River Trust 'Sharing Towpaths' Consultation is available at:- <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/consultations/completed-consultations>. Zia reported that

she has responded, and that there are lots of other responses saying that horses should be included on tow paths. Mark Weston, BHS, is due to attend a meeting, and requested to be informed of any evidence of canal towpaths that are, or were ridden to be sent to him at [M.Weston@bhs.org.uk](mailto:M.Weston@bhs.org.uk). The BHS have noted some sections on the Shropshire Union Canal and the Llangollen Canal. Zia reported that Shrewsbury to Uffington is now a public bridleway and that the Queens Head via Maesbury to Pant towpath was ridden. The consultation states that 'towpaths although built for horses are now predominately used by people and except where designated as bridleways, use for horse riding requires special permission'. John said that a lot of tow paths could not be used by ridden horses due to low bridges. Members said this was not a problem as they just ducked under them or dismounted. It is still legal to tow boats with horses and tow horses were often ridden.

**(d) Draft Deregulation Bill**

It is noted that the amendments were withdrawn, and there is nothing to report at present as the section of the Bill dealing with access is currently waiting to be discussed in Parliament.

**(e) Natural England Higher Access**

It is noted that Mark Weston, Director of Access, BHS has asked for any routes suitable for higher access on Natural England land in Shropshire, which includes the Meres and Mosses, Stiperstones and part of the Wyre Forest, to be sent to him as soon as possible to [M.Weston@bhs.org.uk](mailto:M.Weston@bhs.org.uk). John reported that he had given a map of routes at Whixall to Jim Stabler. Angela reported that there is an enclosure order for that area. It was asked if Natural England owned the Railway Line. On the Stiperstones, Rosemary reported that wire netting has been put on a very steep bridleway at Mytton Dingle, she used to go up with horses. Shona needs the details and the route number. Carol will ask Sue Lee to check this, and also see if she knows of any other ridden routes that should be recorded. Zia put in a route she rides that branches NE off the BW up Perkins Beach to the ridge, it is a wide track used by vehicles. The route to the top, exchanged for the loop around the south, should be reinstated, and a possible link on the eastern boundary investigated. Shona said the area is Open Access land. If there are needed higher status routes NE can dedicate them. Information needs to go to Mark as soon as possible.

**(f) Any other Matters arising not on the Agenda**

**Helicopters** – Zia, and the owner of the horse she rides, took part in a photography session on the Long Mynd, for an RAF Shawbury planned high-viz campaign, but the MOD would not allow helicopters to be used to take the photos. There is no news on this at present.

**Equestrian head height for underbridges** - Shona reported that she had been contacted from Staffordshire with regard to the recommended head height for a bridge. John said the old BHS height recommendation was 10ft 6". Zia said that for overhanging foliage it is a minimum of 10ft, but it is best to clear to 12ft to allow for lower branches when wet and for growth, but that height should not be a restriction to use of a route, as riders could dismount to pass under.

*(BHS guidelines for subways and underbridges give 3.7m (12ft) as desirable with a minimum of 3.4m (11ft), though in exceptional circumstances a lower height may be acceptable. Clearance of overhanging branches should be to a minimum of 3m (9.84ft) with 3.7m (12ft) preferable.)*

**4. Shropshire Council**

**(a) 'Countryside Recreation' title change to 'Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships'**

The change of title is noted. This change is to highlight the new focus of health and volunteering. Deb Hughes heads the team. Clare Fildes, who was with the ANOB, has taken over Jim Stabler's role on his retirement, but with more of a focus on securing and increasing Volunteering across Shropshire. On her team to help with this are Helen Beresford, who has moved from Richard's team to the Shirehall, and Simon Brown who will work with the mental and physical difficulties

volunteers. Funding has come from the Health Department to get people out and about, active and healthy. Clare also oversees the 3 Walking for Health Coordinators, Helen D'Albert who covers the south, Mick Dunn the central area, and Liz Evans the Oswestry to Market Drayton area. The Ramblers and Macmillan now support Walking for Health.

Richard Knight's team has 5 area Officers who deal with ROW in their areas, support P3 Groups and help secure funding. Harvey Morgan works Monday to Wednesday and covers the NE, and Andy Lipa works the other half of the week and covers the NW. They job share, with Andy Lipa spending one day a week on Offa's Dyke. David Hardwick covers the Central area, Paul Butter the SW, and Tim Simmons the SE. 4 Maintenance Officers support them on the physical work.

On Shona's team, following Mat Stephens leaving in July, Emily Harrison has been appointed for two years from October to cover the North to East. Shona covers the Central Area and South West and Lucy McFarlane the South East. Lucy Stanley logs all the complaints etc. and Jean Jones covers Orders, searches, planning etc.

Mark Blount heads the other team covering Country Parks, play areas, greens, commons etc. There are about 120 green spaces. Ed Andrews covers the Severn Valley Country Park and the sites in the south; Clive Dean covers Nesscliffe and mainly the north, Shaun Burkey deals with the Northern Oswestry area, with Wendy Salter at the Mere, Ellesmere. Mark is currently in the process of recruiting a new team member to replace Amy Davies who covered all the play areas, and sites in the Bridgnorth area. Contracts are currently only for a maximum of 2 years. There is no news on the planned sell off of the Shirehall.

#### **(b) Outdoor Partnerships Implementation Team**

Richard Knight reports that Steven Caldwell has now started in their team to replace Helen Beresford, so they are now back to 4 Maintenance Officers. They have 5 area ROW Officers (*listed in 4(a)*) who deal with ROW in their areas and support P3 Groups.

The Brogyntyn diversion work is now completed. There is one extra temporary gate by the parking area. This will be in place for a maximum of 2 years whilst work is done to reinstate the area back to pasture. The new route is to be way marked with diversion discs as a Restricted Byway. There are now building proposals at the west end. It is not known yet how this will impact on the RB.

Hinton /Polemere Byways improvement is completed. This is part of the HKWay. The routes were overgrown, muddy, rutted, and subject to bad flooding. Carol said that the repairs are fantastic.

There are still some ongoing works on the Humphrey Kynaston Way routes, which David Hardwick is dealing with, including works on the overgrown section of BW25 Ford Heath past Boons, which, now the nesting season is over, is to be cleared, and ditching work then done. Zia reported that the work done, and support from Richard's Team for the route has been fantastic.

Kerry Ridgeway UCR The second phase of work on this is complete, but plans to do more work with Powys on the BOAT is on hold, as Powys did not come up with contributory funding.

The Probation Trust Working with them is going very well. Future work is likely to include more work done in Nesscliffe Country Park organised by Clive Dean, cutting back edges etc.

Annual Summer cutting was done but, due to being one member of staff down, and time restriction, they were not able to get to some routes, mostly in the south east area. Shona confirmed that this year has been exceptionally bad, with lots of complaints of overgrowth on routes.

Fish House Wood, Broseley Opening up work is all done, and the route is now available for use.

Acton Round, Shirlett, still has issues as someone is cutting down trees and putting glass on the route. The south end is now fine, but there are now problems with the Muckley Cross end. Shona confirmed that they are going to keep a watch on this when all the clearance and opening up work is complete. Mike Baldwin has asked for his thanks to be passed on to the local volunteer group who are working on this, and who cleared the glass.

Bridleway gates The new stock proof ones, in the fixed metal frame, with the handle just below the top bar, and nothing to get caught on, have been well received. They can be opened with one hand, and can replace the gates with the latch on the closing post, which require one hand to lift the latch and one to open the gate.

### **(c) Shropshire Council Planning**

Shona reported that Jean Jones publishes the legal orders, and she and Lucy McFarlane deal with the planning consultations. They are supposed to be consulted on any planning application that either directly affects a ROW, or has a right of way adjacent to it, but this does not always happen. Issues are width, surfacing and access. They can put forward objections, but these are not always addressed. A big concern at the moment is where access to a proposed site is along a Right of Way where the applicant has no legal right to vehicular access. They notify planning of this, and inform them that they will be committing an offence under the Road Traffic Act if they drive on the route, but Planning can still be granted. It is up to the applicant to prove that they have a legal right of access. This can cause extra work for Shona's department if a route is damaged, as they are responsible for the surface of rights of way. There are incidences where planning has been granted for buildings across Rights of Way, and they have been built without addressing the ROW. There is an example of this where an extension obstructs BW 0431/90 south of Hanwood. Linda raised concern over permitted development where barns are just built with no consultations.

The BHS have an advice leaflet on Town & Country Planning affecting Riders & Carriage Drivers  
Due to Shropshire not having their SAM DEV in place Planning applications are being granted in areas that have been turned down as unsuitable in the past. This is having a great impact on lanes, and off road routes. Shona reported that Condition 29 search forms included highways, but not ROW. Changes are imminent following a Law Society consultation, with questions to be added including does the planning application affect a ROW, are there any claims in for a ROW, have there been any diversion to ROW etc. Shona is not sure when this is to be implemented. Planning Applications are listed on: <http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>.

### **(d) Shropshire Riding Website**

Zia reported that further updating of the [www.shropshireriding.co.uk](http://www.shropshireriding.co.uk) website has not taken place, as Jim has said that it is planned to do a new map based website to include walking, cycling and horse riding. Only Shropshire Council promoted routes are currently shown on the Shropshire riding home page 'map of routes' link on the left. You click on a route on the map to get up the route leaflets etc. Full details of the Humphrey Kynaston Way can also be obtained via a link down on the left, and for the Jack Mytton Way via 'featured route', but the Kerry Ridgeway and Sabrina Way are not mentioned, nor is carriage driving. Permissive routes, and other information is out of date and Zia is hoping to get this resolved. The site only shows 'Horses Welcome' establishments and there are very few registered in Shropshire. It is intended that the new site map will be linked to Shropshire Council's local map so definitive routes can be brought up. Zia needs to know what information people think should be included on the new site. Jim has mentioned a March deadline for the project. Clare Fildes will be taking this project on when he leaves.

