

Shropshire Local Access Forum

Date: Wednesday, 13 April 2016

Shropshire Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday, 21 April 2016
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Shrewsbury 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

Name	Fields of Interest
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
Janet Mees-Robinson	Carriage Driving/Disabled Access/Tourism
Stewart Pickering	Motorised Vehicular Use/Countryside Volunteer/Walking
Roger Plowden	Landowner/Conservation Wildlife/Farming
Zia Robins	Horse Riding
Jim Stabler	Tourism, Walking and Disabled Access
Stuart West	Shropshire Council
Mark Weston	Horseriding/Carriage Driving/Voluntary Activities

Your Committee Officer is:

Linda Jeavons Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257716

Email: linda.jeavons@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Welcome, New Member Introductions and Membership Recruitment Update

2 Apologies for Absence

3 Minutes and any matters arising (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 15 October 2015.

4 Public Question Time

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

5 Declarations of Interest

6 Rail Crossings - Presentation by Network Rail

7 Local Access Forum National Conferences

Mark Weston and Jan Mees-Robinson will provide an update on the key points arising from the recent National Conferences.

8 Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme

Presentation by Pete Banford, Shropshire Hills LEADER Co-ordinator.

9 Parish Paths Partnership Update

Helen Beresford, Shropshire Outdoors Development Officer, Shropshire Council will be in attendance.

10 Bridges/Large Structures on the Network

Richard Knight, Rights of Way Team Leader, Shropshire Council will be in attendance.

11 Landowner Leaflet

Shona Butter, Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader, Shropshire Outdoors Partnerships to present.

12 Outdoor Partnerships Update

Deb Hughes, Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Manger, will be in attendance.

13 Feedback from other Forums and items for noting (Pages 7 - 54)

13.1 Items for Noting

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

- (a) Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Meeting – 25 June 2015
- (b) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum – 5 October 2015
- (c) Shropshire Hills Forum – 9 October 2015
- (d) North Walking Forum – 19 October 2015
- (e) Central Walking Forum – 27 November 2015
- (f) North Walking Forum – 25 January 2016
- (g) Shropshire Hills Forum – 5 February 2016
- (h) Central Walking Forum – 26 February 2016

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, 30 June 2016
Thursday, 20 October 2016
Thursday, 19 January 2017

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Shropshire Local Access Forum

<u>Committee and Date</u>
Shropshire Local Access Forum
11 February 2016

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2015 10.00 AM - 12.23 PM

Responsible Officer: Linda Jeavons
Email: linda.jeavons@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257716

Present

Trevor Allison, Stephen Bell, Gareph Boxley, Peter Carr, Alex Carson-Taylor, Janet Mees-Robinson, Roger Plowden, Zia Robins, Mark Weston and Leslie Winwood.

1 Elect a Chairman

RESOLVED:

That Mr Roger Plowden be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

2 Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Lee Chapman, Chris Chillingworth and Stewart Pickering.

4 Appoint a Vice Chairman

RESOLVED:

That Mr Mark Weston be appointed Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

5 Minutes and any matters arising

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 2 July 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Matters Arising

- With reference to Minute No. 42, Trevor Allison provided an update on The Big Pathwatch survey, which was ongoing and would conclude in 10 weeks' time. To date, nearly 49,000 1 km squares had been surveyed in England and Wales and overall over 30,000 positive comments and over 36,000 negative comments had been made. Out of 3,000 sq. kilometres in Shropshire 815 sq. km had been surveyed, with 680 positive comments and 1,250 negative comments submitted.

During a discussion the following points were noted:

- One member expressed the view that the survey was being undertaken from a walker's perspective so any outcomes on higher status routes would only be of benefit to walkers; and
- The results would be of use to the voluntary sector and would identify issues and areas where partnerships could work with councils.
- With reference to Minute No. 39, final paragraph, a member reiterated her concerns with regard to the high number of errors on the OS ITN mapping layer currently available on the Shropshire Council local view Outdoor Recreation map layer; as many minor public roads are shown as private any errors on the maps could lead to Sat-nav errors; and Shropshire Council had not digitised all maps and it was important that a copy of all maps should be made and kept secure. Shropshire Council had still not digitised the older highway maps and it was important that a copy of all maps were made and held secure.

All members of the Forum reiterated their concerns with regard to the potential that information could be 'lost' if transferred to other organisations, ie Mouchel, and requested that a copy should be made of all highway maps that were transferred out-of-house.

In response to comments, Shona Butter, Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader, explained that:

- The Integrated Transport Network mapping layer was a resource which provided information on the location of public and private roads. It was not clear whether the mapping could be used in a public capacity. She agreed to identify the purpose of the mapping and any safeguarding implications;
- The National Street Gazetteer was essentially smaller but more accurate; however, there were errors with the data and insufficient resources to provide an accurate picture at this time; and
- Some material, ie historic mapping, had transferred to Mouchel but she reiterated that historic mapping had been and would continue to be held secure. She agreed to raise the concerns of this Forum and explore the costings to copy a full set of maps.

6 Public Question Time

There were no public questions, statements or petitions received.

7 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

8 Canals and River Trust

Wendy Capelle, Waterway Manager, and Ani Sutton, Development and Engagement Manager, Canal & River Trust (CART) were in attendance and provided an overview

of the work of CART to protect, manage and improve the nation's canals and river navigations. A copy of the presentation could be viewed on the Shropshire Council website and would be appended to the signed minutes. A question and answer session followed, during which CART reiterated their willingness to work with all groups and communities in order to ensure waterways and access both on and off towpaths were made and continued to remain accessible and user-friendly to as many users as possible. In response to concerns raised regarding horse riding access, Mark Weston offered to act as the point of contact.

The Chairman thanked them for their attendance and excellent presentation.

(At this juncture, Councillor Les Winwood left the meeting and did not return.)

9 Lost Ways / Deregulation Bill

At this juncture and with reference to Minute No. 33 of the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2015 (Public QuestionTime – “A plea for the Lost Ways of Shropshire”), Shona Butter, Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader, drew attention to the question and response as attached at pages 11 – 13 of the report.

SB and Mark Weston provided an update on the position to date with regard to Discovering Lost Ways & The Deregulation Act 2015. A copy of the presentation could be viewed on the Shropshire Council website and would be appended to the signed minutes. The basis of the Deregulation Act was to try at the outset to get applications submitted of sufficient quality so as not to waste a local authority's time and hence a Basic Evidential Test would be introduced. When an application was received a local authority would examine it and decide whether to make an Order and would notify and enter into dialogue with the landowner to find out whether they would accept the evidence or would prefer an alternative route; an applicant would have the right of appeal; applications would be able to be transferred from one person to another; a local authority would be able to draft Orders; as a cost saving, there would no longer be a requirement to advertise the diversion in the press; and certain routes, ie those routes on the List of Streets, Gazeteer etc., would be exempt from the cut-off provision.

In response to questions from the floor, SB commented:

- That, to date, details of the Basic Evidential Test were unknown but this Forum would be appraised as soon as more information became available;
- If the local authority had initially consulted with landowners who then had suggested an alternative route, then ramblers could appeal but the local authority had the ability to disregard irrelevant objections/comments and determine the matter;
- There was already the ability for a group to submit a Definitive Map Order;
- SB agreed to check if there was a disc available listing all the Lost Ways and, if so, what information could be released;
- When changes to routes were advertised grid references were already included; and
- Evidence of historic and continual use, consultation/agreement with the landowner and claims submitted by a local authority would be used to protect

routes in use prior to cut-off and also those routes linked to rights of way with no status.

10 Shropshire Great Outdoors Website - Launch

Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Development Team Leader, was in attendance and via a live link drew attention to the new Shropshire's Great Outdoors website, which could be found at www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk. This was a "work-in-progress" project, with a possible launch date of spring 2016. She welcomed any feedback, comments, suggestions for links etc. and she could be contacted on 01743 255067 and/or email clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk.

A member reported that the Shropshire Great Outdoors website had an interactive map which now had the facility to show rights of way and UCRs separately or altogether so that omissions and gaps could be identified for lost ways.

Members of the Forum congratulated CF on a superb site and welcomed the inclusion of the interactive map.

11 Corporate Sponsorship

Alex Carson-Taylor provided an update on the developments that had taken place with regard to corporate sponsorship. A copy of the presentation could be viewed on the Shropshire Council website and would be appended to the signed minutes.

The meeting noted that Severn Valley Country Park had been identified as the pilot site with one of their aspiration's being the development of the visitor centre. In the ensuing debate, members of the Forum commented that the public transport links to the site were not good but noted that the site was accessible by other means and questioned if corporate sponsorship could be used to improve this aspect.

12 Feedback from other Forums and items for noting

Items for Noting

There were no items for noting.

Minutes / Papers:

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

- (i) North Shropshire Walk Forum – 26 January 2015
- (ii) North Shropshire Walk Forum – 27 April 2015
- (iii) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum – 8 June 2015
- (iv) North Shropshire Walk Forum – 20 July 2015
- (v) Central Shropshire Walking Forum – 26 August 2015

Future meetings:

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

- (a) Ploughing & Cropping – SB reported that a booklet on the responsibilities of landowners was currently being developed in consultation with the NFU;
- (b) Shooting over Rights of Way;
- (c) New LEADER Programme;
- (d) Update on Parish Path Partnerships;
- (e) Level Crossings – update on the Network Rail project to close level crossings in the future.

Following a discussion it was suggested that all members should give some consideration to the future membership of this Forum with an aspiration to provide input from a wide variety of backgrounds, skills and interests. Suggestions for future membership and representation/input included CART, Local Enterprise Partnership, Health & Wellbeing Board, cycling, public health, tourism and Shropshire Councillors; liaison with cross-border LAFs; and the importance of raising the public awareness of the work of LAF was also raised.

Future meeting dates:

Thursday, 11 February 2016

Thursday, 30 June 2016

Thursday, 20 October 2016

Thursday, 19 January 2017

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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Shropshire Hills
AONB Partnership

25 June 2015

9.30 am

Item



Public

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2015 9.30 - 11.15 AM

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Councillor George Chancellor (Chair)

Councillors Tim Barker (Vice Chairman), James Williamson (Vice Chairman), Cecilia Motley, David Turner, Chris Turley, Alison Caffyn, Dr Keith Bartlett, Gillian Binks, Veronica Cossons, Ian Dormor, Sue Jones, Jo Jury, Sue Lee, Hazel MacDowell, Ronald Repath, David C. Smith and Ms Donna Tavenor

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

1.1 The Chair welcomed Jo Jury (DEFRA), Rhona Goddard (Butterfly Conservation), Donna Tavernor (Forestry Commission), Andy Evans (Head of Economic Growth & Prosperity, Shropshire Council) and Alison Jones (Clun Catchment Officer AONB Partnership) to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from:

Caroline Bedell (CLA), Pete Carty (National Trust), Sarah Bury (CPRE), Harriet Carty (Individual Member), Lee Chapman (South Shropshire Tourism), Hilary Claytonsmith (Town/Parish Council Representative), Carol Griffiths (NFU), Geoff Grimes (Shropshire Tourism), Gill Hamer (Marches LEP), Deb Hughes (Shropshire Council), Cllr. Heather Kidd (Shropshire Council), Bill Klemperer (English Heritage), Marc Liebrecht (ICF), Fiona Pidduck (Individual Member), Leo Smith (Upper Onny Wildlife Group / Shropshire Ornithological Society), Elizabeth Thomas (Individual Member).

2 Note of the last meeting

2.1 The note of the last meeting held on 17 March 2015 had been circulated.

2.2 **RESOLVED:-**

That the note of the last meeting be confirmed as a correct record.

3 AONB Partnership Activity Update

- 3.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided an update of recent activity.
- 3.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised members that 14 grants totalling £25,300 had been awarded from the Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund, and drew their attention to the appendix to the report which listed the projects. He reminded the meeting that funding for the scheme was made up from the subscriptions to the Friends of the Shropshire Hills AONB, together with contributions from the Jean Jackson Charitable Trust and the Millichope Foundation.
- 3.3 The AONB Partnership Manager advised members that a consultation was in progress regarding changes to streamline the administration of the Sustainable Business Scheme, to include a two year membership and pledge rather than annual renewal.
- 3.4 The AONB Partnership Manager informed members that the Partnership Team were currently working with partners to develop potential new projects including:
- Involvement in feasibility work for a landscape-scale conservation project focused on the Long Mynd and Stiperstones area.
 - Input into proposals by the Foundation for Common Land for a possible national project on upland commons, with activity in the Shropshire Hills AONB and four other areas.
 - Discussions with Woodland Trust and other partners about the possible development of new woodland project work, e.g. supporting woodland social enterprises, and encouraging management of PAWS (Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites).
- 3.5 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that further discussions had taken place regarding the possible relocation of the office to Church Stretton. Shropshire Council was continuing with proposals for relocating the library, though this was now subject to a legal challenge. In the event of the AONB Partnership team being able to relocate to the library premises, the team were also developing a proposal for the AONB Partnership to manage the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in the same building, on a commissioned basis with financial support from Shropshire Council, and using volunteers to assist in staffing the facility. Dr Dormor enquired whether the VIC would occupy the same area as currently. The AONB Partnership Manager said that the current space would be used, and commented that an advantage of this proposal was that the VIC would be able to operate in situ with minimal set-up costs, rather than alternatives of relocating the VIC.

