

NORTH SHROPSHIRE WALK FORUM NOTES

Ellesmere Mere Bungalow, 2pm, Monday 16th October 2017.

Present: Trevor Allison (Ramblers), David Bevan (Criftins Councillor), Peter Carr (Ramblers), Colin Chandler (Oswestry P3), Tony Eccleston (Wem Walkers), Liz Evans (Walking Co-Ordinator), Clare Fildes (O P Enterprise Manager), Janet Hankey (Cockshutt P3), Jane Ing (Baschurch P3), Ian McKenzie (Kinnerley P3), Ann Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Neil Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Kevin Sutherland (Hinstock P3), Carol Warner (Parish Council Clerk for Lyneal and Welshampton).

Apologies:

Mark Cuthbert-Brown (Kinnerley P3), Paul Goulbourne (Mere Rambles), Kevin Ikin (Whixall P3), Mark Leather (Trefonen P3),

Ploughing and cropping

Shona is preparing a report outlying the results from both last year's and this year's campaign which will be sent out when it is completed, hopefully in the next couple of weeks.

Due to the increased production of maize and rape for fuel this is becoming more of a problem as it is impossible to walk through if it has not been cleared. The following points were raised:

Farmers who are known to plant maize to be contacted later in the year to remind them of the need to keep a path through the crop or leave a path around their field giving permission for people to walk around the edge. (Shona has this in hand for going out in the next couple of weeks).

Farmers who plant rape seed are asked to leave a wider footpath as the main issue is when the plants have ripened and fall over onto the footpath.

The NFU could also put out notices to farmers

Local councillors could contact landowners

Harvey to consider use of power machine to cut through crops

Farmers also have issues with walkers who allow their dogs to stray and do damage to livestock and crops. Walkers themselves do not always keep to the correct path and leave litter.

The Ramblers continue to liaise with farmers

A small percentage of farmers and walkers make things difficult for everyone else by their behaviour and the best way forward is to work together

Clare and Shona plan to produce a leaflet similar to the one for landowners, but this one would be guidance for people using footpaths.

Walking for Health

Nationally, Macmillan Cancer Support will no longer be a sponsor from April 2018. The Ramblers have enough funds to continue to support Walking for Health and one of their trustees, who is also a commissioning GP in Birmingham, is leading on finding a new partnership.

Locally, public health funding will be reduced from April 2018 which will have an effect on how this is delivered locally. There have been 4 workshops to inform volunteers of this and a working party will be established to find ways to continue to provide support for groups.

Helen Foxall has been piloting the Daily Mile for Schools scheme and it is hoped to offer this as a package to get children more active.

The next walk leader training is:

Wednesday 1st November in Craven Arms

Monday 4th December in Shrewsbury.

Please contact Liz if you want to book.

P3 – report from Helen Beresford

Another good quarter from the P3 groups contributing 2822 hours

Total for this year is 5595

New groups: Hopesay, Bridgnorth and Selattyn & Gobowen, all have been out on their first workdays

Huge thank you to all of the groups involved in waymarking the Shropshire Way Main Route.

Shropshire Way Main Route

The southern loop has now been launched and should be waymarked with the new waymarks. Improvements are still ongoing.

A new website has been launched by the Shropshire Way Association to promote the route for long distance walking holidays. <http://shropshireway.org.uk/>

A proposed northern route has been put forward and surveying and waymarking of this will start in the New Year.

Volunteer Celebration

This will be held on 7th November 2017 at Severn Valley Country Park and Alveley Village Hall.

There will be a number of events in the morning followed by a talk about the Country Park and its history and the projects and improvement which have happened this year.

Maintenance Report from Harvey

Clearance & stiles replacement with kissing gates in various parishes
Main work area - Prees (routes around village)

Other Parishes (Mainly kissing gates for stiles)

Greatness/Littleness	Ruyton	
Ellesmere	Petton	
Whittington	Whitchurch	
Baschurch	Wem	
Loppington	Hodnet	West Felton

Whittington P3 groups - meeting soon to look at their network/improvements.

Walkers are Welcome

The 4 sessions for the year have now been delivered in Oswestry. It is doubted if Liz will be able to continue this next year. Dave Andrews, author of 'The Oswestry Round', has a book out called 'Gobowen to Everest' which tells the story of an unusual journey and the memorable people met along the way.

Next year's Whitchurch Walking Festival will be May 11th -13th. Plans are ongoing for this event.

Shropshire Council Update

There will be reduced funding next year resulting in a need to focus on other ways of bringing money in.

Examples of this are the Severn Valley Country Park and Mere at Ellesmere, which will be developed and promoted with events.

There will be a European funding bid to improve signage and access.

Relaunch of the membership scheme which will now include family and joint membership. The Boathouse at Ellesmere and Hi-Gear sports in Shrewsbury are 2 examples of businesses offering discounts. These businesses are advertised on the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website so if anyone knows of a business that would be interested, please let Clare know. A great xmas present. 😊

The updating of the Shropshire Great Outdoors strategy is ongoing which will have a broader agenda than the present one and will include partners such as the Canal and Rivers Trust.

If anyone can put the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website in their local newsletters please let Clare know.

Other

Trevor has been investigating the reasons for temporary footpath closures on railway lines. He has discovered there should be 305 metres of visibility each way on a 90mph stretch to be safe and this is increased by 50% for vulnerable people. 62 are threatened with closure nationally and there is a public enquiry on Friday.

Peter said the Ramblers are producing a technical guide for new multi-user paths. The proposals should be done next month. This is not about bikes being able to use all footpaths, but paths in a more urban area, or for example along old railway lines etc.

Next Meeting – Monday 29th January 2018, 2pm, The Bungalow, Swan Hill,
Ellesmere, SY12 0DQ.