## **5. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues**

**Preston Montford** - Zia reported that the map orders for creating the new through bridleway from Preston Montford to Montford Bridge, which is part of the Humphrey Kynaston Way bridleway, and for deleting the line of the old footpath, have all now been confirmed, with no objections.

Shona gave the following updates:-

**Hughley towards Gippols BW** – Pam Y. has served a section 130 notice for obstruction on a highway, but served the notice on a non-definitive route which connects the bridleway to The Gippols. This has been used by riders since the 1950's. It is not the through line claimed in the 1950's, which follows the bridleway from Hughley, but then a section of footpath with a stile. Angela has looked at old maps and this line is shown as a white road. Shona has done a site visit. The Landowner is understood to have given permission to some local riders, to use the through track, but has now locked the gate due to the numbers using it. The used route link can be claimed, but only with evidence of ridden use without permission.

**Clun/Offas Dyke** – Zia has been contacted by a representative of the Ramblers with regard to BW12 Clun which is overgrown, and stops at Offa's Dyke on the parish boundary with no legal connection to the bridleway 100 yards to the south. He would like support to resolve this anomaly. Shona will raise this with Lucy. We do not have anyone covering that area since Anita left.

**Adcote Bridge BW** – There are still legal issues to resolve in order to get the privately owned bridge, which has collapsed due to flooding, repaired. The temporary closure notice only applies to the bridleway over the bridge and does not include the ford adjacent to the bridge.

**Broseley – BW addition Chapel Lane to Lodge Lane.** Shona will try and look at this.

**Badger Wood** – This is still ongoing.

**Oaks Wood** - This is still ongoing

**Frodesley** – Shona hopes to be able to get the orders sent off, whilst witnesses are still around.

**Drumbles Wood** – Shona will try and get this order resolved.

**Sutton Mill** – The Order need to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

**Llanyblodwel** – The part confirmed order was sent to the OS, but they have put all the routes on. The Public Inquiry is on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December and includes one BW. The objectors have not yet done any Statements of Case. Anthony has been very helpful on the bridleway claim.

**Old Moors Lane** – Shona will try and address this now Mat has left. It is shown as a through road on the 1929 highway maps.

**Hilton** – This is still waiting to be published.

**Lea Hall Quarry** – This is still ongoing.

**Melverley** – This is still waiting for the width confirmed by the Inspector to be enforced. Shona explained that if they move an obstruction they have no powers to put anything in its place.

**Duck Lane, Little Ryton to Ryton** – No claim has been submitted yet.

**Pontesford Hill** – Awaiting the public Inquiry in November on claimed footpaths on the hill. This will be interesting as it involves an argument around Crown land.

Shona explained that when they start something, they have to make sure that they have the ability to carry it through.

Diversions, currently mostly footpaths, are an important part of their work as they bring in income.

## **6. Solar Farm Applications**

The big concern with these is the security fencing, especially when put up alongside or on both sides of a public right of way for horse riders. It is agreed that we need to make sure that the fencing is safe and that adequate extra width is allowed between the right of way and the fencing, especially for previously unfenced routes, and that it does not impact on access through. Shona reported that they have had no guidance on this, but that the underground cables are also an issue, as well as proper reinstatement of the surface. It was put forward that safety rails should be provided as a barrier between any proposed security fencing and a right of way, especially if the fencing has spikes or a similar topping to prevent it being climbed.

It is noted that the British Horse Society have advice on Solar Panels on [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk)

## **7. Public Access under Stewardship Schemes**

Zia reported that there are 17 schemes still operating in Shropshire, some to 2020. There is concern that new EFA regulations may lead landowners to withdraw schemes. Shona will check on this.

*The remaining 17 schemes are downloadable on <http://cwr.naturalengland.org.uk/walk-ride>*

## **8. Items to Note**

The British Horse Industry Confederation 'Equine Sector 2015 .General Election Manifesto for the Horse' attached to the Agenda is noted. The statistics contained in this could be useful. Sport and

Tourism are very important to Shropshire's economy. Tourism generates over £561million a year for Shropshire.

#### **9. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums (not already covered)**

The minutes of the Local Access Forum held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014, attached to the Agenda, are noted. The meeting held at Preston Montford Field Studies Centre on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2014, included a presentation by Adrian Pickles on The Field Studies Council and its work at Preston Montford, and how Shropshire Council and LAF could work with them, and an update on Shropshire Council's Parks and Countryside sites by Mark Blount with discussion on working together and on how the role of volunteering could be encouraged.

It is noted that the next LAF meeting is on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and that, and the following meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015 will be held at 10am in the Shirehall.

#### **10. Any Other Business**

**Newport Cycle Path** – It was asked if this 14 mile route from Newport to Gnosall, along a wide old railway line, is open to horse riders. (*Part of National Cycle Network NCN 55*). Concern was raised that whilst cyclists used any bridleways that are claimed or created, horse riders are often not being included on new cycling routes.

**Wenlock Edge Cycle Path** – Zia reported an article in the Shropshire Star about a fundraising drive by the National Trust for £4,000 to create two family friendly cycling routes of 4 miles and 7.5 miles along Wenlock Edge. Shona thought that Richard Knight had been contacted on this. The Jack Mytton Way runs along Wenlock Edge using part of the railway line and this is already open to cyclists. There is concern that they may want to change the surface. Shona confirmed that they would not be able to alter the surface of the bridleway without permission.

**Minsterley to Pontesbury new off road Cycle Path** – Rosemary asked if horse riders could get permission to use this new route. We had asked for this to be multi user, but were told that it would only be open to walkers and cyclists. It is reported that horse riders are using it, as it is a needed route.

**British Horse Society Access Conference Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014** – Jan Mees Robinson and Zia are booked in to attend. Gill and Angela may also attend.

#### **11. Dates of the Next Meetings**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting is **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at 5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30. The meeting must close at 7.30pm** due to evening closure of the Shirehall.

It is confirmed that the following meeting will be held on **8<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at 5 for a prompt start at 5.30pm**

**TO NOTE:** All papers for SR&CDF meetings are now sent out by email.

## **SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)**

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015, at 5.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

### **1. Attendance:**

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Chair. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BWG, Joint Secretary. Judy Dickenson, Church Preen & District. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Wendy Beaumont, Bridgnorth. Gaynor Evans & Jan Baldwin, Broseley Bridleways. Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere. Steve Benbow, Oswestry Riding Club.

### **Apologies:**

Anthony Francis-Jones, Telford BWA, Vice Chair. Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group. Margaret Dutton, Broseley Bridleways. Gill Eyre, BHS South Shropshire East, South Shropshire. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen BWA Pam Yuille, Underton, Bridgnorth. Mark Weston, BHS. Carol Williams, Long Mynd & Dist BWA. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council, had to cancel late, but she has sent reports.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2014 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Chair. John commended Zia on the minutes.

### **3. Matters Arising**

#### **(a) Wind Turbines**

It is noted that the application for a 327ft (99.7m) wind turbine near Tetchill has been turned down, but that the application 13/04250/FUL for a 77m wind turbine to be sited approx. 60m from Bridleway 11 at Wigmarsh is still awaiting a decision. Turbines have gone out of control and shed blades in fine weather. A repositioned turbine has recently been granted near the Long Mountain, and the Planning Committee agreed at the meeting that any now granted should be more suitably coloured, non-reflective and not white, as many of the existing ones are, as they show up in the landscape. John reported that in Italy they are not so noticeable as they are green or grey. It is agreed that we should continue to object to any applications that fall within the BHS guidelines.

#### **(b) Shropshire Highways**

There is still no news on progress on the digitizing of the old Shropshire Highway Maps. The subject was raised again at the last LAF meeting. A number of roads shown on the 1929 Handover Map were left off later maps. Old Moors Lane near Saint Martins is still to be resolved. The Order for it to be registered as a bridleway was withdrawn, as it is an Unsurfaced Unclassified County Road. John reported that he was told that there were a lot of maps at Bridgnorth. Zia reported that Divisions held their own maps which were often different to Central Highway's maps. On earlier Highways maps a number of green lanes, and unsurfaced ends to lanes, were just rubbed out. A later set of Highways maps were damaged by water and errors were also made when copying these by hand to new maps. Shona has reported that, following surveying, their department had agreed to

take on the maintenance of a number of key unsurfaced UCR's which link with the ROW network. They are discussing the possibility of creating a map layer so we all know which routes these are.

**(c) Canal Towpaths**

This item was put on the agenda following the The Canal & River Trust's 'Sharing Towpaths' Consultation: - <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/consultations/completed-consultations>, and the expected attendance of a representative to address the last LAF meeting, but they failed to turn up. Shona is hoping to get a representative from CART to the next LAF meeting. The responses to the consultation included a question asking 'Is anything missing from the nine principles of towpath use'. 59% responded 'yes, horse riding'. Zia reported that tow paths were ridden in the Maesbury Marsh area, and John that ones were ridden in Essex. Mark Weston has reported that 3 Pilot routes with horse riding access are being looked at in Yorkshire, Wiltshire and Herefordshire. Members are reminded to report any canal towpaths that are, or were ridden to Mark Weston on [M.Weston@bhs.org.uk](mailto:M.Weston@bhs.org.uk).

