

Central Shropshire Walking Forum

Notes of Meeting

2 pm, Wednesday 15th May 2015

The Lantern, Meadow farm Drive, Shrewsbury

Attendees:

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

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 18th 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 (15th – 17th 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 13th 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 26th August 2015, Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY26ND