4 LEADER 2015 - 20

- 4.1 Members received a report which outlined the proposed changes in governance arrangements for the 2015-20 Natural Growth LEADER programme.
- 4.2 The Chair commented that the proposals comprised a fundamental change in the governance of the LEADER programme, and asked the AONB Partnership Manager to give a little more background.

- 4.3 The AONB Partnership Manager briefly outlined discussions held during the transition year in 2014, which after much deliberation, had led to the bid submitted in September 2014 based on the benefits of integrating AONB and LEADER functions, and with the Partnership again acting as the LEADER Local Action Group (LAG). This bid had received formal support from Shropshire Council as accountable body and from the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). In November 2014 a letter had been received from Defra indicating that the bid had been successful, subject to confirmation by contract. A competing bid for the area based on the AONB Partnership not being the LAG had been rejected.
- 4.4 The AONB Partnership Manager went on to say that at the end of April 2015, local Defra officers had first raised issues regarding proposed governance arrangements for the southern Shropshire programme, and indicating that key aspects of the proposals as set out in the bid would no longer be acceptable. For example, the AONB Partnership was now considered to be an 'interest group', and since the grant decision making panel could not comprise of more than 49% from any single interest group, that the proposed structure where members of the Approvals Panel would become members of the AONB Partnership would not now conform to this rule. While Defra would allow an option where the Partnership remained as the LAG, the Panel must be independent of it. Partnership representatives felt that in this scenario the Partnership would not be truly acting as a LAG in the manner intended, and would lay itself open to risk from decisions made in its name over which it had little control. Further, Defra's guidance that the AONB Partnership's conservation remit could now be considered a 'conflict of interest' made the Partnership's role potentially much more difficult, especially since clear written guidance on this topic was not forthcoming. The second option, to separate the governance of the LEADER and AONB functions and make the new Panel into the LAG was therefore, with reluctance, favoured. The subsequent decision of Shropshire Council to take the LEADER Programme Manager in-house had not been expected.
- 4.5 Ms Jury advised the meeting that the LDS submission had been robust and good, but a recent interpretation around conflicts of interest had required changes. There was an issue of perception and a need for consistency over the whole of the country. She added that other Local Action Groups were having to address the same issues.
- 4.6 The Chair then asked the Head of Economic Growth and Prosperity to inform the Partnership about the Council's proposed change to the staffing arrangements. The Head of Economic Growth and Prosperity said that the AONB's Partnership work and role in securing the LEADER programme was recognised, but since the recent guidance from Defra, the Council felt that the LEADER programme sat better within Shropshire Council than with the AONB Partnership team. This would strengthen the accountable body role and enable better links with the LEP and other funding programmes.
- 4.7 The Chair commented that there was need to make a decision swiftly, since a Delivery Plan had to be submitted to Defra by the end of July. He added that during discussions with Shropshire Council he had received assurances that the Council would find ways for the AONB Partnership to replace the loss of earned income from hosting the LEADER programme, such that the Partnership would not be financially disadvantaged by the Council's decision.

4.8 A number of comments and queries from members were discussed in considerable depth, including: -

- How could the AONB Partnership be considered as an 'interest group' when it is made up of a large number of different organisations?
- How could the aims of the AONB Partnership be protected when LEADER grant decisions were made under the new arrangement?
- The ground had shifted under our feet and it wasn't clear in this case why Defra had supported the Partnership's bid to deliver the programme.
- How would the new Panel be made up and how would members be recruited to it?
- How would the new LAG avoid conflicts of interest itself?
- Would there not be some negative perceptions about the location of the Programme Manager at Shirehall, outside the LEADER area?

4.9 The AONB Partnership Manager said that the two elements of the Partnership being the LAG and the team hosting the Programme Manager were the essence of the lead organisation role, and the loss of these was very disappointing, as well as leaving implications for loss of earned income to the Partnership. He advised the meeting that there would need to be dialogue between the Partnership and Shropshire Council over the recruitment of the Panel as the new LAG.

4.10 The Chair commented that it was important that the Partnership maintained as much influence as possible and that members of the Partnership may wish to apply to be members of the LAG to ensure this.

4.11 The Chair proposed the resolution that *'The Approvals Panel should be reconstituted as the LAG for the Natural Growth LEADER Programme under the direct organisation of Shropshire Council with the proviso that the AONB Partnership will not lose out financially through these changes.'*

4.12 Ms Caffyn proposed that the following amendment be made *'that the AONB should retain involvement and influence in the programme'*. This was agreed.

4.13 Following a vote, and with great regret and disappointment on the part of all concerned, it was Resolved that: -

The Approvals Panel should be reconstituted as the LAG for the Natural Growth LEADER Programme under the direct organisation of Shropshire Council with the proviso that the AONB Partnership will not lose out financially through these changes and retains involvement and influence in the programme.

5 AONB Partnership Biennial Membership Review

5.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided them with information about the biennial membership review.

5.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised members that the Partnership's Terms of Reference provided for a biennial review of membership, which included appointments to the Individual Member seats and a review of the organisational

seats. He reminded members that it had been agreed that the current review would also include direct applications for the Town & Parish Council seats rather than SALC appointing the representatives.

- 5.3 It was agreed that the number of seats in the various categories should remain the same, and that the three non-statutory organisations with the lowest attendance should be invited to reapply for their seats on the Partnership.

6 Proposed Charitable Organisation

- 6.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided an update on progress to establish the Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund as a charity.
- 6.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that a draft Constitution had been prepared and that it was proposed that the initial charity trustees be recruited to enable them to be involved in developing the final version of the Constitution. He added that it was proposed that four or five trustees would be initially recruited with the additional seats filled once the charity was established and registered with the Charity Commission. He then outlined the required skills and aptitudes for trustees and asked that if anyone was interested in volunteering to be a Trustee to let him know by email by 10 July 2015.

7 River Clun Recovery Project

- 7.1 It was agreed that due to lack of time the presentation would be deferred to a future meeting.

8 Date of next meeting

- 8.1 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded members that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Tuesday 17 November 2015.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 5th October 2015, at 5.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

1. Attendance:

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Chairman. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council.

Apologies:

Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BWG, Joint Secretary. Caroline Le Butt, Long Mynd Bridleways Group. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Pam Yuille, Underton, Bridgnorth. Mark Weston, BHS.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th June 2015 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising**(a) Wind Turbines**

It is noted that the application for a 77m wind turbine at Criddon has been refused. The response we put in was quoted in length in the Planning Officer's Report.

It is also noted that a Planning Application 15/03443/SCR (Scoping Report) has been submitted for a 48m tip height wind turbine at Webscott, which, is closer than 200m from the Humphrey Kynaston Way Linear Route. SC ROW has responded that as Bridleway 35 is approximately 160m to the north-west it will not be directly affected by the proposals. Concern was raised that there seems to be a misunderstanding over the recommended separation distance. This is a minimum of 200m, even if 3 times the height comes to less than this, which in this case it does. As this was only a Scoping Report the Planning Website did not allow public response.

(b) Canal Towpaths

It is noted that the CART (Canal & River Trust) representative is due to attend the LAF meeting to be held on 15th October 2015, and that Mark Weston, Director of Access, BHS, reports that the previously reported 3 pilot areas canal towpath trials are progressing, with for one, a specification of works required to enable the trial to proceed being drawn up; the second it is hoped may proceed on an informal basis. The third is not a runner, but CRT would be happy for their bridges to be used if another route can be found to connect them, which may be a possibility. The problem of low bridges was raised, but Angela said they were not a problem as riders could duck under many or dismount.

(c) Deregulation Bill

The report by Jonathan Tweney of Defra from NE LAF News Issue 7 is noted, and that the documents can be viewed on www.parliament.uk by putting 'Deregulation Bill' in 'search'. It is understood that the regulations are due out in March 2016. It was agreed that it is best to wait until then before submitting any claims, but concern was raised that there may not be many staff left at Shropshire Council to deal with them.

(d) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships annual public survey 2014-15

It was felt that the poor response this time could be due to people having completed one in previous years, and not realising that they needed to do so again. Concern was raised again over

the questions being more weighted towards walking. Clare Fildes has been asked about this. It is understood that many of the questions are standard ones, to produce standard statistics, so cannot be changed. It was suggested that perhaps separate survey forms could be filled in for walking, riding etc. as the answers could be very different. People may always ride with a friend for one to two hours twice a week, but only walk with their family for an hour once a month. Some questions only referred to walking. It is not known when the next survey is due out.

(e) Solar Farm Applications

A response was sent on behalf of the Forum to the Application for a Solar Park on Land to the North of Moor Farm Baschurch, as agreed at the last meeting following concerns raised over the impact on narrow country lanes used by horse riders.

(f) Shropshire's Great Outdoors New Website

Zia reported that the new site is now live, but is still very much work in progress. She is working with Clare Fildes on the horse riding content on the site, and has raised the lack of carriage driving information which it is hoped to address. There have been errors in the transfer of some routes, and some photos still need to be sorted out, but the main elements are now there. There is an excellent interactive map which one can get the promoted routes up on, and overlay rights of way. Zia had asked for UCR's to be included, so riders can see where green lanes link the network, and these are now on. Another good feature is the aerial map, as this enables riders to see the type of terrain they would be riding over. This was also good, when overlaid with the Rights of Way layer as users can then see when Rights of Way are not on the used line. Any suggestions or comments on the site and its contents are welcome.

<http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/>

(g) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda

National Grid Power Lines

The decision on these is still awaited, but consultation seems to be on hold.

Helicopters

It was reported that following the recent [RAF Shawbury - High Visibility Campaign](#), there had been a delay at the manufacturers, but RAF Shawbury hope this week to have the rest of their high viz items to send out. There has been good feedback on a presentation they did to the North Shropshire Pony Club. It is agreed that it is important to target younger riders. There is now a new Station Commander, Group Captain Jason Appleton. Zia will liaise with them over a future meeting.

Shropshire Level Crossings Review

There is nothing to update at present in Shropshire, but there was a report in the LAF News which we will send out with the Agenda papers for our next meeting in February.

4. Shropshire Council

(a) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships

Shona reported recent changes in staffing – Emily Harrison is now Mrs. Parsons-Jones. Clive Dean has left the authority, and has taken up a position with the Wildlife Trust. In the interim Shaun Burkey will take on Colemere and the play and greenspaces in Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Ruyton XI Towns, and West Felton. Mark Blount will take on responsibility for Brown Moss, Nesscliffe, Corbet Wood, Whitchurch CP, Merrington Green, and Shelton. Ed Andrews will take on Snailbeach following the Higher Level Stewardship restoration works. Clive Dean had looked after the Nesscliffe Hills Countryside Heritage Park, and had been working on projects. Concern was raised over the future of maintenance of this site.

Shona also reported that the Council still have savings to achieve and that all services are having to look at further significant savings, efficiencies, and different ways of working to achieve these. The Council is moving towards a Commissioning Authority and is also looking at stopping

services. Outdoor Partnerships is not immune to any of this. The Council will be undertaking a consultation on the services people value which is called The Big Conversation due to be undertaken at the end of the month. It is important that everyone makes their views known as undervalued services are likely to undergo significant changes or will cease to exist. We are not sure of the detail yet, but think the following page on the Council's website will contain the consultation <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved>.

(b) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Implementation Team

Richard Knight's team have done their summer topping, and they will be doing work on UCR's. Paul Butter has now started on the drainage work on BW25 Ford Heath by the former Boon's Abattoir. With regard to P3 Groups, David Hardwick is working with the Long Mynd Bridleways Group on projects, and Tim Simmonds with the Clee View Bridleway Group in the Farlow area. David Hardwick has been out to Preston Montford where there has been a problem with a new stockproof lift up latch on the new field gate. The Nesscliffe Hills & District Bridleway P3 Group has done clearance work on The Cliffe and worked with Paul Butter on improvement works on Hopton Hill. It is understood that Mark Weston is looking at getting a group together in the Tong area. Richard still has a full team, but they now do outside work to bring in funds. Concern was raised at the last LAF meeting over the protection of the monies raised, and that they should be ring fenced for Access work. Helen Beresford now does the Outdoor Partnerships Newsletter.