**(d) Deregulation Bill**

It is noted that the Report Stage – line by line examination of the Bill – was started on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February, and that this will be followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading; 4<sup>th</sup> March; Consideration of Amendments; then Royal Assent. The Deregulation Bill documents can be viewed on [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk) by putting 'Deregulation Bill' in 'search'. It is understood that the CLA was trying to stop motorised vehicle use of some routes. Some amendments were withdrawn, and others were not moved. The outcome is now awaited.

**(e) Natural England Higher Access**

Routes were put forward for the Stiperstones area, including the omission of the new link bridleway to the south. A suggested link on the east side was rejected due to ground conditions. It is noted that Mark Weston, BHS Director of Access, has reported that he is waiting to hear back from Natural England on the used branch route up from Perkins Beach. Nothing has been heard on the old railway line link in the Wyre Forest. Dedication of higher status routes in the Meres and Mosses area, will be coming soon, but may be a problem, as they cross the border into Wales and Natural England can only dedicate higher access in England. Wales would have to agree. John reported that the North Wales carriage drivers are getting together with Area 27 Shropshire, to look at, and re-drive all the routes. They have evidence of over 20 years use, but some links may be permissive. There are a number of legally dead end definitive equestrian routes, but which are well used as through routes, on both sides of the border in the Whixall Moss and Fenn's Moss area, some linking to the old railway line, which is in Wales. Angela reported that there is an enclosure award in this area, and that Andrew Kelly looked into equestrian use in this area.

**(f) Natural England Permissive Access**

It is not thought that any permissive access has been affected yet by changes in legislation, but Judy reported that farmers have to apply every year for their entry level stewardship. Shona has reported that she had not heard any news on the new regulations relating to stewardship. There is money available for infrastructure, such as gates, for permissive routes, but no payments for any new routes, or for the renewal of existing access routes. A number of now ended routes provided good links with definitive routes. It is noted that of the remaining 17 schemes with bridleway access, none are due to end in 2015, 4 end in 2016, 1 in 2017, 1 in 2018, 5 in 2019 and 6 in 2020. *These 17 remaining schemes are downloadable on <http://cwr.naturalengland.org.uk/walk-ride>*

**(g) Any other Matters arising not on the Agenda**

**(i) Helicopters** – Zia reported that the RAF Shawbury High Viz campaign, which Zia and her riding companion have done filming for, is to be launched in May at RAF Shawbury's Landowner's Day. There is information on RAF Shawbury's website. They will be supplying High Viz items to riders. It is understood that the BHS are now involved with this. It is agreed that it is important that younger riders are made aware of the importance of wearing High Viz items.



**(ii) Solar Farm Applications** – A number of sites have been applied for and granted. The Meadowley site involves the diversion of a bridleway from cross field to field edge. Local riders have not objected to this, but there is concern as to how horse riding may be affected. It is agreed that a field edge route is preferable to a double high fenced route through the solar panels. Zia reported that the BHS have an advice leaflet on Solar Panels on their website. [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk) The security fencing can be a problem. It is important that when equestrian routes are fenced for the security of these sites, preferably 5m of useable width is provided, with a minimum of 4m. 3m is only suitable for an unfenced field edge bridleway. Fencing must be suitable, and safe, if in close proximity to an equestrian route. High fenced corridors can be intimidating, and sharp pales are not safe, as a rider could be thrown onto them. There must also be good, safe drainage.

#### **4. Shropshire Council**

##### **(a) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships**

Shona has reported that the Council still has to make savings, and that their service is no different from others, in that they have identified further savings for next year, and more are likely the year after. It is hoped that there will be no further staffing losses, but this will depend on continued funding by Health, and if additional savings have to be found. Emily Harrison is now settling in, having taken on Mat Stephen's areas. Lucy Stanley has recently left. She logged complaints and dealt with a lot of the admin. It is understood that she is not being replaced. They have to look at doing work to bring money into the department. Dealing with the increase in planning application has put extra pressure on them. There is concern that reported issues will not be dealt with due to the limited number of staff members, but it is very important that problems etc. still get reported.

##### **(b) Outdoor Partnerships Implementation Team**

It is hoped to resolve the ongoing problems at Acton Round/Shirlett by putting up cameras. They will then get the team to clear the route and monitor the situation.

Hinton /Polemere Byways Zia reported the fantastic work done on these routes which are now a pleasure to ride. Good surfaced routes discourage mud plugging by 4x4's.

David Hardwick is still working on resolving problems on some of the Humphrey Kynaston Way routes. The overgrown section of BW25 on Ford Heath has now been cleared and the ditching will be done after April when it has dried out a bit. Now Boons Abattoir has closed the air is much pleasanter there! These routes have been improved, and more gate improvements etc. done and planned, as part of the work on the Humphrey Kynaston Way. This benefits local users as well as those doing the linear and circular routes. Richard reported that they are now back to two teams of two for topping, clearing etc, but that funding for providing infrastructure will be a problem. They are planning to do work with the Long Mynd Bridleway Group on the Minton Ride. More P3 Groups have been formed and volunteers are helping to improve routes.

##### **(c) Shropshire Council Planning**

It is noted that the planning application for two houses and an Agricultural field access up the narrow green lane BW 7 in Ford, where the applicant has no vehicular rights of access, has been rejected. The application for 30 houses in a field off the quiet Back Lane section of the Humphrey Kynaston Way Ford circular ride has been turned down by the Planning Committee. Shona reported that all of the Officers within her team respond to any applications that affect, or could affect Rights Of Way. Maps are included showing the routes, and the appropriate advice is given dependent upon the situation. Where there is an issue with private access rights it is made clear that if there are none, and the route is a PROW, then they would be committing an offence, and the onus is on the owner to prove private rights. Zia said that Planning can be granted even when there is doubt over the access. Ian Kilby, Planning Service Manager, gave LAF an overview of how access is incorporated and considered in the planning process, and the impact of SAMDev. Planning Applications are listed on: <http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>.

#### **(d) Shropshire Riding Website**

Zia has helped with some updating of the [www.shropshireriding.co.uk](http://www.shropshireriding.co.uk) website. Out of date Defra information has been removed and a link put to the Defra Permissive Routes. Plans are being put in place for a new combined website for all types of access, with interactive mapping. Jim had asked Zia to collect details of pubs, businesses etc on the promoted routes, to link to from the mapping, but this could prove difficult to keep up to date so this has now been dropped. Clare Fildes is now dealing with the update of the websites, and tenders are currently being evaluated. They will be using the Shropshire Council mapping which shows the definitive routes. Angela has looked at the travel cycle website which she said has yellow dots which when clicked shows photos along the routes. It was pointed out that cycling has lots of funding.

### **5. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues**

There was a discussion on the importance of recording routes before the proposed 2026 deadline. How this is proceeded on will depend on the regulations that come with the Deregulation Bill. Under this Bill the Council, not the applicants, will have to notify landowners of claims. Also the Council would be able to make applications within a specified timescale to preserve key routes. Shona has reported that she could see an increased pressure on their team, and potentially very tight timescales to determine issues based on the Basic evidential test, but there are no details yet on what this might be. It would help considerable if the highways record was correctly recorded. Members agreed that we need to be prepared, but should wait for the Deregulation Bill regulations before putting in claims. It is hoped that approving the regulations will not take too long. Angela said it will resolve the problem of putting in claims when the claimant is known to the landowner.

**Consultation on National Grid Mid Wales Connection Routes** – Shona has reported that individual LAF members have sent their comments direct, and that she would be coordinating a formal response from LAF once she had contacted members for their input. She was having a meeting with National Grid next week. It is understood that Shropshire Council and LAF are objecting to this. Zia walked the bridleway that will be affected by the currently planned line, to discover the bridleway has been obstructed by the landowner putting in an extra narrow gate with a plank nailed across the top. The proposed power line will run parallel to the bridleway with a pylon right beside the metal bridleway gate off the road. It is agreed that passing quickly under is acceptable, but not negotiating metal gates under it, or riding parallel, as power cables produce a fizzing type effect, especially in wet weather, which can agitate the horse, and can be felt by the rider.

**Llanyblodwel Public Inquiry** The bridleway claim was confirmed by the Inspector, but Shona has reported that it is being re-advertised, at their request, due to an alteration to the line of the footpath addition. The whole order has to be advertised, but responses can only be made on the modification to the footpath.

**Clun/Offas Dyke – BW gap on the parish boundary.** Shona reported that they will be checking the historic evidence, but it looks as if this is a natural anomaly as per the Inclosure Award.

**Adcote Bridge BW** – A decision is awaited on how to proceed with the collapsed bridge. Richard Knight is dealing with this. The ford alongside the bridge is still legally open.

**Broseley – BW addition Chapel Lane to Lodge Lane.** Shona will try and look at this.

**Badger Wood** – This has now been sold so no progress. This route will now have to be claimed.

**Oaks Wood** - Shona reported that Linda has informed them of the line change on the ground so they will need to contact the owners re the preferred line for the diversion, and to discuss the associated Formal Application.

**Frodesley** – Shona reported that they will review the files and then send the order off to the PI.

**Drumbles Wood** – This unresolved Order will now need to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

**Sutton Mill** – The Order is waiting to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

**Old Moors Lane** – This UCR has still not been addressed by Highways. Zia will contact them.

**Hilton** – This is still waiting to be published.

**Melverley** – This is still waiting for the width confirmed by the Inspector to be enforced.

**Pontesford Hill** – Shona reported that the Inquiry was started, but then adjourned until April as they understand that the residents are trying to buy the land.

