

## Central Shropshire Walking Forum

### Notes of Meeting

2pm, Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017

The Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

#### Attendees:

John Newnham (Chair)	Shrewsbury Ramblers	<a href="mailto:john.newnham@btinternet.com">john.newnham@btinternet.com</a>
Bill Hodges	Shrewsbury Ramblers	<a href="mailto:vibill@phonecoop.coop">vibill@phonecoop.coop</a>
Trevor Allison	Shrewsbury ramblers	<a href="mailto:eta-06@tiscali.co.uk">eta-06@tiscali.co.uk</a>
Bob Coalbran	Wellington Walkers are Welcome	<a href="mailto:bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com">bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com</a>
Paula Doherty	Telford & East Shropshire Ramblers	<a href="mailto:pauladoherty@tiscali.co.uk">pauladoherty@tiscali.co.uk</a>
Naomi Wrighton	Walk about Wrekin	<a href="mailto:info@wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk">info@wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk</a>
Geoff Sproson	Marches LDWA	<a href="mailto:marches@sproson.com">marches@sproson.com</a>
Dick Bailey	Much Wenlock WaW and WfH	<a href="mailto:gdickson.bailey@virgin.net">gdickson.bailey@virgin.net</a>
Clare Fildes	Outdoor Partnerships	<a href="mailto:clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk">clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk</a>
Mick Dunn	Outdoor Partnerships	<a href="mailto:mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk">mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk</a>
David Hardwick	Outdoor Partnerships	<a href="mailto:david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk">david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk</a>

#### Apologies:

Anne Suffolk  
Audrey Menhinick  
Phil Wadlow  
Helen Beresford

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions (JN)

John opened the meeting at 2pm

#### 2. Feedback/Action from Previous Meeting

There was no actions from the previous meeting.

#### 3. Lost Ways Project (JN)

Ian Barnes has attended a session at Archives with Lucy Mcfarlane and will share with other RA members who are working on the lost ways project. Trevor continues to identify issues that could become lost ways projects. Geoff suggested contacting the Shropshire Mines trust to identify potential Lost Ways in the Snailbeach area.

#### 4. Volunteering

a. Central Shropshire Maintenance Officer (**DH**) – the P3 groups have been very busy in Central Shropshire, in particular the Shrewsbury Ramblers P3 group who have been carrying out three sessions each month (a lot out of area). Condoover P3 have recently carried out a lot of maintenance around the Dorrington area.

b. P3 (**HB**) – P3 groups across the county have carried out over 7621 hours of maintenance between April and December 2016. New groups have recently been started in Pulvebatch, Cockshutt, and Marton. There are now 71 P3 groups across Shropshire. New groups will potentially be set up in Sellatyn and Gobowen.

Church Stretton P3 group now have a new coordinator, which means they will continue with tasks next year.

Helen will be asking for the running cost grant requests in February so they can be processed in April. 56 people attended the ROW training course in November, funded by the Meres and Mosses LPS. The training was held at Whixall and consisted of presentations on ROW law and practical maintenance training. There will also be a brush cutter course before March 2017.

Bod asked if another ROW law session could be arranged. **Action Clare agreed to approach Shona Butter to see if this was possible.**

Volunteers will soon be ready to survey the Southern Section of the Shropshire Way Main Route to look for defective furniture and other issues. Helen is looking for more volunteers to assist. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Helen at [Helen.Beresford@Shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.Beresford@Shropshire.gov.uk)

- c. **Walking for Health (MD)** – The next Volunteer Walk Leader Training Courses will be held on:  
Fri 03<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2017 at the Shirehall in Shrewsbury – contact [mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Thu 02 Mar 2017 at Craven Arms – contact [helen.dalbert@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:helen.dalbert@shropshire.gov.uk)

5. **Walkers are Welcome Shrewsbury (JN)** – Unfortunately, the bid for Shrewsbury to become a Walkers are Welcome town failed. John hosted a representative from the WaW national committee but it was deemed that Shrewsbury was too large to become a WaW town. John with the help of Bob and Naomi are investigating the possibility of a cluster of smaller villages (Bayston Hill, Uffington, Pontesbury etc) forming a WaW cluster around Shrewsbury.