(c) Shropshire Council Planning

Concern was again raised over development in country areas with poor road access.

In the short time since the Humphrey Kynaston Way was completed, applications totalling hundreds of houses have been submitted, especially in the Nesscliffe and Baschurch areas, which will impact on large sections of the route. Permission is being granted for many houses on the edge of hamlets in open countryside. An application has been submitted at Felton Butler for farm buildings to be changed to light industrial, and for a weighbridge and other buildings right beside the bridleway. There is concern that as the farmland is still there how it will be farmed with all the buildings developed, and whether new farm buildings will then be applied for, as has happened elsewhere, and then impacted on bridleways not used before for farm building access. The green lane section of the HKW at Felton Butler, that bordered open farmland is, following an application for additional chicken sheds, now to be sandwiched between the two lots of chicken sheds. As reported at our last meeting, there is also impact by planning on the Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage Park. An application has just been granted by delegated powers for an underground eco house, but with overground structures on one of the views out from the Country Park. The site is now being sold with 'probably the best views in Shropshire'. Objections had been submitted to point out the impact, and National Heritage expressed concern about above ground structures being put on the site. There are also other applications still pending within the area of the Country Park that will impact on access. Shona has confirmed that their department cannot object to Planning Applications, but put in concerns and guidance on ones which affect a ROW. Concern was raised that Planning Officers often then state in their report that Shropshire ROW do not object to the application, and fail to address the concerns raised by the SC ROW. Members raised concern that affordable housing has been sold off, and permission given for many small properties to be extended, but that a lot of the planning applications now being granted are for larger homes when starter homes are needed. Also that if all the plots of land identified in Sam Dev and all the small paddocks and bits of gardens are granted planning permission now, what will be left for the period up to 2026, and what impact will all this development have on the countryside, and the lanes that link to off road riding routes. Shona was asked if she was aware of any examples of additional access being given when routes are affected by planning, other than diversions, and she confirmed that she was not aware of any. CIL money tends to focus more on open space provision.

<http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>

(d) Shropshire Council Highways

Concern was again raised over the failure to digitise the older Shropshire Highway Maps, especially now that Anita Corfield Jones, who looked after them, has been moved to Mouchel. Zia confirmed that on hearing of the move she went in at short notice and photographed all the maps with her digital camera, but has not had time yet to go through them all. Zia had emailed Andy Savage regarding the failure to record the last section of Old Moors Lane, St. Martins, following the Planning Inspectorate's decision to cancel the Order for it to be a bridleway after it was proved that it was a through UCR. Andy however has now left Highways Development. Shona followed up on this and confirmed that the route is now, at last, being reinstated to Highways mapping.

Government's £3 million funded new digital road map OS ITN and Recording of White Roads by 30th March 2016.

Zia has been trying to find out more about this new mapping and what it is being used for. She has been told it is used for GIS. It is all very worrying with the large number of errors on the map for Shropshire. The map is currently still available to view on the SC Local Map under 'more maps' 'Outdoor Recreation' then 'OS ITN', but it can take a long time to load.

5. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues

Llanyblodwel BW– Shona confirmed that the area Officer has been on site, so this route should be opened up soon. Angela reported that the landowner has been concerned over user's safety when the route is opened up, and that he wanted to downgrade the route to a footpath. It is agreed that it is up to users to make the choice whether to use a right of way or not. There are many routes that come out on busy roads, and even if riders choose not to use a route, cyclists may wish to. It was asked if a field edge link might be possible, but it is believed that this is not feasible.

Shawbury Restricted Byway 1A – Shona confirmed that they had not had anything to add to the report on the proposed diversion. This is now with the Planning Inspectorate for determination following an objection from the Open Spaces Society, and the deadline has now passed for any further comments.

Shirlett – Shona reported that the Rights of Way Officer will be completing the necessary works to ensure that the route is open. The adjacent landowner has agreed to keep an eye on the route and has cleared glass and trees. Once opened fully, letters will be sent out to all users to report any issues.

Adcote Bridge BW – Richard is leading on the issue of the collapsed bridge. He is still waiting for the costings on the different options, but these have been held up due to other emergency works.

Broseley – BW addition Chapel Lane to Lodge Lane – Shona reported that the outlet is to be recorded on the Definitive Map, and that Lucy McFarlane will be undertaking consultation on proposals to extinguish the route originally claimed, and create the route available on the ground.

Oaks Wood – Shona will contact the Forestry owners to move this forward, and to discuss the Formal Application at the same time.

Frodesley Orders – The Officers are working on the Statement of Case so that this can all be sent off together to the Planning Inspectorate.

Drumbles Wood – Emily will address this once Frodesley has been sent off.

Sutton Mill – With Lucy McFarlane.

Old Moors Lane – As reported in 4(d) after many years of trying to get the through route resolved, this is now to be reinstated onto Highways Maps. It will then need work to open up the sunken hedged lane section as it has been used as a rubbish dump and road drain.

Hilton – No change. This is still waiting to be published.

Melverley – No Change. This is still waiting for enforcement of the correct width.

Pontesford Hill – Shona reported that if the Forum desired for higher rights there, it may be worth them contacting Friends of Pontesford Hill, and the Wildlife Trust who now own this site.

Purslow BW addition –The Public Inquiry was held on 22nd September, and it is now awaiting the Inspector's decision.

Long Mynd Jack Mytton Way – Zia reported that she had discovered, on riding the route in the summer, that the used route to the Shooting Box had been moved onto a different line, cutting it off from the connection to the bridleway to Ratlinghope, and it had been way marked as a footpath. On reporting this she found out that the National Trust had moved the route off the definitive line many years ago onto a line which impacted on historic sites, and that they had now reinstated it to the definitive line. The used route of the Ratlinghope Bridleway, part of a Ride Shropshire Route, is also on the wrong line. The new website interactive map, with rights of way overlaid on the aerial map, clearly shows this. Zia asked if a temporary path could be cut through to reconnect the used line of the Ratlinghope route to the Jack Mytton Way until this line anomaly can be resolved. The National Trust agreed to this, and it has now been done, and is all way marked.

6. National Trial of Self Closing Bridlegates held on 18th to 24th September 2015

It is agreed that it is unfortunate that we did not have prior warning of this trial at Askham Bryan College near York, as this Forum has been working for some time on the subject of gate improvements. It is understood that it was on Twitter. Zia and Shona had only heard about it from the recent LAF newsletter. Zia reported that, at short notice, she arranged to go with her husband to York, but as no horse was available could only participate on foot. She passed round one of the survey forms used on the day. Most of the gates being trialled had high handles, which have caused a lot of problems in our area with riders and their tack getting caught on them. The lift up stock proof handle used in the trial, is also causing problems in Shropshire, as it is sticking, and riders cannot then get through. At the trial NE told Zia that they had now realised that the wider gates were no better than the 5ft ones. The gate with a high cross bar rocker opening being trialled is expensive, and Zia is concerned that it could be opened by stock. A gate that is working well here in Shropshire, is the Chiltern gate with the low stock proof pull handle below the top bar, but this was not put forward for the trial. They had the Chiltern gate in the trial, but only with the high handle, and different hinges. Zia had asked for the low handle to be included when she heard about the trial, but was told by Natural England that it was too late to try it as all the photos had been taken for the trial. Zia looked at, and discussed all the trial gates with the Natural England representative attending the trial. NE have asked for examples of good and bad gates.

7. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums

It is noted that the next Local Access Forum Meeting is to be held on 15th October 2015, so the minutes of the 2nd July meeting are not yet confirmed. The CART representative will be attending to discuss Use of Towpaths, and Lost Ways in Shropshire is also on the Agenda. It was reported that at the last meeting, there were a lot of updates, and reports on new ways of working and current policies by Shropshire Council staff, including an update on management of UCR's by Richard Knight.

The minutes of the Central Walking Forum dated 26th August 2015 are noted, and Shona's article on Ploughing and Cropping.

LAF meeting papers are available on a new website link: [Local Access Forum](#) go to 'Browse meetings and agendas for this committee'.

8. Any Other Business or items to Note

It is noted that the BHS Access Conference is to be held on Saturday 17th October 2015, and that Jan Mees Robinson and Zia will be attending

9. Dates of the Next Meetings

The next meeting is to be held at the Shirehall on **Monday 8th February 2016 at 5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30-7.30pm.**

The date of the following meeting is confirmed for **Monday 6th June 2016**

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Shropshire Hills Forum

Notes from 11th Meeting

Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms

10 am – 12.00 noon Friday 9th October 2015

Attendees: Sue Jones (Ramblers), Helen d'Albert (Shropshire Council), Clare Fildes (Shropshire Council), Keith Pybus (Shropshire Way Assoc.& Chair of Shropshire Hills Forum), Chris Chillingworth (Ludlow / Wheathill P3), Val Simpson (Cleobury Mortimer WAW and CCL tourism), Nigel McDonald (Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership), Michael Holland (Ludlow P3), Marion Law (Ramblers area secretary/ Rail Rambles), Dick Bailey (WAW Much Wenlock), Helen Beresford (Shropshire Council), Charles Edwards (P3, Vice Chair G.C.L.), Gill Steed (Ramblers), Colin Carson (HF holidays), Rick Summers (Ludlow P3 / Whitcliffe Common), Steve Levers (WaW / Walking Festival B.Castle), Jacqueline Wigglesworth and Peter Wigglesworth (Clun Shamblers), Peter James (Clun P3), Paul Butter (Maintenance team S.C.), Patrick Edwards (N.T. Ranger Long Mynd), Catherine Collier (Promotions and Marketing manager GCL), Janet Radford (C.E. for G.C.L.).

Apologies: Mike Beazley, Ted Laidlar, Gill Mortimer, Mandy Smith.

Notes of Meeting	Action
<p>Welcome and Introductions: See list of attendees. Helen thanked everyone for coming and commented how wonderful it was to have such a large turnout for the meeting.</p> <p>Feedback focused on the 3 priorities identified by members: The new Shropshire's Great Outdoors Website and branding (Clare Fildes)</p> <p>Overview of the new website: www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk Use, features and plans for future developments.</p> <p>Website is a recreational resource for the general public to find out about the outdoor facilities and opportunities in the county. It includes walking, cycling, horse riding, play areas, parks and sites information and volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>The website is still under development, with certain features, such as 'Top Outdoor Experiences' (to prompt people to get outdoors), not yet operational.</p> <p>At this stage concentrating on getting foundation and information of the website correct. Aim is to develop and link with partners such as the National Trust, Shropshire Wildlife Trust etc.</p> <p>Communication methods discussed. Website not interactive, as do not have sufficient staffing resources. Facebook is current interactive mechanism used. Information goes out via the newsletters – sign up to these is available through the website.</p>	<p>H.B. / C.F.</p>

<p>Feedback welcomed. All encouraged to look at the website and contact Hd'A & H.B. with feedback – Hd'A and HB will then collate comments and together with CF address accordingly.</p> <p>Any relevant news / events you have coming up and would like advertised via the website – please provide in WORD format to C.F.</p> <p>Promoted routes: (Clare Fildes) Interactive map on new Shropshire's Great Outdoors website shows a selection of current promoted routes in county.</p> <p>V.S. raised issue of cross border routes, and advised of a new cross border route (Bewdley area)</p> <p>Can everyone please look at their area and see what promoted routes are on the map. Identify which are priority routes and if any key promoted routes are missing advise C.F. accordingly. Limited resources mean that new promoted routes will only be considered where there is a proven need.</p> <p>Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre (SHDC) as a Walking Hub:</p> <p>Janet Radford CE & Charles Edwards (Vice Chair) presented vision and plans for SHDC as a walking hub– see the copy of power point presentation circulated with the meeting notes.</p> <p>Catchment area for walks identified as those starting from SHDC or within a 10 min drive.</p> <p>Rail rambles suggested by group as another possible idea.</p> <p>Please refer to the final slide of the presentation for Action points by our group. Contact Catherine Collier to provide feedback and if you would like to participate in helping them with further discussions/ ideas session to support their excellent work.</p> <p>Volunteering Updates:</p> <p>P3: (Helen Beresford)</p> <p>At present: 63 P3 Groups and 21 PPWs. Approximately 297 P3 Volunteers across the county</p> <p>2015/16 so far..... Volunteer hours – 3941</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 206 individual improvements • 1289 hours of vegetation clearance • 72 hours of surfacing works 	<p>All / C.F. / Hd'A / H.B.</p> <p>All / C.F.</p> <p>All / C.F.</p> <p>C.C / All who are interested in participating in ideas / planning session</p>
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- 454 hours of surveying paths
- Total value of P3 volunteering - £27,587

Priority areas within Shropshire Hills area 2015/16

- Worthen & Shelve
- Rushbury
- Cardington
- Mainstone (BC interested)

New groups establishing in south

- Worthen & Shelve –Tentatively starting
- Farlow (footpaths group) – Installed first kissing gate with them, they have a number of jobs in pipeline and are due to install a bridge shortly. All work full time but very keen to fit in works when they can. Susan Sharp has expressed interest in helping support them through the CMFA

Other news

- Contact List – about half the co-ordinators have responded positively
- Bushmoor to Marshbrook Bridleway Work Day with Shropshire Housing Volunteers. Wed 14th October. Hope is to clear whole route and install some gates.

