

Notes from Shropshire Hills Forum meeting:

10 – 12.00: Friday 3rd June 2016, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre.

Welcome and Introductions

Feedback focused on the 3 priorities identified by members:

Promoted routes:

War Walks– feedback and future plans (Keith *Pybus*):

War walks progressing well. Average at 3-4 miles as they are interpretative walks. Aiming for better mix of Saturday / Sundays for future walks. Usual start time is 11am.

Themes useful way to get coverage for walks. Ludlow walk gained coverage in the Shropshire Magazine 'The Courage of Ludlow', (based on houses in the centre of town who lost men in the War). Good turnout.

Programme details fixed for this year. Rest of scheduled walks also mapped out. KP working with Brown Clee walkers and Ditton Priors History group on August walk, based on Conscientious Objectors camp and the Finnish Sailors at Burwarton. Sept walk – Much Wenlock.

Shropshire Way (*Clare Fildes and Keith Pybus*)

CF. Ramblers made request for a single Shropshire Way path. Currently rather a cobweb of routes. CF showed map of proposed main route, this is based on existing route, and achieve a single route for those who wish to walk as a long distance path. This route will be sent to OS mapping and feature on SGO (Shropshire's Great Outdoors) website. New clearer waymarks will replace old ones.

PJ and Clun P3 have volunteered to re-waymark route in Clun Parish. Group discussed need for arrow to be incorporated in the waymark version used. Colouring TBC- current favoured is a cerise pink. Rambler's paper on visibility would be useful to look at – **KP** to locate paper and provide to **CF**.

11 out of 12 at meeting in favour of white surround and enclosed arrow. 1 member in favour of WM minus the white surround.

ML to feedback to **Audrey Menhinick** (Shrewsbury Ramblers) the recommendation by the Forum is the waymark with the white outer circle and arrow within the white circle as the clearer image.

Suggestions made by the group: Mocking up a short section of route to check clarity, and printing arrow in line with the beak of the bird. HB: When logo and WM is located, the arrow should follow line of travel and the arrow should be at 12 o'clock to the design.

CF. Costs rise if have more than one colour. Key to main and minor routes will be indicated on rectangular signage located on posts. Timing for changes and OS mapping discussed. Digital OS has changed but current OS paper maps feature the previous version. Main route will be shown as SW on OS maps, the other minor branches off the SW will be shown on OS map as ROW, and will appear in publications and on the ground.

ML: Shropshire Way association (SWA) has been reformed. Proposal to be made at July's meeting to make SW a constituted group. This would enable group to apply for grants.

ML: At SWA's recent meeting it was agreed need to get WM's in place in one go - work planned for October 2016. Old waymarks to be removed. To minimise confusion Forum noted clear instructions needed to P3 groups and others involved. Hd'A: Could we use companies with social responsibility volunteering to assist? HB/ ML: Consideration how best to address crossover into Telford. Use of bands on lamp posts discussed. Telford use aluminium finger posts.

Mayflower project: (update from *Keith Pybus*)

He had approached our MP for help with where and how to obtain funding. This unfortunately was not forthcoming. CF will now follow up.

'Grow Cook Learn' plans for developing the Discovery Centre as a walking hub (SHDC)

CE/CC: Continuing to develop centre as a walking hub. Routes reced for leaflets, and centre selected by Mouchel but unfortunately no funding received. If anyone knows of alternative funding, contact CE or CC. ML- would Ramblers holidays funding be an option? CE to contact Peter Carr to investigate.

KP led recent bluebell walk. KP to work with Centre looking at further themed walks. Currently working on autumn walks programme. CC has wonderful photos of bluebells if anyone needs these for illustration on literature. Offa's Dyke Path talk by Rob Dingle 7th July 7.30pm. Walking for Health goes out on a walk from the centre each Wednesday and a Nordic walking leader also runs regular walks. Reminder centre is run by a charity 'Grow Cook Learn'. Visitor numbers up by 15%. Idea of food walks discussed. Wild food themed walks project done some years ago by AONB- CC to contact **NMcD** for details.

Volunteering updates:

P3 (*Helen Beresford*) -see attached notes

P3 distribution of groups is located on Shropshires Great Outdoors Website page.

TL: could we share our good work and achievements with other local councils? Some liaison with other counties has been taking place.