6. **Shropshire Way Circular Route (JN)** – The Shropshire Way main route has now been established in principle and a logo for way marking has been agreed. A funding application has been submitted to the RA Holidays trust to assist with funding to waymark and promote the route.

Volunteers will be used to help way mark the main route and carry out repairs and maintenance starting in the South.

The need to keep route changes to a minimum was reiterated. This is because the main route needs to simplify the Shropshire Way network rather than complicate things further.

## 7. **Outdoor Partnerships Update (CF)**

a. **Shropshire Great Outdoors Membership Scheme** - We have launched a new membership scheme in a bid to secure the future of the Shropshire Council managed Country Parks and Heritage Sites, and to help maintain ROWs above the statutory requirements. The scheme costs £3 a month (£36 a year). More details and how to join can be found at <http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/join/>  
The new scheme has been devised to help address the threat to funding for Parks and Sites in particular and to secure these assets within the Council. Promotion of the scheme through partner organisations and networks would be appreciated.

b. **Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board** – it is being proposed that the Local Access Forum is restructured to make Outdoor Recreation in Shropshire:

- More financially independent and resilient
- More strategically important across a range of sectors
- More action driven

The priorities for the next two years would be:

- Delivery of the Enterprise Plan- Business Planning, fundraising and income generation, including the development of a charitable organisation and promoting of the contracting team
- Development of the Countryside Access Strategy 2018-2028
- Promotion and marketing
- Increasing awareness of the benefits of outdoor recreation for health, the local economy and the environment
- Influencing and advising other departments, organisations and local and national policy
- Community engagement and volunteering

The Strategy Board would take on the role of the Local Access Forum as well as other duties and this would be reflected in a new Constitution.

Strategy Board Membership

### **User Groups**

The Ramblers Association  
British Horse Society

### **Other relevant interests**

Local Nature Partnership  
Health and Wellbeing Board

Cycling Forum (not currently running)  
 Energize- County Sports Partnership  
 Disability Network  
 Walking for Health  
 Parish Paths Partnerships

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership  
 Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country LPS

**Council Members**  
 Portfolio Holder

**Owners and occupiers:**

CLA  
 NFU  
 National Trust  
 Shropshire Wildlife Trust

**Individuals with specific expertise**

Fundraising and income generation  
 Outdoor Recreation development and strategy

Other people will be needed in sub-groups to deliver specific activity relevant to their skills and experience.

A suggestion was made for a Walkers are Welcome representative to sit on the Board. **Action- CF to suggest this in discussions.** Some representatives will fit more with specific sub-groups but this all needs to be considered.

There was some concern about the development of a group with a wider remit might distract from the Rights of Way focus of the Local Access Forum. CF reinforced the point that for the development of the Rights of Way network to be taken more seriously in the future, it needed to be perceived as more relevant to other agendas, such as the Local Enterprise Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board. The development of the Board is necessary to integrate those who can influence these agendas.

**c. Countryside Access Strategy 2008-2018 Review** – a review of the countryside strategy will be held in 2017. The aims are:

- Countryside Access- ‘Ensure that the access network meets the needs of Shropshire residents and visitors whilst recognising the special qualities of the landscape’
- Making Local Journeys- ‘increase peoples’ use of the Rights of Way network for local journeys to support a sustainable transport network’
- Health and Wellbeing- ‘improve people’s health by encouraging more people to be active in the countryside’
- Access for Everyone- ‘increase the opportunities for hard to reach groups to access the Shropshire Countryside’
- Visiting Shropshire’s Countryside- ‘to provide a high quality access network that supports a thriving tourism economy’