**Purslow BW addition** – Shona reported that they had rejected the application, but the applicants appealed. They were then directed to make an order for a very short section of BW. An objection was received to the order, so this has now been sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

**Gippols route near Hughley**- Judy raised this. It needs to be looked into, as to the route to be claimed, the historic route, or the later used route.

We need a representative from the Clun/Knighton area. Anita used to cover that area but she left.

## **6. Cycling and Rights of Way**

The CTC (Cycling Touring Club) Campaigns Briefing to Local Access Forums (Attached to the Agenda) is noted. Shropshire LAF is looking at off road representative, and interest in joining by an on road cycling representative. They are looking at LAF membership generally to ensure a balance. The CTC document raised use of bridleways; Amendments to the Definitive Map in a timely fashion, to benefit off road cycling; Proper maintenance of byways, bridleways & unsurfaced UCR's; and, removal of obstructions. Shona reported that they would like to have all issues resolved, but do not have the staff to deal with them, therefore actions have to be prioritised. The Cycle Forum minutes, available on the website link, are noted. There is concern that recently created cycle ways such as the Pontesbury to Minsterley off road Cycle Route do not include horse riding. Horse riders are using it because it is a needed route. It is not known what the plans are for the NEN45 extension in Bridgnorth, John said that he knows the Newport route 75, which is being extended along the old railway line, and which newspaper reports describe as a walking and cycling route. It should be a multi user route. Judy has ridden it. John said he has driven it; it joins to Telford routes and crosses by Donnington Depot, but he did not know where it went from there. Members are concerned that bridleways are being taken over and surfaced for cycling routes, but that new cycle routes are not being made available to horse riders. Angela asked if Mark Weston could be asked to intervene on our behalf, and talk to Sustrans. Concern was also raised over off-road bikers, especially in the Long Mynd area. Zia has tried to get the message over that cyclists have, by law, to give way to walkers and horse riders on a public bridleway. A newspaper report mentioned the National Trust is putting in two cycle routes on Wenlock Edge, but no one is aware of where these routes are. Cyclists can already use The Jack Mytton Way along Wenlock Edge.

## **7. Game Shooting across Public Rights of Way**

The relevant extracts from 'The Code of Good Shooting Practice 2012' and from the BASC guidelines (attached to the Agenda) are noted.

There have been reports, from horse riders, of shoots not following the guidelines for shooting across public rights of way, putting horse riders at risk. Shoots have not put lookouts to hold the shooting, to allow users of public rights of way to pass through safely. Horse riders have been unable to use some bridleways on occasions when a shoot is taking place, or have been put in dangerous situations when they have. There has been a recent case of abusive behaviour towards horse riders out on an afternoon ride, unaware a shoot was taking place across the bridleway, and trying to get home, with no alternative. A request to be allowed to pass through was ignored, and beating and shooting was continued for 15 minutes, with shot raining down on the waiting horse riders. A representative from the CLA has said that he will get guidelines out to remind members before the next shooting season starts. There is no link on the BHS accident website to report incidents with shoots, or information on guidelines.

## 8. Shropshire Level Crossings Review

Concern was raised over the possible closure by Network Rail of level crossings. Shona has reported that they have had several site visits with Network Rail to look at key sites, but to date no firm proposals have been put forward following those visits. They will resist any proposals that are to the detriment of the access network and communities. Shona will follow up on this.

## 9. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums (not already covered)

The minutes of the Local Access Forum held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014, attached to the Agenda, are noted. The meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015 included Ploughing and Cropping concerns, especially with regard to oil seed rape. For public bridleway, a useable width of 3m at field edge and 2m cross field must be left. There should be a wider width left to account for fall over of a crop such as oil seed rape. Shona reported that they will be sending out their usual reminder letters on cropping to landowners in April/May and that they hope to raise awareness with the landowning fraternity by discussion with the CLA.

Joe Penfold did a presentation on the Stiperstones Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme with consultation on routes. It is understood that Joe is to hold a workshop session to look at this with the communities and interested parties. Other issues covered at LAF have been included on the Agenda.

It is noted that the next LAF meeting is on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015 at 10am in the Shirehall.

It is also noted that the full LAF papers are available on the new website link given on the Agenda.

## 10. Any Other Business

**Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships annual public survey 2014/15** Members are reminded that the survey closes on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The end date has been brought forward from the end of March. Members are asked to fill it in, and to pass on the link to it.

**British Horse Society Access Week** It is noted that this is from the 23-31<sup>st</sup> May 2015. Zia is doing a talk 'Exploring Shropshire on Horseback' on 30<sup>th</sup> April, to raise money for the BHS Access Fund. The venue is to be confirmed.

**Byways** - John Gibson reported that the British Driving Society and the CLA were getting together over green routes. Members reported that there have been problems on lanes near Bucknell with troupes of off-road vehicles damaging the surface. Steve reported that off-roaders often use vehicles which are not road legal.

## 11. Dates of the Next Meetings

It is noted that the date of the next meeting is **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at 5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30. The meeting must close at 7.30pm** due to evening closure of the Shirehall.

It is also noted that the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015 meeting is the AGM, and any nominations, resignations etc should be in by the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015.

It is confirmed that the following meetings will be held on **5<sup>th</sup> October 2015**, with **possibly the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016** for the following meeting if this is not the half term week.

**TO NOTE:** All papers for SR&CDF meetings are now sent out by email.

## MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE CYCLE FORUM

Tuesday 10 February 2015, Gateway, Shrewsbury

### 1. Present

Cllr Miles Kenny (Chair)  
Bill Dorrell  
Jenny Willmot  
Michael Willmot  
David Currant  
Phil Pool

Ray Hughes  
Emma Bullard  
Alex Ford  
Alex Grant  
Peter Mathison  
Peter Walden

Bill Craig  
Ian Gordon  
Martin Withington

### Apologies

Martin Beardwell  
Helen Gilmour  
[Will Baugh](#)

### 2. Previous minutes and matters arising

Amendment needed to attendance list – Alex Grant, Bill Dorrell and Helen Gilmour should be listed as ‘CTC Shropshire’.

MW gave Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package (SITP) update. Marches LEP funding with focus on economic growth. 6 elements including way finding (part electronic) and walking/cycling network (tackling missing links and into urban extensions in south and west). Only a strategic plan at moment, detailed proposals in 6 to 12 months’ time with cost benefit justification needed to draw down funding.

Concerns expressed – car bias and focus on roundabouts (PP), signals systems need microwave detection – magnetic no longer appropriate for modern bikes (PM). Concern £10m won’t go far. Use of term ‘sustainability’. AG asked if a done deal? Essentially yes (see LEP consultation already taken place) but could influence the detail. Softer measures need to be linked to the new infrastructure – promotion of sustainable transport, training etc. Will cycling be given enough weight – probably not know until the detail comes out. EB said the challenge was for the comments to be made at the right time to the right people. MW share feedback with Andy Savage.

**Action:** MW to let members know timeframe for consultation on the detail.

Post – meeting information from Andy Savage in Highways Development Control:

He will shortly be submitting the Outline Business Case for SITP, to the LEP.

It is hoped that this will be accepted May/June and funding allocated for next year and beyond.

Once he is assured of the funding coming forward and when it can be drawn down (influencing the programme) he can then proceed with appropriate stakeholder and local member/community consultation. This will probably start in the summer/autumn and continue on specific interventions based on the programme delivery.

DC asked if any plans for the other market towns. Place plans define infrastructure wish lists.

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/place-plans/>

DC not filled with confidence.

PM asked who was responsible for long term management of sustainable transport in Shropshire and who is the professional lead?

MW mentioned the scoring system for the capital programme under the Road Safety policy. There are three Area Transport Commissioners (Kevin Aitken – Central (old SABC area), Victoria Merrill - South and Matt Johnson - North).

These Transport Commissioners have a key role in prioritisation and scheme delivery. Officers with cycle infrastructure expertise have been lost e.g. Alison Kennedy and Jan Cook (left council) and Richard Harman (now in Development Control role).

PM asked if community cycling initiatives will be picked up beyond March. MW said that likely to be a drop in cycling softer measures though are looking at ways to find new funding including through the planning system and from housing developments. See contributions by developers through CIL. MW agreed that experienced cyclists need to be involved in capital infrastructure decisions.

### **3. Cyclist Provision on Emstrey Island (A5)**

A question had been asked about whether Shropshire Council had any input to the redesign of Emstrey Island. EB had asked how cyclists will get on and off the carriageway at Thieves Lane and Atcham Road. Jan Cook when in post had said Shropshire Council would help if Highways Agency didn't. Lights were switched on last week. Post scheme safety audits should identify such issues and the Sustainable Transport team will forward comments to HA.

### **4. Sustrans ranger requests for updates**

- NCNR45 cross town link at Bridgnorth – EB said no immediate prospect of building but still on the books.
- Signing of RR32 (alternative to A 49 between Craven Arms and Shrewsbury). This is currently an approved Sustrans regional route and is shown on the Six Castles leaflet (NCN 44) but not signed on-road. Will be useful for LEJOG riders and tourists so has safety and economic benefits which support the case for signage. *Use of See Sustrans NCN stickers* too. Hopefully go forward as a potential scheme in next year's programme.

As part of this route there is a long-standing request for cycle path on verge at Weeping Cross Island. MW said may be funded in future as part of local SAMDEV development.