Walking for Health: (Helen d'Albert)

Overall the 14 walks going well. Difficulty recruiting more volunteer walk leaders, despite extensive & varied promotion. 8th Oct: 8 volunteers attended training. Further 3 have expressed interest.

Feedback about priority areas – Craven Arms walks commenced 1st July. Numbers building. 3 volunteers trained in Oct.

Despite concerted promotion one of Ludlow's walks has been discontinued due to poor attendance. Focusing instead on providing 2 tiers within popular Monday walk (one slower and one slightly longer and quicker walk) to meet walker's needs. Requires double up of leaders available.

Numbers have increased in Church Stretton Grade 1 walk after further promotion.

Clun now has 2 walk leaders, work focusing on increasing walker numbers.

Bishop's Castle now has 5 walk leaders and numbers still modest but gradually building.

New posters being produced for all groups, using photos of local walkers to give local context. Focusing on social aspect- as surveys show this is main draw for people attending walks.

Wild Team: (Hd'A for Simon Brown)

Shropshire Wild Teams is a Public Health funded project focused on increasing physical activity levels within inactive population groups through outdoor activities in the natural environment.

Shropshire Council's Outdoor Partnerships Service co-ordinates initiative via Outdoor Development Officer (Simon Brown).

There are currently two teams. One based in Shrewsbury and one in/around Craven Arms. While numbers are relatively low, both groups have regular volunteers.

Groups started ten months ago and began with clearance work and gate installation via various council, National Trust and Stiperstones and Corndon Hill partnership projects sites. Other activities since, have included hedgelaying & brush cutter training and wildlife surveys for various organisations.

The Craven Arms based team is now ready to work independently. Simon, has arranged regular work for them with Discovery Centre, National Trust on the Long Mynd; and Rectory Wood via David Hardwick, Area Officer.

Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre: (Catherine Collier)

Lots of areas to maintain. Focusing on enhancing visitor experience. Using a core of a few volunteers working to support staff to provide better interpretation of the outdoors. Practical meadows work continues, with activities such as Himalayan Balsam clearance. Catherine working with Partnership organisations and groups for help with these activities. Exploring corporate social responsibility opportunities with local organisations such as Shropshire Housing Group.

Expressed need to get the message out as a priority that the facility is run by Grow Cook Learn (GCL) highlighting that they are a charity. Suggestion made of flyers to alert those parking at the centre.

'*Ramblers Holidays Charity Trust*' suggested as possible funding source for GCL to access.

National Trust: (Patrick Edwards- new Ranger at Long Mynd)

Lots of volunteering opportunities - Heather moorland conservation work, tearoom, shop, recruiting, parking help, meeting with public: 5,000 acres site. Rely heavily on practical volunteer help. Brought newsletter leaflets to share with group. National Trust hand out information as people park to advise of the volunteering opportunities and walk routes.

AONB – update – (Nigel McDonald):

AONB has just moved offices to Drovers House Craven Arms.

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, Drovers House, The Auction Yard, CRAVEN ARMS, SY7 9BZ

www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk www.twitter.com/ShropHillsAONB

Given swift move to new premises mobile numbers or emails are best used till communication systems are fully sorted.

nigel.mcdonald@shropshire.gov.uk 07990 086383

- Shuttle buses – a good year. Numbers up. Full review being done. Some funding from Natural England has been withdrawn, which is worrying. Still have funding from National Trust. Buses to continue next year. Looking at Ludlow route, a lot of effort put into promotion this year. Excellent feedback received from all over Europe about customer experiences.
- Working with Shropshire Hills Tourism Association to update Discovery Map- self-funding though advertising.
- Focusing on what people do when they get to the area
- Relunched business scheme – Shropshire Hills Business Network – feedback good
- All led walks run this year were well attended. Now reviewing what to do with future walking plans and these ideas link in well with the development of the Discovery Centre as a walking hub.
- Caer Caradoc- would like to run a project to look at the hill; erosion is a concern. Good relationships with landowners. Aim: to look at wayfinding issues, erosion and interpretation of hillfort and locality.
- In their move, a folder has been located with a wealth of hard copies of (printed) walks in the area, in various formats. These routes may no longer be actively promoted but could provide ideas for new walks. Contact Nigel to access folder or to add other routes.
- Public transport links with Shuttle buses raised as a problem, issue discussed, difficulties acknowledged and limitations as to what further can be done were outlined. N.Mc. explained Arriva are considering promoting walker friendly links.

Big Path Watch: (Marion Law and Sue Jones)

- Current flagship campaign of the Ramblers. Involves walking every kilometre square of the county and reporting about these. Anyone from general public can participate. Routes available via Ramblers website- 'The Big Path Watch'.
- An easy to use system and there are plenty of squares still to do in the Shropshire Hills. It can be done via the website, or a phone app. You can take printed information out to the walk site, then enter your findings via the internet on your return.
- There are a few priority squares in Shropshire Hills but all need to be completed. The results will be reported electronically to the council. It is hoped that it will not all be negative feedback. It is important for the council to know which footpaths are open and those that are not. M.L. pointed out the need to be realistic that the council will not be able to do anything about some of the footpath issues.

Update on OS mapping of Shropshire Way: (Hd'A for Mapping &

All

Enforcement Team)

- Confirmation received from OS they have processed the changes to the Shropshire Way using the up to date details sent to them by the Council's Enforcement team and OS mapping liaison officer. It will appear on the electronic OS maps and on the printed versions when these are next produced by OS.
- N.B. if any other amendments made in future please advise team, so layers can be updated and OS informed to ensure it is kept up to date.
- Question raised "has Open Source mapping been informed?"
- Issues have been raised about the new Shropshire Way routes. Some confusion between the linear and circular routes in terms of waymarking. The path is now more of a network of paths across the county and there is a need to define one route that is the 'Shropshire Way' for those wanting to complete a long distance route.
- There has been a complaint about the Shropshire Way around Church Stretton by a self-guided holiday company. **Need P3 groups to look at the routes and let Right of Way Maintenance team know if there are particular issues.**
- OS printed maps kept and used by many for years and become out of date- no easy solution to this.
- Ludlow P3 have done a lot of work on southern part of Shropshire Way – Titterstone Clee – Stokesay. Latest plan is to remove stiles and replace with gates (½ dozen in total)

Hd'A to ask Enforcement team

P3 Church Stretton, David Hardwick (Maintenance team) and Lucy McFarlane (Enforcement team)

Mayflower Voyage 400 year anniversary 2020: (Keith Pybus)

- K.P had been asked to seek the Forum's views on the benefits of a Mayflower promotion. The Forum was in favour.
- Walk held as part of Wenlock Walking Weekend this year - passes from Brockton via Larden to Shipton. The story of the four 'More' children from Larden Hall who were on the Mayflower. Will need to be turned into a circular walk. Shipton Hall are aware of and support proposed plans.
- Need the help of the Much Wenlock P3's. HB also trying to contact Corvedale P3.
- The development of a Mayflower Trail could be a focus for work, with the opportunity to bring people and thus revenue to the area. 12 million Americans claim to be descendants from the Mayflower. Other areas of Britain already planning events.
- Other ideas discussed to celebrate the anniversary locally: children's events, history, and evening events – Discovery Centre / AONB. This would widen appeal- needs careful planning.
- Suggestion made that P3 and AONB apply for grant funding to pay for it to be done properly, especially if promoted across world, to maximise the opportunity.
- C.F. recommended a smaller focus group comes together to explore the broader picture and events ideas.

KP will look at a return leg

HB / DB to contact once KP has completed

War walks on the Home Front: (Keith Pybus)

- 2015 has been a big success. Key features – pleased to see a significant number of women on walks, and to have a lively level of interest and participation on both walks.
- Date for diary: walk to take place in Ludlow [amended subsequent to meeting] 28th May 2016: Joint leaders Clive Richardson, author, and KP.
- Shropshire VCs – Hopesay to Sibdon Castle – links with the family which designed and still makes the VC.
- Simon Evan's Way – Simon Evans a postman, who was badly injured in the war.
- War Walk on the Home Front no. 5 was created from his story. V.S. reported on the great success of the walk and the positive future implications. Brought a locally made clay bust to show the group, specially created for the Cleobury Mortimer Walking weekend.
- Excellent feedback received about the weekend events. Val explained having started out with a story and a walk, things snowballed – from a 4 day event, to producing a calendar and now an annual S.E. festival is likely to be created as a result. Val to document this and write a case study to demonstrate what can be achieved.
- In a similar way, although not promoted as one of the War Walks, the SHAONB had taken the paintings of Bruce Bairnsfather of Stokesay Castle, Downton and Clun to launch a walk from the Stokesay Inn [Old Bill mural] to Stokesay church and the "Old Bill" war memorial.
- Idea put forward – should we be looking at themed walking festivals- maybe location based are not necessarily the way forward?
- Names and contact details of walks participants are very hard won by all individual groups and events. Thoughts of collating names and contacts and sharing with partners with view to alerting them of similar events of interest were discussed, but data protection issues would need to be investigated.

Dates for next meetings set as follows:

Friday 5th February 2016 venue to be confirmed

Friday 3rd June 2016 venue to be confirmed.

Please note all agreed action points are highlighted in bold print.

K.P.

V.S. / C.F.

KP will look at the market

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NOTES FROM NORTH SHROPSHIRE WALK FORUM

MONDAY 19th OCTOBER 2015

Present: Trevor Allison(Ramblers), Mike Bossen (W4H,West Felton), Peter Carr (Ramblers), Mark Cuthbert-Brown(Kinnerley P3), Liz Evans(W4H), Ian McKenzie (Kinnerley P3), Pat Middleton (Kinnerley P3), Ann Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Neil Moore (Whitchurch Walkers).

Walking for Health

The next volunteer walk leader's training is on Friday 5th December at The Lantern in Sundorne, Shrewsbury. If you know anyone who is interested please contact Liz Evans (Liz.Evans@shropshire.gov.uk).

Walking for Health in the north remains quite static in numbers, but most groups are doing well with the exception of Oswestry and Wem.

There is a new group in Harmer Hill on a Thursday morning which is being trialled for 6 weeks.

Peter Carr and Liz to visit Dave Preston from Oswestry Town Council, to see what opportunities there are for promoting walking for health.

Walkers are Welcome

The national committee are holding their annual general meeting in Whitchurch on Sunday 8th November. Peter suggested inviting town councillors from Ellesmere and Market Drayton in addition to Whitchurch ones.

Next year's Whitchurch walking festival is from Friday 20th May to Sunday 22nd May 2016.

Oswestry has its last walk of the year on Tuesday 10th November, 10am from Cae Glas park. It concerns the people from Oswestry who were in the war.

WW1 walks

The next walk is in Oswestry on Tuesday 10th November, 10am at Cae Glas park. See attached poster.

Walk Leader Training, Meres and Mosses

The Meres and Mosses are arranging for a 3 day training to promote the special qualities of the Meres and Mosses by creating a small group of volunteer walk leaders who will lead a successful range of well interpreted, guided walks throughout the Local Partnership Scheme area. Full details to follow when available. Please let Liz know if you want to do it.

Big Pathwatch

This is about 33% completed in Shropshire. Trevor has done over 600 squares.

If anyone is interested in helping the Ramblers with this, please contact Trevor Allison directly at eta-06@tiscali.co.uk.

