

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.