### **5. Tourism**

- Visitor economy. Alison Patrick Tourism Officer at SC is helpful. Although only 2% who visit Shropshire say that cycling is the main reason for their visit, it is seen as a potential growth area for leisure cycling. There is a larger market for easier routes which would appeal to individuals and families who don't cycle regularly; this might be helped by more cycle hire businesses. The market for more challenging rides in hillier areas is smaller and more niche so easier to target. CTC have included Shropshire in their holiday programme in the past but not currently.
- Shropshire Cycleway – NEW. EB mentioned the new route which links up existing routes (NCN and market towns leisure rides) into a 185 mile round county route with an additional 40 mile Shrewsbury circular loop. This has been produced as a folder with 6 maps and will soon be available in Tourist Information Centres and libraries.
- Proposed Offa's Dyke cycle route – NEW. This is being designed by Transport Initiatives transport-initiatives.com for the Offa's Dyke Partnership and will be a challenging route.
- CTC: LEJOG route only; no touring holidays
- Self-guided tour companies: Wheely Wonderful, Byways Breaks

AG mentioned the Ellesmere CTC birthday ride routes (2012) which can be made available. The Travel Shropshire team has the information in the form of route descriptions but they haven't been designed as leaflets/maps for the general public.

## 6. Telford and Wrekin update

- BMX report from Derek Owen - No National race this year but planned for 2016. Midlands region race is programmed for August 2<sup>nd</sup> (Sunday). All welcome. Free entry for spectators.
- There was no update from Telford and Wrekin Council. Jill Henderson has now left T and W

## 7. Shropshire update – LSTF team

- 'Wheels for All' spring dates (see <http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk/cycle/wheels-for-all.aspx> ). Cycling Projects continue to offer weekend inclusive cycling sessions for children at sites around the county. Can help adults too but best to confirm in advance to ensure if right type of cycle can be made available. More details via contacting Ian Tierney [ian.tierney@cyclimg.org.uk](mailto:ian.tierney@cyclimg.org.uk)
- Discovery Centre, Craven Arms all-ability path. A project to provide an inclusive cycling facility at Craven Arms in partnership with Grow Cook Learn. Currently out for consultation - views to [ray.hughes@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:ray.hughes@shropshire.gov.uk) . DC said Ludlow 21 were fully supportive. CTC affiliated Cycling4All Shropshire acting as enabler for development of inclusive cycling in the county. See <http://www.ctc.org.uk/cycle-centre/cycling4all-shropshire>
- Spring Gardens, Shrewsbury design work. A shared use path on east side of Spring Gardens/ Ditherington Road between the Flax Mill and Comet Drive. Designed this year, built next.
- Shropshire Council contacts wef. 1 April.

### **Area Transport Commissioners:** (new schemes)

Matt Johnson, North [matt.johnson@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:matt.johnson@shropshire.gov.uk)

Kevin Aitken, Central (old SABC area) [kevin.aitken@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.aitken@shropshire.gov.uk)

Victoria Merrill, South [Victoria.merrill@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Victoria.merrill@shropshire.gov.uk)

### **Area Highway Engineers:** (maintenance, signs)

Dave Gradwell, North [david.gradwell@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.gradwell@shropshire.gov.uk)

Mike Davies, Central [Michael.davies@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.davies@shropshire.gov.uk)

Alice Dilly, South [Alice.dilly@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Alice.dilly@shropshire.gov.uk)

### **Development Control** (road layout and cycle facilities in new developments)

Mark Wootton North [mark.wootton@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:mark.wootton@shropshire.gov.uk)

Richard Harman Central [Richard.Harman@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Harman@shropshire.gov.uk)

Gemma Lawley South [gemma.lawley@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.lawley@shropshire.gov.uk)

Kevin Aitken also has a sustainable transport policy role so is the best contact for general cycling issues. Kevin's role will be to bid for new cycling funding if becomes available in future. Cycling (promotion) portfolio holder is Cllr Karen Calder (public health lead) and Cllr Claire Wild for infrastructure. Reporting lines – Kevin/Chris Edwards Senior Commissioner/Clive Wright Chief Executive.

- Sustrans R81 work party (litter picking) Sat 7 March 10am-1pm meet Sports Village front entrance.

## 8. Shropshire Cycle Forum 1996 onwards - Philip Pool, founder member

Phil gave a speech asking what had changed since 1996. Gave example of town walls traffic calming which worked against helping cyclists by forcing them more into the road. Lots of positives. Shropshire successful in the past in getting funds. Number of cyclists cause for optimism. Bicycle still a wonderful form of transport which doesn't take up much room in busy town centres. Phil received a rapturous round of applause. Reflected on the fact that a number of previous Transport portfolio holders had been very supportive – Simon Jones, John Overall, Philip Engleheart. Advised running schemes past FOE to avoid mistakes being made. DC added his thanks to the support received from Ray in Ludlow for cycling promotion and community cycle rides. Felt it had been a positive two way relationship.

## 9. Next steps

Sustainable Transport Team receive redundancy notices from 5 March and little can be done after 1 April. Sustrans Travel Adviser team also finishing end of March. Not confirmed but possibility of Ray and Malcolm Farrar Road Safety Officer continuing with primary and secondary schools work (see statutory duties to provide road safety education and promote sustainable travel to school) but working for Mouchel consultants. Bike It officer (one remaining – Jo Morison) to finish in July at end of school term. Bikeability continuing (confirmed to March 2016) as separate funding stream from DfT.

Travel Shropshire cycling pages to be retained within Shropshire Council website and administered by Outdoor Recreation Team. Agreed we needed to retain the maps and other Travel Shropshire documents of value to the public looking for cycling information and suitable routes. Plan to continue arrangement for community to publicise cycle rides and events.

Future of Cycle Forum? Agreed there is an ongoing need for a lobby group. Could Telford keep it going? EB said in theory yes but they have not seen it a priority and have a local group TBUG – Telford Bicycle Users' group.

Mike W reflected on how the Community Rail Partnership had worked successfully but needed leadership. Martin W said Kevin Aitken could interact with a forum but not administer.

Felt a need for local issues and developments to be discussed perhaps in smaller groups in market towns. PM suggested ask each of the three commissioners to hold a cycle forum meeting for their respective areas and this was seen as a positive idea. Local cyclists would need to go to the commissioners with an agenda so would need to communicate with each other and reach some sort of consensus on priorities to ask for.

**Action:** Ask all attendees, past forum members if would be happy to share emails and join a virtual forum.

(Regarding planning and cycling, MW said training was being provided to highways and planning development control officers to support them in delivering more sustainable transport interventions from new developments.)

Bikefest – question asked could we still have one? The Community Council might want to get involved as a promotional opportunity for Wheels to Work. Would probably need to be a volunteer led event. JB mentioned Police Commissioner's Event on 5 July which Cycling4All Shropshire have been discussing with Christian Smith at SSV.

AG suggested any downloadable relevant documents on Travel Shropshire to be kept on own PCs so not lost.

**Action:** Bulk paper copies of route maps etc. are available on request – email [transport@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk) or order from the website <http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk/cycle/cycle-routes.aspx> as soon as possible

Ray Hughes  
March 2015



# Central Shropshire Walking Forum

## Notes of Meeting

2 pm, Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015

The Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall Shrewsbury

### Attendees:

Clare Fildes, Shropshire Outdoor Partnership [Clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Mick Dunn, Shropshire Outdoor Partnership [mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk)  
David Hardwick, Shropshire Outdoor Partnership [david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Helen Beresford, Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships [helen.beresford@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:helen.beresford@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Bob Coalbran, Wellington WaW and WfH [bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com](mailto:bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com)  
Bill Hodges, Shrewsbury Ramblers [vibill@phonecoop.coop](mailto:vibill@phonecoop.coop)  
John Newnham, Shrewsbury Ramblers [john.newnham@btinternet.com](mailto:john.newnham@btinternet.com)  
Dick Bailey, Much Wenlock WaW & Walking for Health [gdickson.bailey@virgin.net](mailto:gdickson.bailey@virgin.net)  
Susan Daykin, Marden Walking for Health [susanedaykin@gmail.com](mailto:susanedaykin@gmail.com)  
Brian Dale-Patteson, RA & U3A [rosanbrian@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rosanbrian@yahoo.co.uk)  
Tim Parker, Conover P3 [tim.parker@nhs.net](mailto:tim.parker@nhs.net)  
Geoff Sproson, Marches LDWA & Stiperstones Inn [walking@marchesgroupldwa.eu](mailto:walking@marchesgroupldwa.eu)

### Apologies:

Trevor Allison  
Barbara Martin

### 1. **Welcome & Introductions**

Clare Fildes opened the meeting at 1400hrs.

### 2. **Feedback/Action from Previous meeting**

a. The new Shropshire Walking Website is currently being designed and developed. Clare may approach groups in the near future to carry out some testing on the site before it goes live.

b. A tender and suggestions for the new Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships display equipment is now in.

c. Mick has produced a poster to display in Tourist Information Centre and Library.

d. Conover has now started a walking group and carry out one walk a month at the moment.

### 3. **Group Updates**

Attendees were asked to give a brief update on current activity:

a. **Bob Coalbran** (Walkabout Wrekin & Wellington WaW) – Bob has started work on the production of the Shropshire Way Central, routes 16 & 17 guides. Volunteers from Wellington Walkers are welcome also walked the routes.

Strimming and clearance work has been undertaken on a stretch of path connecting the Shropshire Way and the Silkin Way, which proved to be a difficult task and will require regular maintenance.

WaW have contributed an article to the Shropshire Walkers are Welcome leaflet which is being produced.

Wellington WaW continue planning for the Wellington Walking festival taking place from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The festival programme should be finalised and available in early spring.