Shropshire Way Rationalisation

This is difficult to promote as a long distance route due to it not connecting, parts are clearly not used – it needs a rationalisation and re-launch. Ramblers are to lead on this.

Promoting Walking in North Shropshire

How do we get an enthusiasm for promoting walking?

In Whitchurch, people talk about the Sandstone way, not the Shropshire way.

Borderland tourism want to promote Oswalds trail – 600 downloads per month – people in Oswestry are not taking this on.

Sam Divine Turner from Meres and Mosses is working on viewranger. As people like technical gadgets, this may be a way forward.

It was also felt the town council could be more active in promoting walking.

Ploughing and Cropping 2016

Peter succinctly outlined responsibilities of landowners and was asked to write this down and send it out to everyone.

He has formulated a plan with Shona, Rights of Way team leader, for next year. Shona will give the Ramblers a list of paths that have a history of cropping problems – the Ramblers will report on them to Shona. Shona will then send out a stronger letter explaining intent to inform the Rural Payments Agency. The Ramblers will then go back 3 weeks later and report again. Following this, the cutting machine can be sent in and a bill sent to the landowner for the work. It was felt it would only have to be done for 1 farmer and the rest would comply.

Next meeting

Monday 25th January, 2pm, small hall, Ellesmere town hall.

Central Shropshire Walking Forum

Notes of Meeting

2pm, Friday 27th November 2015

The Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

Attendees:

John Newnham (Chair)	Shrewsbury Ramblers	john.newnham@btinternet.com
Bill Hodges	Shrewsbury Ramblers	vibill@phonecoop.coop
Phil Barnes	Shrewsbury Ramblers	phil@trigpoint.me.uk
Trevor Allison	Shrewsbury ramblers	eta-06@tiscali.co.uk
Phil Wadlow	Much Wenlock WfH & WaW	wadlowfarming@msn.com
Anne Suffolk	Telford & East Shropshire Ramblers	annesuffolk1@gmail.com
Naomi Wrighton	Wellington WaW, Walkabout Wrekin	info@wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk
Clare Fildes	Outdoor Partnerships	clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk
Mick Dunn	Outdoor Partnerships	mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk
Shona Butter	Outdoor Partnerships	shona.butter@shropshire.gov.uk

Apologies:

Dick Bailey
Bob Coalbran
Audrey Menhinick
Geoff Sproson
David Hardwick
Helen Beresford

1. Welcome and Introductions

John opened the meeting at 2pm

2. Feedback/Action from Previous Meeting

There was no actions from the previous meeting

3. Group Updates

a. Naomi Wrighton (Walk about Wrekin & Wellington Walkers are Welcome)

The Wellington WaW footpath group hold 2 path clearing sessions each month. The group also hold regular Wednesday health walks and longer Sunday walks. Details of walks can be found at www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk The annual Walkers are Welcome General Meeting was held at Whitchurch in November. A route linking together WaW towns in Shropshire has been discussed. ? If this is possible to link in with the Shropshire Way.

b. John Newnham (Shrewsbury Ramblers)

Shrewsbury Ramblers held their AGM in November where a number of "footpath topics" were discussed as well as the Shropshire Way. Deb Hughes (Outdoor Partnerships service manager) and Richard Knight (Maintenance team leader) were in attendance. www.shrewsburyramblers.org.uk

c. Phil Wadlow (Much Wenlock Walking for Health & Walkers are Welcome)

Much Wenlock WaW held their Walking Weekend in September. The festival was another success but a few walks were undersubscribed which was potentially down to a problem with online bookings. Walking for Health continues to do well averaging over 70 walkers every Monday. The WfH group now has over 30 trained walk leaders and back markers. www.2shrop.net/wenlock.walks

d. Anne Suffolk (Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers)

There have been lots of recent personnel changes in the Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers. There is a new Chair, Footpath Officer, and secretary. The Footpath group will be working closely with the WaW footpath group. The Telford & East Shropshire Ramblers are trying to liaise more closely with local walking

groups and are becoming more engaged with social media. (Note Mick will add a list of walking related FB pages in Shropshire to the end of the Notes) www.shropshireramblers.org.uk/groups/telford.php

e. Geoff Sproson (Marches LDWA & Stiperstones)

Way markers are now in place on the Elsie Rowson walk. A plaque has been donated by the Women's Institute and will be erected outside the old post office. A guide has been produced and is awaiting printing. A website will be launched shortly.

LDWA Update

1. Wem Winter Wonderland walk (20mile walk in North Shropshire) takes place on Saturday 19th December starting at 08.30am from the Wem Sports Centre.
<https://www.ldwa.org.uk/Marches/E/15691/wem-winter-wonderland.html>
2. South Shropshire Circular in February is now full and entries have closed.
3. Wenlock Olympian Walk (64 mile challenge walk) takes place on July 18th 2016. Entries open Jan 02nd 2016 <https://www.ldwa.org.uk/Marches/E/15788/wenlock-olympian-walk.html>

f. Helen Beresford – P3 Update (in Helens absence Mick Dunn gave the following update)

P3 Hours since 1st April 2015

Volunteer hour's whole County – 5097

Central area parishes' hours – 810

Total cost if done by contractors £43,153

David will be coming round with maps to identify all routes which the volunteers consider as priorities in their parish and to ask them to think about this beforehand. Naturally if the Shropshire Way, Severn Way, etc. go through their parish these will be automatic priorities as well as any route with a publication available for it. However, we also need to know the routes which are valued most in each parish and which also make important links to the wider area.

g. David Hardwick – Maintenance Team Update (David was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following update)

The biggest project has been improvement of the Severn Way at the Mount/Doctors Field, Shrewsbury. Work parties from Shrewsbury Ramblers P3, Shropshire Wild team and Shropshire Wild Trust have assisted with this. There have been delays in putting the finishing touches together because of high river levels. But the path has not shown any signs of damage after recent flooding.

A new warden in Westbury Parish has highlighted issues at Vron gate which the neighbouring P3 at Alberbury has helped with as well as Shrewsbury Ramblers P3. There is also potential for Pontesbury P3 to assist in the area.

Pontesbury P3 have been active in the Hope Valley area improving footpaths and bridleways.

All the local volunteer groups have been given parish maps to identify what they feel may be the priority paths in their areas.

4. Shona Butter (Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader)

Discovering Lost Ways - Shona gave the forum a presentation on "Discovering Lost Ways & the Deregulation Act 2015" a copy of the presentation is attached.

Ploughing and Cropping - Shona provided an update on Ploughing & Cropping for Shropshire. Comparisons over recent years clearly demonstrated that cropping was by far the greater issue. See below:-

Year	Ploughing	Cropping
Apr 12 - Mar 13	9	80
Apr 13 - Mar 14	16	67
Apr 14 - Mar 15	14	75

This year's campaign had resulted in the following success rates:

% of paths clear of crops
North Shropshire 39%

Oswestry	54%
South Shropshire	76%
Bridgnorth	54%
Shrewsbury & Atcham	59%

Future Actions:

- a. Landowners who have been sent letters in the past and are highlighted again in the following year will be sent a stronger letter, or notice will be served.
- b. Cropping with maize has been identified as a growing problem with increasing acreages grown for ensiling or energy production. This crop lengthens the cropping season and a further harvest period (Sept-November) This must now be taken into consideration in any campaign and the situation when a crop could be obstructing the path from May to November. It should be emphasised that a crop should be cleared as soon as it emerges for the advantage of both walkers and landowners.
- c. In addition, the fact that some crops lodge (fall over into the path) e.g. oilseed rape are also being looked at more closely by the enforcement team. It has come apparent that this crop can also obstruct depending on the method of harvesting. If it cut and left in swathes to ripen before combining these across the path make it impossible to negotiate.
- d. More timely inspections are required to give officers sufficient time to take action and prevent landowners using the 'imminent harvest' as an excuse not to clear the path. Volunteers to inspect routes were welcomed.
- e. Production of the landowner leaflet to help raise awareness of legal requirements to ensure routes are open and available.

5. Shropshire Way

Discussions have been ongoing about establishing a definitive, circular Shropshire Way route. A full update will be given at the next meeting.

6. Shropshire Outdoor Partnership Updates – Clare gave the following updates:

- a. **The Big Conversation.** <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/big-conversation/> Clare explained that due to further funding cuts Shropshire Council were conducting a public consultation regarding the service the Council currently provide and which services should be provided in the future. Clare encouraged all attendees to complete the survey.
- b. **The Severn Way.** Funding sources are being sought to upgrade and improve the Severn Way through Shropshire. Surveys are being carried out to establish the extent of the work needed.
- c. **Outdoor Partnership annual ROW survey.** <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/outdoor-recreation-annual-public-survey/> Clare reminded everyone that Outdoor Partnerships conduct an annual user survey for our ROW, Parks and Country Side sites. Attendees are encouraged to complete the survey and encourage members of their relevant groups to do so. Evidence collected from the survey is vital for securing future funding.

7. The Big Path Watch

Trevor gave the following update. The Telford and Wrekin area has been completed apart from 6 grid Squares. Shropshire is the Top area in the country at the moment for completing target squares. 46% of total Squares have now been completed in Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin. www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/join-the-big-pathwatch.aspx

8. AOB

9. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 26th Feb 2pm – 4pm The Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury SY26ND

Walking Facebook Pages

<https://www.facebook.com/WalkingInShropshire>

<https://www.facebook.com/ShrewsburyAndMidShropshireRamblers>

<https://www.facebook.com/Telford-and-East-Shropshire-Ramblers-463941947076536>

<https://www.facebook.com/Wenlock.walks>

<https://www.facebook.com/WellingtonWalkersAreWelcome>

<https://www.facebook.com/Ironbridge-Gorge-Walking-Festival-30-Apr-08-May-2016-416628868384643>

<https://www.facebook.com/Church-Stretton-Walking-Festival-2016-757983534315681>

<https://www.facebook.com/Shropshire-Hills-Area-of-Outstanding-Natural-Beauty-103513872530>

NOTES FROM NORTH SHROPSHIRE WALK FORUM

MONDAY 25th JANUARY 2016

Present: Trevor Allison(Ramblers), Dave Andrews (Oswestry Round), Peter Carr (Ramblers), Mark Cuthbert-Brown(Kinnerley P3), Ken Dunning (Market Drayton P3), Liz Evans(W4H), Clare Fildes (Development Team Leader), Ernie Heath (Wem Walkers), Jane Ing (P3), Andy Lippa(Rights of Way Officer,), Ian McKenzie (Kinnerley P3), Pat Middleton (Kinnerley P3), Ann Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Neil Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Shirley Pemberton (W4H Hadnall), Dennis Powell (W4H Ellesmere), Jane Trudgill (Oswestry Round).

From the last meeting

The Meres and Mosses training will still go ahead, but was postponed due to ill health. If you are interested please contact Liz.

Walking for Health

The next volunteer walk leader's training is on Friday 11th March at Shirehall in Shrewsbury. If you know anyone who is interested please contact Liz Evans - Liz.Evans@shropshire.gov.uk

Walking for Health in the north remains quite static in numbers, but most groups are doing well with the exception of Oswestry.

The new group in Harmer Hill never really got off the ground so will probably be postponed until after Easter and done on a Tuesday evening again as this was quite successful last year.

Walkers are Welcome

The national committee held their annual general meeting in Whitchurch on Sunday 8th November. They thought Whitchurch was an excellent venue and believe it to be the cake capital of north Shropshire.

This year's Whitchurch walking festival is from Friday 20th May to Sunday 22nd May 2016. The programme is now being finalised and will be available soon.

Oswestry has a snowdrop walk on Tuesday 23rd February, 10am, Cranberry Moss campsite, Kinnerley.

WW1 walks

The only walk scheduled for north Shropshire is in Whitchurch. Hopefully the museum will supply the information and from this an interesting walk around town will be made. If you have another idea for north Shropshire, please let Liz know.

The Oswestry Round

Dave Andrews and Jane Trudgill have produced a booklet detailing a 33 mile route around Oswestry, which can be broken down into sections. The booklet is available to purchase from local booksellers in Oswestry for £5. If you would like a booklet please contact Dave on dand103750@aol.com. There will be a challenge weekend, supported by the Rotary Club, on 11th and 12th June to raise money for the Lingen Davies centre and Cancer Research UK. If you are interested, it costs £25 to do (this includes marshalling, drinks etc en route) and can be booked on the website oswestryround.co.uk. There is a limit of 200 entrants. Liz to put on Facebook and Clare will put on the website once Dave has sent a small paragraph outlining the booklet.