Walking for Health (Helen d'Albert) -see attached notes

Wild Team (Helen Beresford on behalf of Simon Brown)

Craven Arms and Oswestry groups going well, please contact if any works you would like Wild Teams to assist with. Transport volunteers needed. Contact SB if you know of anyone who would like to help with this.

Discovery Centre

Had Volunteer-drop-in-day on 27th April, interest received from 6-7 people, most wanted outdoor roles and were referred on to SB and the Wild Team. Walking for Health had a display. Looking for helpers in Café and those to talk to visitors about walks and what is available in the area if anyone knows of anyone please contact CC.

National Trust - no one present to feedback at meeting today.

Volunteer Celebration event: (Helen Beresford and Helen d'Albert)

End September? Date TBC. Venue: Nesscliffe village hall and surrounds.

Request made for photos of project work with few brief words from volunteers, to showcase achievements on display boards and appear on Photo slideshow through the lunch. Please **all** send photos and information to **Helen Beresford**.

Ideas floated for event: Having a P3 training session as part of the day? (Comment also made that it may be useful to run a P3 training course at Disco. Centre for brush cutting at some point). KP- 5 min First World War Centenary video including War Walks should be available by then. Themed walks?

Volunteer Supplement 'News from the Chair': (Hd'A, HB and KP)

'News from the chair' idea floated with the Forum. **KP** happy to provide a short piece for the publication, next issue due out in July. Bluebell walk has been used for the forthcoming publication. Aim is to show work carried out and the benefits. Quotes and feedback useful to include. KP wished to highlight the qualifications of the Forum present and gathered info from those present at the end of the meeting to put into the piece for the Volunteer supplement.

KP noted that all our themed walks are made possible by the work done to ensure paths stay accessible.

Bob Hockenhall Midlands today- looking for good news stories if anyone wishes to know details CF can put you in touch.

It was noted that there is a need to collect volunteer hours from others in the Forum, e.g. KP, to help highlight for funding: **KP / CF**

'The Walking Book group': (KP)

KP – highlighted there was a Walking book group started by Hd'A's predecessor Ian Permain. Mary Gill coordinates group which is going well.

Hedging and finger posts: (Ted Laidlar)

Problem with damage done to posts from Hedgers and farm contractors cutting too close to the post in Hopton Castle area. Metal finger posts suggested by DH Area officer. ML felt this would be backed by the Ramblers. HB recommended putting an insert at the top of post to make replacement easier. Suggestion from group: Could a higher flag post be attached to the top of posts painted white to highlight these and make more visible for the hedge cutters? Note made that if an area is particularly vulnerable with consistent incidents then a metal post can be put in. ML- landowners need to be aware of the preservation and care of the posts and thus advise their Hedge cutters to take appropriate care.

Council update: (Clare Fildes)

There has been a recent management restructure within Outdoor Partnerships Department. Manager Deb Hughes is taking voluntary redundancy and leaves at the end of June. An Enterprise Manager is the job role that will replace this in the structure- congratulations to CF who is taking up this role from July. CF will continue to lead on the Health and Economy Team, including Walking for Health, the Wild Teams and LEADER. The new management structure is attached.

Paul Butter has been promoted to the post of Contract Development Officer and will be leading on securing more commercial work through Shropshire Outdoor Contracting.