Time line TBC

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Set up Working Group with representatives from LAF	Jan-17	CF
Draft review for consultation	Jan-17	CF
Consultation on current strategy and successes and issues from past 10 years. Future priorities. Including user and Town and Parish Council Surveys	Feb 2017 to June 2017	CF
Consultation with owners and managers of land with PRoW	Feb 2017 to June 2017	CF
Formal feedback from LAF and Scrutiny Committees	Jun-17	CF
Publish review of 2008-18 Strategy	Jul-17	CF
Assessment of Public Rights of Way and UCR network- Definitive Map, promoted routes, opportunities to further enhance	Jul-17	SB
Strategic review and consideration of upcoming legislative changes and resources	Jul-17	SB
Agree new vision statement	Sep-17	CF
Publish draft plan	Sep-17	CF
Consultation- users, businesses, landowners, Scrutiny Committee	Oct-17	CF
Report to Cabinet	Nov-17	GC
Publish Final ROWIP	Dec-17	CF
Sign off by Full Council	Dec-17	GC

It was suggested that not too much time was taken on the development of the new strategy, as it could be seen to be distracting from the 'day job'. CF agreed that there was a balance to be struck but that this was a statutory document and time would be needed to get it right.

## 8. Group Updates

**LDWA (GS)** – The Marches LDWA next challenge walk will take place on Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017. The South Shropshire Circular is a 25 mile challenge walk starting in Norbury. This annual walk is always popular and this year's walk is full. The annual Tour de Marches (Sept 2017) and the Christmas walks will take places as normal but unfortunately the Wenlock Olympian Walk will not take places this year due to a lack of support staff. Details of the Marches LDWA and walks can be found at <https://www.ldwa.org.uk/Marches>

**Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers (PD)** – The definitive map for T&W is in the process of being completed. <http://shropshireramblers.org.uk/groups/telford/>

**Wellington Walkers are Welcome (BH)** – The paths group have been busy working on the paths in Limekiln Wood and are hopeful that heavier work will be completed in the next few months. Two people have received brush cutter training and are in the process of getting a brush cutter. We are working on a leaflet of walks to the North of the town. This is part of a longer project called Wellington 360.

The wellington Walking festival will take place in the second week of September 2017  
<http://www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/>

**Walk about Wrekin WfH (NW)** – Currently struggling to recruit new walk leaders and will be concentrating efforts to provide short level one walks this year.

**Much Wenlock WaW & WfH (DB)** – WaW held their annual walking weekend in September with over 100 walkers taking part. This years walking weekend will take place from the 1 – 4 Sep 17. Walking for Health are seeking to recruit new walk leaders to continue to support the large number of Health walkers in Much Wenlock. The P3 group have be active maintaining the paths around the town.

**Shrewsbury Ramblers (JN)** – The new Shrewsbury Ramblers programme will be produced in February. Six volunteers work very hard to ensure there is a varied walk programme for the group. The AGM was held in November with guest speakers and 30+ people attending. P3 group has been very active.  
<http://www.shrewsburyramblers.org.uk/>

**Bill Hodges** – Bill is continuing to survey the footpaths in and around Shrewsbury and is planning to extend this further North.

## 9. AOB

**(TA)** – A level 2 bid has been submitted for funding for the St Winifred's pilgrimage walk. The Ramblers path watch is now up and running again.

**(BH)** – There was recently a national campaign by cyclist to be allowed to cycle on all public ROW. Details of which have been passed to the Ramblers for further investigation.

**(MD)** – All the major walking events and festivals are being added to the Shropshire Great Outdoors Events Calendar once dates have been confirmed <http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/events/> as well as being advertised on Facebook and Twitter. Please pass on the details of any events we don't have details of. (List attached)

I have recently put 70 walking routes onto the View Ranger smart phone app.  
<http://www.viewranger.com/en-GB>

## 10. Date of Next Meeting

TBC