Henry V Pilgrimage

In 1416 Henry V made a pilgrimage from Shrewsbury to Holywell to pray at the shrine of St Winifrede as an atonement for his and his men's actions at the Battle of Agincourt the previous year. To celebrate the 600th anniversary of this event a committee has been set up to organise a public pilgrimage between June 19th and 24th in 2016. It will go along national established routes except from Shrewsbury to Offas Dyke. Once completed it will be called St Winifreds Way. Provisional details are as follows:

Saturday 18th – service in Abbey, followed by a visit to the catholic cathedral to see some relics. The walk will then start and go towards Nesscliffe.

Sunday 19th – Nesscliffe area to Oswestry

Monday 20th – Oswestry to Froncysyllte

Tuesday 21st Froncysyllte to Llandegla

Wednesday 22nd Llandegla to Cilcain

Thursday 23rd Cilcain to Holywell

If you would like to register an interest please email henry1615@mail.com

Full details will be available on the North Wales Ramblers Website <http://www.ramblersnorthwales.org.uk/homeEN.htm> in due course.

Shropshire Way Rationalisation

This has too many loops and deviations and possibly is too intimidating for people to want to tackle it. Now thinking of it being 2 loops from Shrewsbury, one going north and one south. The north one will go up to Oswestry – Ellesmere – not quite Whitchurch – Wem – Shrewsbury. It will aim to take in all the market towns. It will be renamed and the old Shropshire Way will remain. This is a work in progress and is being led by the Ramblers. If you have any comments please contact chairman@shropshireramblers.org.uk

Council Matters

Clare outlined the Council's Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2017/18. A further £77m savings are needed despite the planned 3.99% annual Council Tax increases to balance the budgets and meet the aspiration of no Central Government funding for Shropshire by 2020/21. Major Service cuts will be required over the next two years at the following services are at risk of decommissioning:

- Parks and public open spaces
- Swimming pools and leisure centres
- Museums and tourism services
- Community development team
- Arts

The Financial Strategy highlights the worst case scenario.

Implications for the Outdoor Partnerships Team:

Rights of Way maintenance is a 'mandatory' service and will continue, despite considerable budget cuts and a more commercial approach is being developed. The practicalities of closing parks and open spaces means this is unlikely to happen but alternatives will need to be considered. This could include the development of a charitable trust or the adoption of sites by partner organisations.

For further information, please follow link below:

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/b10420/To%20Follow%20Report%20-%20Financial%20Strategy%20201617%20-%20201819%2027th-Jan-2016%2012.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9>

If you wish to comment on this please contact Stuart West

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=88>

and copy in George Candler

George.candler@shopshire.gov.uk

Any other business

- Big Pathwatch – Shropshire – Initial Headline summary

Survey closed 31 December 2015

Total number of squares in the area = 3491 – this includes Telford

Total number of squares completed = 1852 (53%) – this includes Telford

All 400 target squares were completed – 200 in each council area

Top reported positive features = attractive countryside, helpful and welcoming signs, impressive trees.

Top reported negative features = paths could not be located, missing signs on paths, (it was commented on that you can take your own nails and signs) missing signs on

roads (it was commented on that hedge cutters break these, but it is possible to use metal ones).

- Shona is devising a brochure for landowners so they can be aware of their rights and responsibilities on footpaths.
- The area AGM for the Ramblers is on 13th February at the Gateway in Shrewsbury. President Kate Ashbrook is the speaker.
- Ramblers walk leader training on 18th February in Trefonen. The morning is theory, followed by practice in the afternoon. If you are interested please email Peter chairman@shropshireramblers.org.uk
- Kinnerley P3 Valentines Day walk from Kinnerley parish hall, 12pm. 5 mile walk. Walk is free but contributions for refreshments welcome. Please email Mark Cuthbert-Brown if you would like to come markcuthbertbrown@me.com or go to the Kinnerley footpaths facebook page.
- From Helen Beresford

We are now up to 6487 volunteer hours logged for this year which equates to over £58,000 of work.

Harvey and Helen had a meeting in Tilstock with a couple interested in becoming Parish Path Wardens for the Tilstock and surrounding area and doing minor works and clearing where appropriate. This approach is working well in Oswestry where Trefonen have formed a sub group and it is hoped this will happen here.

Clare and Helen met with Matt Jones from the Meres and Mosses Project who has offered some funding for us to deliver a training package in rights of way management skills. Clare expended on this by saying the package needs clarifying and any ideas are welcome.

Please remember that any of you who wish to put in an application for the P3 grant for next year the deadline is Friday 29th January.

Next meeting

25th April, 2pm, Ellesmere Town Hall, Small Hall.

I was not quick enough to say about booking the next one before people started leaving, so I hope this date is acceptable.

As there were more people than usual I shall take it as a sign this is better for people and keep it to 2pm.

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Shropshire Hills Forum

Notes from 12th Meeting

Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms

10 am – 12.00 noon Friday 5th February 2016

Attendees: Sue Jones (Ramblers), Helen d'Albert (Shropshire Council), Clare Fildes (Shropshire Council), Keith Pybus (Shropshire Way Assoc. & Chair of Shropshire Hills Forum), Chris Chillingworth (Ludlow / Wheathill P3), Val Simpson (Cleobury Mortimer WAW and CCL tourism), Nigel McDonald (Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership), Michael Holland (Ludlow P3), Marion Law (Ramblers area secretary/ Rail Rambles), , Helen Beresford (Shropshire Council), Charles Edwards (P3, Vice Chair G.C.L.), Gill Steed (Ramblers), Rick Summers (Ludlow P3 / Whitcliffe Common), Steve Levers (WaW / Walking Festival B. Castle), Paul Butter (Maintenance team S.C.), Patrick Edwards (N.T. Ranger Long Mynd), Gill Mortimer (Ramblers and Ludlow WfH), Glyn Roberts (Bishops Castle Walking festival)

Apologies: Dick Bailey (WAW Much Wenlock), Ted Laidlar, Peter James (Clun P3), Catherine Collier (Promotions and Marketing manager GCL), Merinda Essex, Mike Starr, Meryl Lippit.

Notes of Meeting	Action
<p>Welcome and Introductions: See list of attendees. Helen thanked everyone for coming and once again commented how wonderful it was to have such a large turnout for the meeting.</p> <p>Feedback focused on the 3 priorities identified by members: Promoted routes: (Clare Fildes). No feedback received further to last meeting's request for all to look at interactive map to check promoted routes in their area. Shropshire Way (SW) – CF reported discussions underway with Ramblers – aiming to make SW long distance (LD) route more identifiable. Route agreed at Ramblers meetings. Two main problems identified: 1.) removing old and confusing SW way marking, & 2.) How to identify the L.D. route on the ground, without losing the definition of the circular routes. Idea proposed is to advertise these as 3 distinct levels of walk a.) Long Distance route, b.) Discovery routes & c.) Explorer routes. The shorter routes being the circular and market town explorer routes. Concern over similarity of current way markers and thus confusion. Main difficulties are at route junctions. Please send details to CF of key areas where signage is causing confusion.</p> <p>Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre (SHDC) as a Walking Hub (Charles Edwards): Things remain much as they were as at the last meeting. A small interest group was formed immediately after the last forum meeting – (N.McD, AC, CE) looking at current walks in the area. Recceing existing and new walks has commenced and will continue over the Spring. PB and team working on existing stiles on ROW from the centre. KP recommended improvements on interpretation to increase interest in walks. CE explained aiming to make link with food (given the ethos of Grow,</p>	ALL

Cook, Learn) e.g. drovers routes, foraging foods etc. KP leading seasonal series of walks with food theme. SJ commended the route up to Flounders folly. ML wished to pass on her compliments to the kitchen staff at the Discovery Centre for the excellent Christmas meal there with the Ramblers. CE reported an increase of 25% in January takings year on year. Huge hill to climb regarding income generation, but situation improving. CE confirmed that further to Janet Radford leaving, Catherine Collier is going to take over the management of the Centre.

Volunteering Updates:

P3: (Helen Beresford)

Volunteering Hours

Volunteering hours (County total) – 6,755 hrs representing £61,412

450 Individual Improvements

Volunteering hours for Southern area 2,712 hrs (North -1951 hrs, Central - 2092 hrs)

Grants

All grant requests have come in and are being processed. Just under £5,500 which is £600 under last year's requests, even though more groups applying for grants.

New Groups

Farlow recently signed P3 agreement. Group all in full- time work difficult to get out in the week, so HB arranging training day on Saturday 27th Feb. Thanks to CMFA for their offer of support.

Shrewsbury Ramblers Article

Great article in in the Shropshire Star about Shrewsbury Ramblers P3 – has resulted in enquiries from the probation service, RAF Shawbury and Sundorne School.

Cleobury Mortimer Silver Jubilee

HB congratulated the CMFA on their 25th Anniversary, and extended a huge 'Thank you' for all the hard work and dedication over the years. The Rights of Way in and around Cleobury are testament themselves to what the group has achieved. Here's to the next 25 years!

Walking for Health: (Helen d'Albert) The 14 walks are going well.

10 booked on Volunteer walk leader training on 27th January - 2 unable to attend but keen to rebook on future course, 8 new walk leaders were trained : Church Stretton (4), Rushbury (1), Bishop's Castle (1), Clun (2).

Church Stretton will benefit from help with back-marking, and enable them to set up a grade 2 (45-60 min walk), in next few months - providing the missing link in range of graded walks.

Bishop's Castle will greatly benefit from a further walk leader, (especially as 2 leaders have reduced availability) This will bring the number of regular walk leaders to 4. Volunteers helping out across groups in Clun and Bishop's Castle.

Clun's volunteers will double in number. One of the new leaders is having a baby in the summer. She is keen to bring the baby to the walks- which we

<p>hope will encourage other mothers to join in.</p> <p>Craven Arms - group still heavily reliant on input from Walking Coordinator. A volunteer walk leader from Clun continues to assist. 2 local volunteers are likely to help as back-markers, but no volunteers have come forward to assist leading the walks. Hd'A asked Forum to help spread the word about volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Wild Teams: (Helen Beresford for Simon Brown) The Wild Team Craven Arms group are now running autonomously- Testimony to the time and effort Simon Brown has put in and to the individuals involved. HB asked Forum members to contact either her or Simon if they have any ideas for projects in the area which the group might help with.</p> <p>'Thank you' extended to PE and the National Trust by CF for their support of the Wild Teams. The aim is to increase partnership with organisations such as the National Trust, Corndon Landscape Partnership etc. to support the long term sustainability of the groups. CF- productive meetings have taken place with CASCA and the Ludlow Foyer to assist the Wild Teams.</p> <p>Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre: CE- centre has several volunteers with various focuses, but none specifically focused on walking.</p> <p>National Trust: (Patrick Edwards- Ranger at Long Mynd) Lots of volunteering opportunities. Wild Team volunteers to be signed up as N.T. volunteers to promote long term sustainability of the group and enable them to claim travel expenses. Hosting a 'Baby and Toddler' walk as part of Church Stretton's Walking Festival in Summer.</p> <p>'Public Rights of Way- A guide for landowners and farmers' : ROW team has produced a ROW guide for landowners and farmers. 7,500 copies to be printed. If anyone would like a hard copy or PDF copy emailed to them – contact HB. Volunteers to be provided with some copies to hand to farmers and landowners as needed.</p> <p>Volunteer supplement: Request made for good news stories and feedback from volunteers for articles in next Volunteer Supplement- please send to HB.</p> <p>Council update (Clare Fildes) : The Financial Strategy for 2016/17 and 2017/18 ratified by Cabinet.</p> <p>Council prioritising essential services which will be ring fenced - including Adult Social Care and Children's Services; other services come under the mandatory bracket - these include ROW (funding for which will continue but at a reduced level). Other discretionary services will be cut unless the settlement from Central Government improves.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
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<p>Council tax to increase - with all councils working towards no central government funding by 2020. Council to derive own funding from Council Tax and business rates.</p> <p>All swimming pools, Council leisure centres, parks and open spaces to close by March 2018. The Council will not provide these services after that date. This is a 'worst case scenario', and a strong adverse reaction is expected from the public. It is hoped this, together with lobbying, will generate a more positive outcome.</p> <p>Parks and sites are under threat. The reality is they cannot just be fenced off and closed. This is not practically workable. For the moment there are no other implications for staff in this next financial year, but after that it is unknown.</p> <p>Working on solutions to address Parks and Sites situation – Applying for HLF funding to backfill management time to enable exploration into a range of options to ensure these services as still provided.</p> <p>Looking to local Parish Councils and Town Councils to take on urban greenspace and play areas, but the Countryside Heritage Sites require special management and are of benefit to a much wider area.</p> <p>Question raised- 'How much recognition is there of the Council's statutory ROW responsibilities?' CF positive that Deb Hughes (Outdoor Partnership Service Manager) has clearly outlined this to Council members. They are therefore very aware of their statutory duties.</p> <p>Mapping and Enforcement ROW team are to continue, point noted that their staffing has reduced significantly over the years from 11 to 4 (2 of which work part time). They are very stretched.</p> <p>Question asked by Forum: ' what impact will these cuts and the funding focus have on promoted routes such as the Shropshire Way?' – CF advised that the Shropshire Way continues to enjoy a high priority.</p> <p>If anyone has any comments that they would like to raise with the council about the budget cuts and changes to services then the advice given is to contact the Outdoor Partnership Services Portfolio holder – Cllr Stuart West and send a copy to George Chandler (Director) - Hd'A to send details out with these meeting notes.</p>	
<p>KP highlighted need for Forum members to send case studies in to CF to show the economic and health benefits of walking.</p>	<p>Hd'A</p>
<p>Public Health have assured funding of £200,000 for the next financial year for the Outdoor Partnerships Service. This is to support active volunteering development work, Walking for Health, Wild Teams and some goes into the general Outdoor Partnership Service's work. At the end of the 2016-17 financial year Public Health funding will no longer be ring fenced so it is</p>	<p>ALL</p>

uncertain how this will affect future funding.

