

NOTES FROM NORTH SHROPSHIRE WALK FORUM

MONDAY 27TH APRIL 2015

Present: Trevor Allison(Ramblers), Colin Chandler(Ramblers), Mark Cuthbert-Brown(P3), Tony Eccleston(Wem Walkers), Liz Evans(W4H), Clare Fildes(Outdoor Partnerships), Ernie Heath(Wem Walkers), Jane Ing(P3), Andy Lipa(Outdoor Partnerships), Ann Moore(P3), Neil Moore(P3) Alison Parker(Ramblers), Barrie Stephens(W4H).

Meres and Mosses

Luke Neal is always interested to hear from groups who might want to apply for community grants. This could be for leaflets, but could also be for walk leader training, a series of funded walks, footpath improvements/audits, or anything else he has not thought of yet that increases awareness and access to the area.

Bluebell walk update – Wednesday 13th May

There are 5 spaces left if anyone wants to book. Alison thanked everyone who helped her organise and publicise this walk. She mentioned there was barbed wire on a gate, but as this does not actually prevent anyone going through, just not over, it was felt no action is required.

Trevor's Trek

Trevor has now finished walking the footpaths of Shropshire. He clocked up 10,000km, or 6,000 miles. He is thinking of doing Telford and Wrekin next. He will re-visit paths that were a particular problem to see what could be done about them, and has discovered ones he did not know existed!

Geo cache routes

There was a discussion about the possibility of using this as a way of encouraging more walking and new walkers to the area. Neil is going to research geocaching.com and talk to Meres and Mosses about using it as a possible project.

Villa Farm Progress Report

Whilst there is agreement from the landowner to the work, the rights of way team are still waiting for other landowners for permission to access their land. It was felt this was no progress as this has been the case for some years.

Walking for Health

Liz reported that walking for health still has many fewer walkers in north Shropshire compared to the rest of the county. Ellesmere, Shawbury and Hadnall remain the most successful groups with a core of excellent leaders. Baschurch is also doing well but is short of walk leaders. Market Drayton has taken on a life of its own this year and is now doing quite well. West Felton remains a small group, but now has a walk leader to look after it. Oswestry and Wem remain very low in numbers despite all attempts to publicise them. There is a new group in Harmer Hill on a Tuesday evening which will probably run throughout the summer. There is a monthly group from Meadowbrook sheltered housing in Gobowen which is unlikely to proceed due to low numbers unless walk leaders take it on. If anybody has any ideas for a new group or helping an existing one, please contact Liz.

Walkers are Welcome

Liz reported that Walkers are Welcome in Oswestry have a walk on Tuesday 12th May and will be doing the south west part of Oswald's Trail. It is a beautiful walk, and will take about 4 hours, so please bring provisions if you want to come. It starts at 10am from the Visitor Centre in Oswestry.

Walkers are Welcome in Whitchurch would like to remind everyone that their walking festival is the weekend of 15th, 16th and 17 May, so please have a look at their brochure to see the variety of walks and activities available, and support them.

It was felt the pictures in the new Walkers are Welcome booklet for Whitchurch were not very appealing. Nothing can be done about this print run, but if anyone has any better pictures they can be put on the online version.

Trefonen Hillwalk Weekend

This is from 22nd to 25th May 2015. If interested please check out their website info@trefonen-hillwalk.com

WW1 Walks

This is an ongoing project for the whole of Shropshire. There have been 4 leaflets done last year and 4 guided walks. This year will be the same. Jim Stabler will lead a walk on Saturday 29th August around Whixall moss.

Update and Chair

Clare confirmed funding from Public Health for another year, but this still requires more savings of £262,000 next year, and £58,000 the year after.

There is a new branding for volunteers to help with marketing. The Shropshire Great Outdoors logo will hopefully encourage new people to volunteering in our area.

There is a lottery application in progress for the heritage side, to develop both Nescliffe and the Cliffe, and another for East Oswestry.

The Pilgrimage Way is in progress and will use existing promoted routes.

Clare still needs to analyse the annual survey results, of which there was a disappointing 350 replies.

Clare requested a Chair be appointed for this meeting in future to allow Liz time to take notes.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be about prioritising issues that could be addressed in north Shropshire.

In Addition

Trevor mentioned a Ramblers initiative called Big Path Watch which will happen over a 3 month period, where people can register online to survey a km² and send the result back.

Trevor and Peter Carr are going to do BVPI (best value performance indicator) training, so they can survey footpaths. If anyone is interested please contact Trevor. The results for last year were 73% good quality which surprised everyone.

Next Meeting

Monday 20th July, 7.30pm, Ellesmere Town Hall.