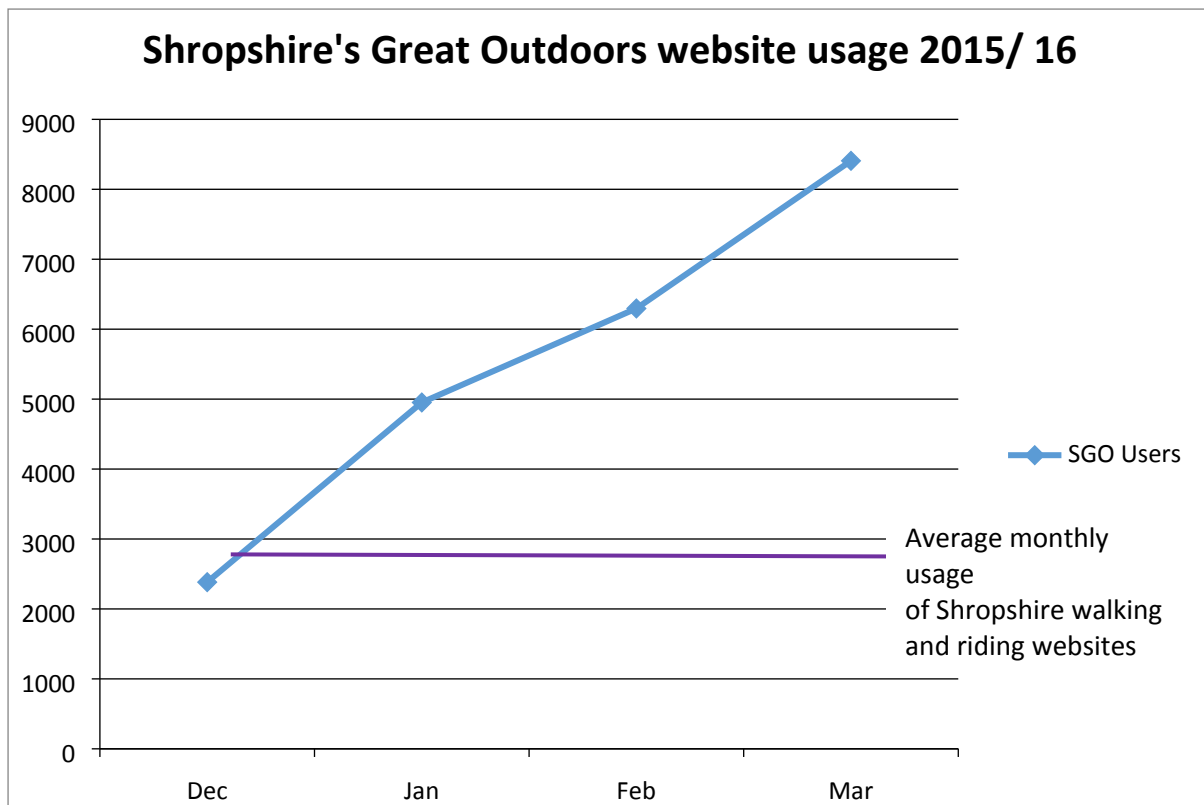
An Enterprise Plan for Country Parks and Countryside Heritage Sites has been agreed. The focus will be on income generation and an update on this and a map of the site are attached.

The health outcomes of the team are funded by Public Health until March 2017. There are concerns over funding from April 2017, when ring-fencing ebds and there will be pressures to spend elsewhere. A funding application for a 3-4 year Big Lottery funded project called Healthy Shropshire Outdoors is being developed. A summary of this project is attached.

Ploughing and cropping – Enforcement team leading a project on this at the moment, good progress made. New guidelines for Farmers leaflet – very positive feedback from members of the Forum to this.

Outdoor Partnerships survey results being collated and will be available soon.

Excellent results from Shropshire's Great Outdoors website, achieving great results- see graph below:



AONB update – (Nigel McDonald) – please see update sheet attached.

Caring for God’s Acre: Cherishing Churchyards Week (Keith Pybus)

Walk taking place on Sunday 5th – Halford and Stokesay.

AOB & reminder of next forum meeting date: 14th October– Venue TBC

Butterfly ID training workshop on 18th June 10-3 pm Discovery Centre.

Dates for your diary:



LED BY IWM

War Walks on the Home Front, Sat 23rd July. **Shropshire VCs** Hopesay to Sibdon circular walk – the eldest daughter of the Hancock family – designers and makers to this day of the Victoria Cross is buried at Sibdon – KP will tell the stories of Shropshire’s 4 VCs en route. To book contact KP.

Sun 7th August. Cleobury Mortimer **Simon Evans walk – second section** – see attached information sheet.

Sat 27th August. **From the Baltic to Burwarton** Rendez-vous Ditton Priors church.

How 100 Finnish Sailors worked in the woods and may have built the first sauna. The Conscientious Objectors' camp; they worked in the quarry on Brown Clee. In 1918 one of their huts was set alight – arson. Linear walk transport back to cars. To book contact KP.

Sat 10th Sept. War Walk on the Home Front **Wenlock's War Hits Home** Awaiting details from the organisers