N.McD pointed out that Visit England /Visit Britain has merged and if government cuts tourism this is likely to result in a lot of disgruntled visitors to the area, as there is a mismatch between local and government tourism focus. The split between rural and urban economies and the implications of this, also raised by Forum.

Shropshire's Great Outdoors website:

VS stated how useful she has found the interactive map on the website.

Work and future plans of the ROW maintenance team (Paul Butter):

PB outlined the effects of the latest cuts. The maintenance team will actively develop their contracting activity. Any income generated to be ploughed back into the department. This has only just been signed off. Work yet to be done on how best to promote contracting.

They are reorganising staff, and looking at staff skill set. Reassurance given that county is very proud of its P3 volunteers and that support for P3 groups and materials will continue.

PB highlighted that Shropshire is bucking the trend of counties with their ROW team; partly due to the excellent work of the P3 volunteers.

Forum would like a **list of skills that the new Countryside Maintenance Team** will offer so that they can help promote the contracting plans to their local contacts.

CF and PB explained they will provide this for Hd'A to circulate in due course, however further work is needed to clarify specialisms and create new marketing. Unlikely to be available in time for the meeting notes to be circulated. It will be sent out separately to the Forum members.

Walkers are Welcome (Val Simpson):

The number of WaW groups in Shropshire has increased from 4 - 10, with 6 in the south of the county.

The Joint Group formed from several groups was meeting 4 times a year. This has now ceased, given the wide geographical spread for meetings and the groups went down to 3. However a lot of good work has been achieved. Whitchurch hosted the national WaW AGM at short notice.

Yorkshire looking to join 3 of their WaW towns with a walking route, but when Shropshire considered this, they realised the Shropshire Way already links all 3 towns, so no new route is needed. Instead plan to further promote the existing SW route.

Yorkshire has walking festivals that follow on across the local WaW towns so forming a continuous walking festival over a longer period and they co-promote this.

Ironically given the Shropshire joint WaW towns meetings now no longer to continue, the idea of local joint groups was being promoted by the National WaW.

Simon Evan's Way (Val Simpson):

Creating a PDF of the route: about a third of the way through. Plan to

CF /
PB /
Hd'A

complete by summer, in time for the Simon Evans walk on August 7th.

WaW Leaflets:

A small stock of the WaW leaflets printed last year, were held back for distribution this year- further to the meeting **Hd'A to discuss with VS how best to distribute and where.**

AONB – update – (Nigel McDonald)

After review of figures and usage, have made the difficult decision to cut the Castle Connect shuttle bus. The Long Mynd and Stiperstones bus to continue in conjunction with the National Trust for the next 2 years. AONB are investigating new funding opportunities. Not easy as is not a new service (running for over 15 years) so does not meet the remit of many funding pots.

Great Days Leaflet – initially called the Discovery Map, is going to print this week, it is entirely funded by advertisers and 25,000 are being printed.

Caravan and Camping Club have produced an article with the help of the AONB with factual information and photographs, which is due to be printed in their Spring magazine. 300,000 copies are printed and distributed nationally.

Coordinating a bid with lots of partners for European funding- applied for marketing and support for VIC's, website development, etc.

Shropshire Hills Tourism is now entirely separate from Shropshire Tourism.

Date for your diary: * **17th March, Leaflet swop event** at the Discovery Centre Craven Arms- drop in event, so you can have a table or stand, or just pop along and take leaflets to put on the table, or leave with N McD to put out for you.

AONB are not organising guided walks this year.

War walks on the Home Front: (Keith Pybus)

KP "Finnish seamen in British Woods" 100 Finnish Seamen, stranded by the First World War, worked on the Burwarton estate at the time of the timber shortages. They built their own sauna. One of the seaman remained in the area, married a widow and is buried here. This will be the main theme of the walk planned with Ditton Priors History Group and Brown Clee Walkers. There was also a local conscientious objector camp

Walks have enjoyed enthusiastic support from various groups. For more information on the Burwarton story, go to

<http://www.shropshireremembers.org.uk/from-the-baltic-to-burwarton/>

Bid to HLF for funding for 2017-2019 stage of the county's WW1 Commemoration Project was unfortunately unsuccessful. Suggestion made by CF that more success may be achieved if look at smaller funding bids, if

**Hd'A/
VS**

ALL

it is still required?

CF enquired when the Abbey Foregate Interpretation board is to be unveiled, as it is ready and in storage. KP reported the German Embassy had volunteered the presence of a military attaché in uniform and the regional consul: reply from the Lord Lieutenant awaited.

Mayflower Voyage 400 year anniversary 2020 : (Keith Pybus)

DB has booked walk for Wenlock Walking Weekend. Shipton Hall will cater and provide a house tour. Plan is also to create a circular walk. Next stage is to recce mapped route on the ground [KP/CC]. Way Marking to be considered.

Funding issue raised- will need a partner to act as the accountable body in order to apply for **small grant to aid the project**. CF/ HB/ KP to consider this.

AOB:

MH – P3 Ludlow have reviewed and updated the Ludlow Country Walks series of leaflets and the series of 9 leaflets have just gone to print. Plan to do a further 3 to add to the series, but no set timescale for these are reliant on technical help of MH son to produce these and he has limited time due to work family commitments.

Hd'A raised idea of an outdoor meeting for June's Forum (as this was proposed by members at a meeting earlier in the year), but consensus of those present was that the current meeting format was the most productive and useful for information exchange and use of time.

VS Country Walking magazine wrote an article about Simon Evans which was printed in the Dec. issue.

KP wrote a recent article for the Holiday Property Bond magazine about things to do in Shropshire January March. He had led a New Year's Day walk for the bond-holders. Upper Norton pleased with our support.

CF highlighted that these should be noted in the **Volunteer supplement**.

Bishops Castle 9 day Walking Festival: 7th-15th May. Glyn Roberts attended the Forum and handed out leaflets.

Hd'A asked members to send **details of any walks** that are going on in the county to Mick Dunn who will put up on the **Facebook page**- email mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk

Date for next meeting set as follows:

Friday 3rd June 2016 venue to be confirmed.

Please note all agreed action points are highlighted in bold print.

CF /
HB /
KP

VS /
KP

ALL

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Central Shropshire Walking Forum

Notes of Meeting

2pm, Friday 26th February 2016

The Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

Attendees:

John Newnham (Chair)	Shrewsbury Ramblers	john.newnham@btinternet.com
Bill Hodges	Shrewsbury Ramblers	vibill@phonecoop.coop
Phil Barnes	Shrewsbury Ramblers	phil@trigpoint.me.uk
Trevor Allison	Shrewsbury ramblers	eta-06@tiscali.co.uk
Anne Suffolk	Telford & East Shropshire Ramblers	annesuffolk1@gmail.com
Naomi Wrighton	Wellington WaW, Walkabout Wrekin	info@wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk
Dick Bailey	Much Wenlock WaW & WfH	gdickson.bailey@virgin.net
Clare Fildes	Outdoor Partnerships	clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk
Mick Dunn	Outdoor Partnerships	mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk
Helen Beresford	Outdoor Partnerships	Helen.beresford@shropshire.gov.uk
David Hardwick	Outdoor Partnerships	david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk

Apologies:

Barbara Martin
Bob Coalbran
Geoff Sproson
Phil Wadlow

1. Welcome and Introductions

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)

Shrewsbury Ramblers have three volunteers who would carry out research for the Lost Ways Project. If any other groups have volunteers could they please forward the names to John before the end of March so he can produce a consolidated list? Shona Butter (access & mapping team leader) will provide some training for volunteers.

MD informed the meeting that the Dereg guidance due out in April has been delayed. The point of Dereg is to cut down bureaucracy and to make the legal process around ROW easier however evidence will still be required to support claims. Shona will update the forum once more details of the Dereg Bill are known.

4. Severn Way Update (CF)

Unfortunately due to the weather and high river levels the surveys of the Severn Way have not be completed (theses will be completed soon). CF will be looking for volunteers to assist with maintenance (particularly overgrowth) and interpretation for the Severn Way. CF will arrange a meeting in the next few months with key stakeholders & partners.

TA has recently walked a long stretch of the Severn Way and has produced a list of issues. ACTION TA is requested to share this information with DH

JN stated that much of the Severn Way is on road and would it be possible to re-route this closer to the river.

5. Volunteering

a. Parish Paths Partnership Volunteering Update (HB) - 66 active groups covering 68% of the County geographically with Pontesbury and Shrewsbury groups doing work in areas outside their patch

Volunteering hours (County total) – 6755 hrs representing £58,872.50

Southern Area - 2712

Central Area – 2092

Northern Area – 1951

450 Individual Improvements have been made

All running costs grant should now have been processed. The total amount of grants requested is just under £5500 which is £600 below last years' requests even though we have had more groups applying for grants.

New footpath group in Farlow to compliment the already established bridleways group. Hanwood has now established a group and had their first work day. They have already done a lot of work surveying their network, and it is a relatively small Parish, so are already in a position to address issues. Beckbury have a new group and have identified some work as priorities. They will mainly be focussing on bridleways.

Priority areas which were identified for 2015/16 and now have groups are: Kinnerley, Uffington, Alveley, Llanfair Waterdine and Clee St Margaret. Worthen and Shelve also have had some tentative interest from a group. I have contacted two people in Selattyn and Gobowen to arrange a meetings with to see if they would like to be involved in the scheme. Priority Areas which still require action are Ellesmere, Welshampton, Rushbury, Chelmarsh, and Mainstone (although Bishop's Castle have suggested that they take on some of that work).

Meres and Mosses programme - £2650 available, to be spent on training by the end of the project in June 2017. "Skills in Land Management". Within this there are 3 headings relating to footpath maintenance: installing countryside furniture; using brushcutters and trimmers; and managing rights of way. I have sent out a survey to glean interest and establish what people would like to see in the programme, when these are all back we will start putting together a programme.

b. Parish Paths Partnership Central Area (DH) - The Shrewsbury Ramblers P3 have had a very good write up in the Shropshire Star detailing their work in particular the recent improvements on the Severn Way near the Mount in Shrewsbury. A previously very wet muddy stretch of path has been surfaced and revetted, it has coped well following recent floods. This has been a long term winter project with many volunteer days and extra help also provided by volunteers from Shropshire Wild team and Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

Shrewsbury Ramblers P3, Church Stretton P3 and Shropshire Wild Team have also been active in improving the path network around Rushbury and Wall under Heywood following a request for help from the local Walking for Health group. There is still more work to complete in this area.

The Stiperstones and Corndon Landscape Partnership Scheme have managed to achieve funding for many access improvements at Poles Coppice, Nills Quarry and Pontesford Hill near Pontesbury, the local P3 group are and will continue to be active in finishing these.