[www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/Festival.html](http://www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/Festival.html)

b. **John Newnham** (Shrewsbury Ramblers) – Ramblers Membership is on the increase. Regular advertising in the Chronical & Shropshire Star.

There will be another map reading course in spring for Shrewsbury Ramblers members.

Big Path Watch will be running during Jun - Sep 2015. Shropshire Ramblers will be inviting members to survey paths within a grid square. Hopefully most of Shropshire will be covered. A similar survey was carried out in 2006 so a comparison of results will be extremely interesting.

The Shrewsbury Ramblers P3 group have had to postpone some work due to inclement weather. They are out on average one day a week doing lots of maintenance work (including work outside their area).

c. **Dick Bailey** (Much Wenlock Walking for Health & WaW) – WfH in Much Wenlock is now being headed up by Phil Wadlow. The WfH numbers remain very good.

WaW made contact with Tim Simmonds and the P3 group is going well. Dick raised concerns about the ongoing issue at Shadwell Quarry and unauthorised path diversions. Action: Mick to speak to Shona Butter to get an update on the issues in Much Wenlock.

The Shropshire Walkers are Welcome groups recently met in Ironbridge.

Planning continues for the Much Wenlock Walking Weekend to be held from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Sep 2015.

[www.2shrop.net/2shropnet/AToZOfMinisites/W/WalkersAreWelcomeInMuchWenlock/WenlockWalkingWeekend](http://www.2shrop.net/2shropnet/AToZOfMinisites/W/WalkersAreWelcomeInMuchWenlock/WenlockWalkingWeekend)

d. **Susan Daykin** (Marden Walking for Health) – Marden Medical Practice WfH doing very well with numbers on the increase. Susan stressed the need for more social walking and variety. Action: Mick to arrange a Shrewsbury Volunteer Walk Leaders networking meeting and walk

e. **Tim Parker** (Condover P3) – Condover P3 group has been carrying out occasional Wednesday morning work parties clearing local footpaths. A new walking group has started in Condover meeting monthly at the moment. Tim would like to investigate the possibility of developing walking in local schools. Action: Mick to arrange to meet with Tim reference the new walking group and School walks/talks

f. **David Hardwick** (Maintenance Team) – David has been identifying action areas such as Rushbury, Worthen, Cardington and Brockton and is liaising with Parish Councils and the local communities to establish priority routes for maintenance. Hopefully there will be new P3 groups at Uffington and Pulverbatch. Helen added that there were also new P3 groups in Wheathill and Tong.

g. **Brian Dale-Patteson** (RA, U3A) – The U3A walking groups go from strength to strength with 6 walking groups meeting fortnightly providing a range of walks. Brian

stressed the need for different levels of walks to make walking as inclusive as possible.

h. **Geoff Sproson** (Marches LDWA & Stiperstones Inn) – There are now over 200 members of the Marches LDWA. The Challenge walks are very popular and places are filling up very quickly (places for the Long Mynd Hike normally fill up within 2hrs of entries opening) Planning taking place for a 100 mile challenge walk in 2016. As well as the challenge walks the Marches LDWA also hold regular social walks. Details of all walks can be found on the web site [www.marchesgroupldwa.eu](http://www.marchesgroupldwa.eu) Planning for the memorial walk is still ongoing. There are some issue with footpaths on the route. Action: David to liaise with Geoff reference the footpath problems

#### 4. Walking Coordinator Updates

a. **Get Walking Week 2015.** There will be no national Ramblers short walks festival in 2015 due to putting their efforts into an exciting project to mark the Ramblers 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Mick intends to do a mini get walking week at the beginning of May to launch this year's Tuesday evening walks programme.

b. **Pontesford Hill.** Contracts have been exchanged with the current owners to buy the Hill. Once fundraising has been completed the hill will be owned and managed by Shropshire Wildlife Trust, so protecting access to the hill. The official launch was held on 23 Jan at the Mary Webb school in Pontesbury. There is now a Pontesford Hill Appeal web page which gives details of various fund raising events and how the appeal is progressing. <http://pontesford-hill-appeal.co.uk>

c. **2015 Shropshire Walking Festivals.** Post cards showing the details of all the walking festivals have been produced by WaW. A full list of Walking festivals and events in Shropshire is attached. The list is also included on the Shropshire Walking Facebook page. Attendees are requested to give details of any events not on the list to Mick Dunn so he can keep it updated.

d. **Shropshire Way Central.** PDFs for the Shropshire Way routes 16 & 17 will soon be produced. It is hoped to produce a pdf for Shrewsbury this summer.

#### 5. Outdoor Recreation Updates: Clare Fildes updated the forum on the following points:

a. **Funding.** There are further significant funding cuts being made across the Council. Currently there are concerns about public health funding and how it will affect Outdoor Partnerships. No fixed budget for next year at the moment.

b. **River Severn Project.** Clare informed the forum about the River Severn flood alleviation project which hopefully will include improvements to the Severn Way footpath and usage of the river.

c. **Volunteering project.** Clare is working on a project to increase active volunteering opportunities in disadvantaged communities to help increase physical activity levels.

d. **Walking Forum.** Clare asked if there were any willing volunteers to Chair the Walking Forum. Volunteers are requested to let Clare know at the next meeting. Clare would also like names of any other organisations/individuals who we can invite to attend the Walking forum.

**6. AOB**

**7. Date of next meeting:**

**2pm. Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015, The Lantern, Meadow Farm Drive, Shrewsbury SY14NG**

## 2015 Shropshire Walking Festivals / Challenge Walks / Charity Walks

### WALKING FESTIVALS

**1st – 10th May 2015.** Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival – over 50 free and varied walks exploring the remarkable history, flora and fauna of the Gorge. <http://www.visitironbridge.co.uk/walkingfestival>

**1st – 25th May 2015.** Bishops Castle Walking Festival - This year the Festival will be held over three weeks, including the May Bank Holidays, giving plenty of time for walking and exploring the area and all it has to offer. <http://bishopscastletownhall.co.uk/events/event/bishops-castle-walking-festival/>

**15th – 17th May 2015.** Whitchurch Walking Festival. <http://whitchurchwalkers.co.uk>

**20th - 23 Aug 2015.** Curch Stretton Walking Festival. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Church-Stretton-Walking-Festival-2015/757983534315681?fref=ts>

**9th Aug & 15th Sep 2015.** Cleobury Mortimer. <http://www.cmfa.co.uk>

**9th Aug 2015.** Magnalonga (Ludlow). The great food and drink walk <http://www.magnalonga.co.uk>

**4th – 7th Sep 2015.** Much Wenlock Walking Weekend. 4 day programme of walks in the Much Wenlock area <http://www.2shrop.net/wenlock.walks>

**14th – 20th Sep 2015.** Wellington Walking Festival.  
<http://www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/Festival.html>

### CHARITY WALKS

**Sun 8th March 2015.** Withies Campsite Walk (Macmillan Cancer Support). Start at The Withies Camp Site at 10 am. The Withies, Stretton Road, Much Wenlock.3 or 6 mile options...Children and dogs welcome. Call Clare on 07789003459 for more details and to book or email [thewithiescampsite@gmail.com](mailto:thewithiescampsite@gmail.com) Start at The Withies Camp Site at 10 am.

**Sat 25th April 2015.** Severn Stride (Severn Hospice) - Starting at the hospice site in Shrewsbury and finishing at Telford the 17 mile route will take in some of the most scenic sights that Shropshire has to offer. <http://www.severnospice.org.uk/support-us/events/severn-hospice-events/?ee=97>

**Sat 9th May 2015.** Bishops Castle Round and About Walk (Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research) This beautiful 23 mile circular walk rambles over the rolling Shropshire hills from Bishops Castle via Offa's Dyke and the Shropshire Way to Clun, for a welcome vegetarian hot lunch. It then returns through the Walcot Estate, Bury Ditches and Oakley Mynd. For the less intrepid, or those wanting to explore Bishops Castle before or after a shorter walk (10 or 13 miles) transport is provided to and from Clun.

<https://leukaemialymphomaresearch.org.uk/event/round-and-about-walk>

**Sat 6th June 2015.** The Social Network (Lingen Davies Cancer Fund) - Join one of the 3 organised events from Princess Royal Hospital to Royal Shrewsbury Hospital:

18 mile Walk – The old faithful. Road and path route which appeals to many

18 mile Run – Road and cycle/walk path route for the more energetic fundraiser

34 mile Cycle Fun Ride– Tarmac roads and cycle paths only, taking in Ironbridge, Atcham and along the Severn. [www.shropshirecharityevents.co.uk](http://www.shropshirecharityevents.co.uk)

**Sat 13th June 2015.** Midnight Walk Telford (Severn Hospice) - The Midnight Walk has returned to be a women only event where you will start a 7km circular route at the stroke of midnight. The route this year is brand new and will explore Wellington, Hadley and Leegomery, but as always you do not need to worry

about where you are going as it is a led walk. <http://www.severnhospice.org.uk/support-us/events/severn-hospice-events/>

**Sat 11th July 2015.** Midnight Walk Shrewsbury (Severn Hospice) - The Midnight Walk has returned to be a women only event where you will start a 7km circular route at the stroke of midnight. The route this year is brand new and will explore the surrounding area of Shrewsbury, but as always you do not need to worry about where you are going as it is a led walk. <http://www.severnhospice.org.uk/support-us/events/severn-hospice-events/>