New P3 groups at Pulverbatch, Hanwood and Worthen are continuing to move towards a formal formation. In the Pulverbatch area a bridleways maintenance team of volunteers has recently reformed and will become active on improving riding routes. There is also interest from new wardens to help with rights of way maintenance at Westbury and Rushbury.

c. Walking for Health – (MD) Walking for Health continues to do well in the Central Shropshire area. Much Wenlock maintain their excellent numbers and groups in Broseley, Albrighton, Alveley, Highley, Marden and the Ladies Walk have had their highest ever numbers in recent months. Numbers in Bridgnorth are picking up and we have just carried out a poster and leafletting campaign in the town. A new group has been started in Bicton Heath. Walk Leader training will take place in Shrewsbury on Friday 11th March.

d. Shropshire Wild Teams – (HB) The Shropshire Wild Team's Alpacas are going from strength to strength, at present the team membership has risen to 12 and are now working independently. They have established an ongoing working partnership with both the National Trust on the Long Mynd and Wenlock Edge as well as the Discovery Centre in Craven Arms and have been doing a lot of clearance work for them.

Much work has also been done in Rectory Wood and they have installed a number of kissing gates around the area. In the pipeline are new partnerships with the AONB's River Clun project and with the Shropshire Wildlife Trust's local reserves. They are also due to revisit earlier projects such as the Long Mynd's Red

Grouse count, the Curlew survey around Clee Hill as well as the Pied flycatcher and Redstart bird box survey around Ratlinghope.

The two other teams are also working well with Shrewsbury membership up to 6 and Oswestry now has between 10 and 12 members. Both groups have been working in partnership with the Canal and River Trust, Cambrian Railway Heritage Project, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

6. Public ROW a guide to Landowners and Farmers (MD)

The ROW guide for Landowners and Farmers have now been printed and are available in hard and electronic versions. The electronic version is available at <http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/public-rights-of-way-a-guide-for-landowners-and-farmers/>. Shona Butter is also looking at producing a guide for ROW users (walkers, riders and cyclists).

7. Ploughing and Cropping (MD)

The enforcement team will be sending initial letters to persistent offenders (reminding them of their legal duty) and anyone who has been reported for P&C issues in the past year. Follow up inspections will be carried out by the team with assistance from the Ramblers groups in the North where most of the issues are. Stage two letters will be issued at this stage if paths have not be reinstated followed by legal notice. If necessary the maintenance team will reinstate the path and the costs reclaimed. In addition the landowner will be reported to the Rural Payments Agency.

8. Shropshire Way Circular Route (AM)

A meeting was held on Monday 22nd Feb with representatives from Ramblers groups across the County. The following observations/suggestions were raised:

- a. We need a Shropshire Way Association to further the reinstatement of the Shropshire Way Long Distance Route.
- b. Other individuals were identified who may join and contribute:
 - Tony Ecclestone – Wem Walkers
 - Andrew Careless – Senior ROW officer Telford and Wrekin Council
 - Paula Doherty – Telford and Wrekin Ramblers
 - Luke Neil – Meres & Mosses
 - Liz Evans – North Shropshire Walking Forum
- c. Need to ensure the Long Distance route is on the OS Map? Deadline may be imminent.
- d. It is important to have a distinct waymark for the LD route.
- e. The recommended direction for walking the route should be carefully considered.
- f. The link to Whitchurch should be named as such rather than the link to the sandstone trail.
- g. Links or signs to other long distance paths would be useful.
- h. Bodies identified for possible funding.
- i. A formal SWA could apply for external grants.
- j. Needs more clarity on project. Another meeting with Deb Hughes and CF would be useful. ACTION CF is requested to look at a suitable date for a meeting.

9. Other Updates

a. Permissive Paths (JN) – John raised concerns that permissive paths or unauthorised diversions may be used as a viable alternative to using the law to get blocked rights of way opened up. MD assured the form that even if permissive paths were agreed that this would not negate the need for the official line to be open and available. If there are cases where unofficial diversions have been created MD requests that the details are forwarded to Shona Butters team for investigation.

b. Shropshire Council Financial Strategy (CF)

The Financial Strategy for 2016/17 and 2017/18 has been ratified by the Cabinet.

The Council are prioritising essential services which will be ring fenced - including Adult Social Care and Children's Services; other services come under the mandatory bracket - these include ROW (funding for which will continue but at a reduced level). Other discretionary services will be cut unless the settlement from Central Government improves.

Council Tax will increase - with all councils working towards no central government funding by 2020. Council to derive own funding from Council Tax and business rates.

All swimming pools, Council owned leisure centres, parks and open spaces are under threat of closure by March 2018. The aspiration is for the Council not to provide these services after that date. This is a 'worst case scenario', and a strong adverse reaction is expected from the public. It is hoped this, together with lobbying, will generate a more positive outcome.

Parks and sites are under threat. The reality is they cannot just be fenced off and closed. It is possible that local Parish and Town Councils may take on urban greenspace and play areas, but the Countryside Heritage Sites require special management and are of benefit to a much wider area. Options for managing these differently are being considered.

c. Shropshire Great Outdoors Launch – (CF) There will be a "soft Launch" of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website before Easter. This will include the "top experience" section which is being finished by the designers.

d. Annual ROW Survey – (CF) Forum members were reminded to encourage as many people as possible to complete the Annual ROW survey which will close on the 21st March 2016 <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/outdoor-recreation-annual-public-survey/>

e. Walking Festivals and Events – (MD) a list of all walking festivals, Charity walks and events is being compiled (list can be found at Annex A). All forum members are requested to pass on the details to their group members and encourage them to support their local walks. If anyone knows of any other events could they please pass them on to MD. All events will be advertised on Facebook and the Shropshire Great Outdoors Website.

10. Group Updates

a. Shrewsbury Ramblers – (JN) Thanks to the efforts of our Publicity Secretary, Amanda Hartley-Newton, we have, since the beginning of this year, received tremendous coverage in the News media. Firstly a 4 page spread in the January edition of the Shropshire magazine, and then a full page in the Shropshire Star and a subsequent one in The Shrewsbury Chronicle extolling the work of our P3 Group in repairing and maintaining footpaths.

A new Programme has just been issued, listing walks up until the end of June. The compilation of the walks is now in the hands of some 6 members of the Group, each with responsibility for differing days in the week. Included in the Newsletter section of the Programme is an appeal from me for volunteers to do research work on the Lost Ways project. Details are there, too, of a Walk Leader Training Workshop to take place in Upton Magna Village Hall on Saturday, 23rd April. We obviously hope it will result in more members coming forward to lead walks on future programmes.

JN recently had a meeting with Mike Connor (Shrewsbury Tourist Association) about Shrewsbury becoming a Walkers are Welcome town. Mike has requested letters of support from walkers and local business. 4500 "Walks in and around Shrewsbury" guide books have now been sold and a further 1500 are being printed.

b. The Big Path Watch – (TA) The initial results from the Big Path Watch have been sent out to local footpath secretaries. In Shropshire over 1621 kilometre squares were surveyed. All 318 kilometre squares were surveyed in Telford and Wrekin.

	Shropshire	Telford
Negatives	1300 missing signs	700 missing signs
	250 paths not found	125 paths not found
	145 unsafe stiles	60 paths with some form of obstruction
	100 missing stiles and bridges	
	250 undergrowth obstructions	
	175 crop obstructions	

Positives	over 400 attractive views 80 interesting trees Over 650 welcoming features	over 200 attractive views over 50 interesting trees
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- c. Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers – (AS) A lot of work has been carried out on the footpaths in the Telford and Wrekin area. It is now possible to report ROW issues on line in Telford and Wrekin. Andrew Careless is now looking at the Shropshire Way and Severn Way in the Telford and Wrekin area.
- d. Wellington WaW and Walk about Wrekin – (NW) Walking for Health Volunteer Walk Leader training will take place 13th April 2016. The Wellington Walking Festival will take place between 12th & 18th Sep 2016.
- e. Much Wenlock WaW and WfH – (DB) WfH continues to do well in Much Wenlock. New Walker Registration forms have been completed for most walkers. The P3 group are holding a recruitment drive to recruit younger members to assist in the heavier tasks. There has been a lot of positive feedback from visitors who walk in and around Much Wenlock.
- f. Marches LDWA – (GS) Unfortunately Geoff was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following update. The leaflets for Elsie's walk have now been produced and the route is waymarked (some waymarks have been removed in the area between Upper Vessons and the Paddock Farm but will be replaced) There is also a website for the walk <http://www.sproson.com/elsieswalk.html>
The South Shropshire Circular is on Saturday 27th Feb from Clun, and the Wenlock Olympian walk is on July 18/19 following a 100K route over the Clees, Wenlock Edge, Caradoc and the Lawley.

11. AOB

- a. CF – Is looking at a Heritage Lottery bid to set up and LPS for the Wrekin. Clare will be organising a meeting soon for key stakeholders and partners.
- b. BH – The Holliday Fellowship will be holding their annual meeting in Shrewsbury on the 9th April.
- c. TA – The St Winifred's Pilgrimage walk will take place during the 3rd Sat in June 2016

12. Date of Next Meeting

Fri 13th May TBC

2016 SHROPSHIRE WALKING FESTIVALS / CHALLENGE WALKS / CHARITY WALKS / EVENTS

WALKING FESTIVALS

30th Apr – 08th May 2016. Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival www.visitironbridge.co.uk/walkingfestival

07th May – 15th May 2016. Bishops Castle Walking Festival www.walkingfestival.co.uk

20th May – 22nd May 2016. Whitchurch Walking Festival www.whitchurchwalkers.co.uk

23rd Jun – 26th Jun 2016. Church Stretton Walking Festival www.churchstrettonwalkingfestival.co.uk

09th Sep – 12th Sep 2016. Much Wenlock Walking Weekend www.2shrop.net/wenlock.walks

12th - 18th Sep 2016. Wellington Walking Festival www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk

CHALLENGE WALKS

27th Feb 2016. The South Shropshire Circular. 25mile challenge walk
<https://www.ldwa.org.uk/Marches/E/15250/34th-south-shropshire-circular.html>

14th May 2016. The Clun Valley Challenge Walk Choose either the 26 or 16 mile route, both with some challenging Shropshire Hills. www.clunvalleychallenge.com

11th – 12th Jun 2016. The Oswestry Round Walk 33 miles in one day (11th June) or complete the distance over 2 days (11 & 12 June) www.oswestryround.co.uk/events.html

16th – 17th Jul 2016. Wenlock Olympian Walk 100km challenge in 28 hrs www.ladwa.org.uk/marches

11th Sep 2016. The Tour des Marches Walk (formerly the Wistanstow Challenge Walk) follows a stunning route through the South Shropshire Countryside. <http://wistanstowwalk.blogspot.co.uk>

1st – 2nd Oct 2016. Longmynd Hike. The Longmynd Hike is a 50 mile competition hike which takes place over the first weekend of October each year. On line entries will open at 09:00 on Sunday 5th June 2016
www.longmyndhike.org.uk

CHARITY WALKS

5th Mar 2016. The Pontesbury Potter 13 mile Hill and Valley Trail, starting and finishing at the Mary Webb School Pontesbury. In aid of the Severn Hospice www.severnospice.org.uk

20th Mar 2016. Derwin College 10 mile charity walk (Oswestry) <http://www.derwen.ac.uk/visit/events/>

23rd Apr 2016. The Severn Stride 17 mile charity walk in aid of Severn Hospice. The walk starts at the hospice site in Apley, Telford and finishes at Severn Hospice, Bicton, Shrewsbury www.severnospice.org.uk

30th April 2016. Bishops Castle Round and About Walks Ramble Scramble or Amble over a choice of routes (22.5 miles, 13 miles or 9.5 miles) for Leukaemia Research www.bishopscastle.co.uk/tourism/walking/

07th May 2016. Midnight Walk Shrewsbury in aid of Severn Hospice. 8 km midnight walk starting from the Shrewsbury Sports Village at 10pm <http://www.severnospice.org.uk/support-us/events/severn-hospice-events/?ee=195>

21st May 2016. Midnight Walk Telford in aid of Severn Hospice. 8 km midnight walk starting from the Telford College of Arts and Technology at 10pm <http://www.severnospice.org.uk/support-us/events/severn-hospice-events/?ee=194>

22nd May 2016. The Shropshire Regiments Trail. A 7, 4 or 1 mile walk in aid of the Shropshire Regimental Museum. Starting at the Vallets, Richards Castle, Ludlow SY84ET www.shropshireregimentalmuseum.co.uk

25th June 2016. The Mynd Drover 13 or 26 mile charity walk / run in aid of Church Stretton School www.churchstrettonwalkingfestival.co.uk

4th September 2016. Severn Wonders of the Shropshire Hills. 16, 10 or 6 mile walk in aid of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust starting at Minsterly Village Hall and exploring the Outstanding Nature reserves including the Stiperstones, Nipstone, the Hollies and Earls and Pontesford Hill. www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

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