**Sun 6th Sep 2015.** Seven wonders of the Shropshire hills (Pontesford Hill and Stiperstones appeals) - A signed 16-mile circular walk with shorter options of 10, 6 and 4 miles. The full route takes you through glorious countryside including five SWT nature reserves (Nipstone, The Hollies, Brook Vessons, Hope Valley and Earl's Hill) [www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Sat 10th October 2015.** RUSSET RAMBLE - 12 mile sponsored walk around the local footpaths in aid of Bishop's Castle Bowling Club. For more information please contact Heather Ashton [walkbc@live.co.uk](mailto:walkbc@live.co.uk)  
<http://www.bishopscastle.co.uk/tourism/events.htm>

### CHALLENGE WALKS

**Sat 16th May 2015.** Clun Valley Challenge Walk - Choose either the 26 or 16 mile route, both with some challenging Shropshire Hills (approximately 4300' of ascent). The scenery is spectacular and the route consists of tracks, bridleways, footpaths and a minimal amount of quiet road walking/running. There are 3 manned checkpoints (long route) with refreshments in addition to self clip passage controls.  
<http://clunvalleychallenge.com/>

**Sat 18th July 2015.** Wenlock Olympian Walk - A 50 mile challenge walk organised in conjunction with the Wenlock Olympian Society who inaugurated the Wenlock Olympian Games in 1850. The walk is over demanding rural countryside and moorland in the Shropshire Hills to the west of Much Wenlock.  
<http://www.marchesgroupdwa.eu/wow/index.html>

**Sat 15th Aug 2015.** Bishops Castle Challenge Walk - Bishop's Castle Challenge Walk is a new 24 mile hike with 4000ft. of ascent over stunningly beautiful uplands of the Shropshire Hills  
<http://www.bcchallengewalk.co.uk/>

**3rd & 4th October 2015.** The Longmynd Hike - The Longmynd Hike is a 50 mile competition hike open to anyone aged 18 or over, which takes place over the first weekend of October every year.  
<http://www.longmyndhike.org.uk>

IF YOU KNOW OF AN EVENT WHICH IS NOT ON THE LIST PLEASE LET ME KNOW THE DETAILS AND IT CAN BE ADDED

# Central Shropshire Walking Forum

## Notes of Meeting

2 pm, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015

The Lantern, Meadow farm Drive, Shrewsbury

### Attendees:

Clare Fildes, Shropshire Outdoor Partnership [Clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Mick Dunn, Shropshire Outdoor Partnership [mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk)  
David Hardwick, Shropshire Outdoor Partnership [david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Bob Coalbran, Wellington WaW and WfH [bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com](mailto:bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com)  
Bill Hodges, Shrewsbury Ramblers [vibill@phonecoop.coop](mailto:vibill@phonecoop.coop)  
John Newnham, Shrewsbury Ramblers [john.newnham@btinternet.com](mailto:john.newnham@btinternet.com)  
Susan Daykin, Marden Walking for Health [susanedaykin@gmail.com](mailto:susanedaykin@gmail.com)  
Phil Barnes, Shrewsbury Ramblers [phil@trigpoint.me.uk](mailto:phil@trigpoint.me.uk)  
Audrey Menhinick, Shrewsbury Ramblers [audreymenhinick@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:audreymenhinick@yahoo.co.uk)  
Trevor Allison, Shrewsbury Ramblers [eta-06@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:eta-06@tiscali.co.uk)

### Apologies:

Barbara Martin  
Geoff Sproson  
Dick Bailey  
Phil Wadlow  
Tim Parker  
Brian Dale Patteson  
Helen Beresford

### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

Clare Fildes opened the meeting at 1400hrs.

### **2. Feedback/Action from Previous meeting**

a. Shropshire Way routes 16 & 17 are now on the Shropshire Walking website and available for download.

b. David Hardwick has spoken to Geoff Sproson reference some issues with the footpaths on the memorial walk in the Stiperstones Area.

c. Mick will be organising a WfH Volunteer Walk Leader networking meeting for Shrewsbury groups in late June early July.

d. Pontesford hill has now be bought by Shropshire Wildlife Trust. Contracts were exchanged in April but fundraising continues to ensure the future management of the hill.

### **3. Group Updates**

Attendees were asked to give a brief update on current activity:

a. **Bob Coalbran** (Walkabout Wrekin & Wellington WaW) – Lost of hard work taking places advertising the Wellington Walking Festival. Programs and post cards have been produced and are now ready for distribution.

[www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/Festival.html](http://www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/Festival.html) Funding for the Shropshire way routes 16 & 17 has been found and they are now at the printers. The Path Volunteers have been busy clearing paths and maintenance work at Granville Nature Reserve.

b. **John Newnham** (Shrewsbury Ramblers) – Shrewsbury Ramblers recently held a litter picking event along the Old Canal Path in Shrewsbury filling over a dozen bags. The Shrewsbury Ramblers P3 group continue to be busy clearing paths and improving access. Mick Dunn will be running two navigation session for Shrewsbury Ramblers members in May.

c. **Susan Daykin** (Marden Walking for Health) – Susan raised concern over the new Walker Registration Form which has replaced the old OHQ. Marden Walking for Health continues to go from strength to strength with very good attendances each week.

d. **David Hardwick** (Maintenance Team) – David has been working along with the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Landscape Partnership Scheme on 2 circular routes. Gates, stiles and paths have been improved to allow easier access.

[www.stiperstonesandcorndon.co.uk](http://www.stiperstonesandcorndon.co.uk)

Work has also been carried out improving paths below Darwin Gardens, Dr Field and Frankwell.

e. **Bill Hodges** – Bill is continuing with his path surveys.

f. **Trevor Allison** – Trevor reported that he has now finished his epic task of surveying the Parishes of Shropshire. Trevor is now evaluating some of the problem areas such as legal dead ends etc.

\*Clare mentioned that Shona Butter is producing a set of Land Owner Guidance Notes highlighting the responsibilities Land Owners have in regards to ROWs.

Action: Bob Coalbran would like a copy for Telford & Wrekin

#### 4. Walking Coordinator Updates

a. Walking for Health - Walking for Health are introducing a new database on the 18<sup>th</sup> May. Shrewsbury Walking for Health have started their summer evening walks at the beginning of May with good attendances at each walk.

b. Shropshire Walking festivals - Mick Dunn reported that both the Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival and the Bishops Castle Walking Festival had been very successful with numbers up on last year's events. The Whitchurch Walking Festival takes places this weekend (15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> May).

c. Shropshire Way route 16 & 17 – Mick thanked Bob Coalbran and the volunteers who were responsible for producing the pdfs and surveying and way marking routes.

d. P3 and Volunteering Update – In the absence of Helen Beresford, Mick gave the following P3 & Volunteering update.

There are currently 69 active P3 groups across the county. New groups in the Central area have been established in Uffington and Bicton. Helen is currently



promoting the P3 offer in Worthen and Shelve. New groups have also been set up in Llanfair Waterdine, Clee St Margaret, Tong, Alvely and Wheathill.

Priority Parishes in the Central Area for P3 development are Rushbury and Cardington. Priorities in the rest of the county are Ellesmere, Welshampton, Chelmarsh, Sellatyn & Gobowen, Mainstone and Wem. These areas have been identified by those parishes which have the most outstanding maintenance issues.

**5. Outdoor Recreation Updates:** Clare Fildes updated the forum on the following points:

a. **Walking Forum Chair** – John Newnham kindly agreed to take on the role of chair for the Central Shropshire Walking forum. A short workshop will be held at the next forum to establish priorities for the CSWF. Action: Mick to arrange a short meeting with John and Clare prior to the next meeting.

b. **Funding** – Clare informed the Forum that Public Health Funding had been secured for the financial year 2015/16 but outdoor partnerships must still make £250,000 savings this year.

c. **Website and Display Equipment** – Clare showed the forum the new Outdoor Partnership branding and gave an update on the new website. \* Bob Coalbran asked if the new website will include walks in the Telford and Wrekin area. Clare commented that Telford and Wrekin would be one of the partners targeted after the website was launched.

d. **Natural Happiness Initiative** – Clare discussed a potential new project that is being planned. The aspiration is to work with people from our most deprived communities to improve physical and mental health through volunteering and other activities associated with our natural, greenspaces; thus getting inactive people active, reducing loneliness and isolation and improving community spirit and a sense of belonging by caring for and improving our precious parks, sites and play areas.

People will be encouraged to improve their skills and learning, increasing confidence to make decisions locally; building relationships between local people, increasing 'ownership' of greenspaces and understanding the impact this can have on their happiness and wellbeing.

**6. The Big Path Watch** - John Newnham updated the forum on the Ramblers Big Path Watch 2015 project which will be launched on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. The Big Pathwatch is an initiative aimed at encouraging communities to survey their rights of way network (footpaths, bridleways and byways) in England and Wales, and then to report their findings, both good and bad, via a purpose-built app or on the Ramblers website. Once the survey closes later in the year, the Ramblers aim to produce the first comprehensive nationwide analysis of the condition of our paths. John and the Shrewsbury Ramblers are currently planning their involvement in the Big Pathwatch.

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/join-the-big-pathwatch.aspx>

**7. The Shropshire Way** - Audrey Menhinick raised the subject of reinstating the original Shropshire Way Route. The Shropshire way has expanded in recent years

and now incorporates a number of circular routes bearing little resemblance to the original route. Audrey would like to investigate the possibility of reinstating and way marking the “Original Shropshire Way” with help from the Shrewsbury Ramblers.  
Action: Mick to discuss with Clare and Deb Hughes and arrange a meeting as necessary.

**6. AOB**

**7. Date of next meeting:**

**2pm – 4pm. Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015, Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY26ND**

# Southern Walking Forum

Notes from 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting

The Greene Room, Wistanstow Village Hall, Craven Arms

**10 am – 12.00 noon Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015**

**Attendees:** Sue Jones ( *Ramblers*), Helen d’Albert ( *Shropshire Council*), Clare Fildes ( *Shropshire Council*), Keith Pybus ( *Shropshire Way Assoc.*), Chris Chillingworth ( *Ludlow P3 & WFH*), Val Simpson ( *Cleobury Mortimer WAW and CCL tourism*), Joy Howells ( *Stiperstones and Corndon Hill County LPS*), Nigel McDonald ( *Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership*), Tim Simmons ( *Shropshire Council*), Gill Mortimer ( *South Shropshire Ramblers /WAW/ Ludlow WFH*), Michael Holland ( *Ludlow P3*), ( *Ramblers area secretary/ Rail Rambles*), Dick Bailey ( *WAW Much Wenlock*), Helen Beresford ( *Shropshire Council*), Charles Edwards ( *P3*)

**Apologies:** Peter James, Ted Laidlar, Rick Summers, Alison Caffyn, Merle Lippit, Joy Nisbet, Steve Levers. Mike Beazley, Catherine Collier, Marion Law, Tish Dockerty, Joy Howells, Ray Hughes.

Notes of Meeting	Action
<p><b>WW1 walks project: Priorities / Partnerships / Principle</b>  Overview provided by K.P. about WW1 walks project. Stage 2 funding bid approaching, project proposals to be submitted by Sept. Next World War Anniversaries Meeting One to consider is on 27.04.15. Opportunity to bid for Heritage Lottery funding to fund the next part of the project.</p> <p>Excellent turn out on WW1 guided walks, Much Wenlock keen to provide a further two themed walks.</p> <p>Valuable partnerships formed as result of this project, involving local individuals and community groups including P3, Mary Webb Society, Wilfred Owen Association Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust, Bruce Bairnsfather Society, Arriva Trains and others. Mary Webb School Pontesbury plan to film some of the 2014 War Walks stories.</p> <p>Case studies to demonstrate the value of the work and the partnership working would be very useful.</p> <p>Val is leading development of the next walk- on August 9<sup>th</sup> Cleobury Mortimer, <i>Walking in the footsteps of a survivor</i>- story of Simon Evans’ great courage.</p> <p>K.P. outlined how the project in 2014/15 provided a good example of putting walking centre stage.</p>	

**It was agreed we should fulfil the promise, working with the WW1 Anniversary team to bid for funding for stage 2 of the project.**

C.F. suggested that we have a countywide meeting to explore further and also capture the details from the work and walks done so far, this feedback will serve to strengthen a funding bid.

**C.F.** to ask  
**Liz Evans**  
( *Walking  
Coordinator -  
North Shropshire  
Area*) to arrange

**Overview of the top three priorities identified by the members of at the last meeting, for action by the Southern Forum:**

*(Given the detail needed to cover the items, only 1 and 3 were able to be covered in any detail during this meeting.)*

**1. Volunteer Recruitment :**

**P3:** H.B. provided details on target areas for recruitment and new groups now formed.

- Priority Areas – Identified by areas which have the most outstanding issues

Cardington

Rushbury – May struggle here – Hoped to go through WFH but not really viable

Mainstone

Wistanstow

Chelmarsh – Tim has identified a number of tasks that could be addressed immediately, was hope of linking to WFH but this seems unlikely

Ellesmere (North)

Selattyn and Gobowen (North)

Wem (North)

Worthen and Shelve (Central) – Working with LPS potentially

- New Groups

Llanfair Waterdine – Really positive start there, some very keen members, had 1 work day

Clee St Margaret - Very keen co-ordinator, work started on some Byways

Wheathill

Alveley and Romsley – Hopefully forge links to SVCP

Tong

Bicton (Central)

Uffington (Central)

Pulverbatch – Have approached PC and will be advertising a

meeting there shortly

Difficulties have been experienced in getting a group going in Craven Arms, so could links be made in some way with Discovery Centre to help encourage a P3 group to start up?

Idea raised- could they have *Walking Ambassadors* at the Discovery Centre; who could act as experts who are around at weekends to answer questions about walking opportunities in the local vicinity?

**Walking for Health:** H.d'A. gave an overview on WFH in the South Shropshire area.

- Current target areas for recruitment of Volunteer walk leaders:

Clun – has 2 walk leaders, further local leaders would be helpful.

Craven Arms - aim to restart in next few months and move meeting point for these walks. Walk numbers were low, group has only one walk leader. Plan to change start point to Discovery Centre – suitable walks, friendly atmosphere and social element of café for end of walk.

Urgently need more Volunteer walk leaders to support this group.

Walk leader training is free: a fairly informal one day course. Ongoing support available from Walking Coordinator and other trained leaders. Following the course volunteers shadow and then co-lead a walk. When they feel ready, they lead their own WFH walk Training in Craven Arms and Shrewsbury approx. four times a year in both areas.

- 2 new groups started and 27 Volunteer walk leaders trained in last 12 months.

Promotional methods currently used were discussed and opportunities explored.

### How can we recruit Volunteers?

**K.P. asked if all members could help to use their contacts to spread the word about the volunteering opportunities available in the services and areas identified. K.P. also suggested perhaps developing a nucleus of activity in a few of the target areas to bring people to action could act as a catalyst for developing P3 groups?**

**G.M offered to put article advertising the volunteering opportunities for WFH walk leaders in Ramblers newsletter**

H.B. / H.d'A/ ALL

<p>(produced three times a year.) <b>Area Council mentioned as another possibility- H.d'A. to contact Marion Law / Peter Carr to ask if could attend the next meeting in July and raise this as an opportunity for their members?</b></p> <p><b>2. Reviewing promoted routes – prioritising and identifying gaps</b></p> <p>T.S. reported the ROW team receives some complaints from Holiday companies who attempt to use some of the lesser used routes that often have ongoing maintenance issues. <b>Idea proposed: to contact the main walking holiday enterprises and work together with them to match walks with the most suitable routes.</b></p> <p>C.F.- routes better placed to go from a café or pub rather than individual B&amp;Bs as greater footfall. Need for more collaborative working with and between B&amp;Bs raised, rather than working in isolation – to develop/ promote suitable local walk routes to benefit all in area.</p> <p><b>3. Discovery Centre as a Walking Hub –</b></p> <p>C.C. unable to make today's meeting. C.E. reported that following our last S.F. meeting; V.S, K.P, N. McD, C.C and C.E. met to discuss the idea.</p> <p>Mission is to promote walking, and increase visitors and revenue. New Manager Jan Radford starting in June. Ideas discussed- specific walks such as forthcoming bluebell walk, K.P book launch with possible walk, Shuttle bus- stop off at C.A. was tried in past but poor take up so not viable.</p> <p><b>Discovery Centre to feedback to the next S.F. meeting if they have decided to go ahead with the idea of having it as a walking hub and then group can discuss how we can help?</b></p> <p><b>C.F. suggested could we have a subgroup to include businesses / major accommodation providers / HF Holidays etc. Could Catherine Collier organise?</b></p> <p><b>Walkers are Welcome:</b></p> <p>New Walkers are Welcome Leaflets have been printed. <b>H.d'A organising distribution to WaW towns and major tourist facilities across county.</b> Reserving small number for distribution next year.</p> <p>C.F. thanked Hd'A for picking up project and all work carried out to complete delivery of this publication.</p> <p>Excellent article in Australian Walking Magazine has given Shropshire publicity highlighting WaW Scheme.</p>	<p>H.d'A / G.M.</p> <p>C.F.</p> <p>C.C. and working party.</p> <p>C.C.</p> <p>H.d'A.</p>
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**Leaflet distribution:**

Lesson from last month's Acton Scott Leaflet Swap: businesses want this event held before the season starts and only once a year.

Idea of a coordinated volunteer run leaflet distribution network raised. Anticipate this would be difficult to maintain and would need income generation ability to sustain.

AONB continue to put leaflets out on Library buses etc. and distribute through year as much as able.

**Update on Council Funding**

C.F. advised group Public Health Funding has been secured for this year. Job descriptions of Walking Coordinators to be reviewed. Savings having to be made; further staffing reduction not expected, but it will have a major impact on all other spending.

Due to the dynamic nature of the meeting and plentiful and productive discussions at this meeting it was not possible to cover all the agenda items listed.

Plans for future meetings and the geographical area covered by the Southern Forum were debated and the following was agreed: **that the group becomes the Shropshire Hills Forum and C.F. and T.S. to meet to discuss possible formation of a separate forum for the Bridgnorth and Severn Valley area – looking at whom to involve and need to ensure some overlap with Cleobury Mortimer and M. Wenlock come into both areas.**

**Agreed there should be 3 meetings of the Shropshire Hills Forum a year with set meeting dates in February, June and October. It was decided given the close proximity of June and the points raised from this meeting for action, that it would be best this year to hold the next meeting in Oct. suggestion made for future meetings in June that we hold as a walk/ event and gather main discussion and action points at end.**

**Any sub groups that are working parties looking at the specific projects will be in addition.**

**Working parties to look at the top 3 priority areas the group identified for action to be set up before the next meeting.**

**Working parties to feedback resulting achievements at the next meeting.**

C.F. / T.S.

ALL

ALL

**Dates for next meetings set as follows:**

*Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015*

*Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016*

*June 2016 date to be confirmed nearer the time.*

**C.E. to enquire if we can come to an arrangement with Discovery Centre to hold meetings there? It would provide a better opportunity for leaflet swapping.**

**C.E. / C.C.**