

SHERSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Sherston Footpaths Group held in Sherston Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Wednesday July 2nd 2008

Present:

Martin Rea
 Jay Dunn
 Steve Dunn
 Nigel Freeth
 Helen Freeth
 Kath Shard
 Steve Shard
 Graham Hayman
 Maggie McKenna
 Phylip Harries
 Andy Osborn
 Sue Morris
 Graham Morris

1. Apologies.

Received from Sue McKechnie ,Phil and Helen Williams

2. Appointments

Martin Rea kindly agreed to act as Acting Chairman. Maggie McKenna agreed to take Minutes of the meeting.

3. Relationship with Parish Council.

It was agreed that we should work through the Environment Committee of the Parish Council in any dealings we might have with the County Council.

4. Aims and Objectives.

The meeting agreed with the Aims and Objectives set out in the Agenda.

5. Relationship with County Council and Unitary Authority

Martin Rea gave the meeting some background on the relationship the Parish had had with the County Council in relation to Rights of Way and said that historically it had seemed to take some time for matters to be progressed. He proposed that we invite the representative of the County Council (Colin Lovelock/Alison Stewart - Chippenham) to come to talk to us.

Nigel Freeth reported that someone from the County Council had been on his land and so it appears that, following the report on the state of the paths prepared by Jay and Steve Dunn, representatives from the Rights of Way Dept have been inspecting the various Footpaths and Bridle ways. It seemed that an audit was being carried out on some 17 paths within the Parish which had been flagged up as having problems.

Martin Rea also reported to the meeting on the changing relationship that may arise between the Parish and the new Unitary Authority – Wiltshire Council - that will come into being shortly. It seems that the parish may well be able to take over the organisation of certain local responsibilities. The Parish Council were generally in favour of this new arrangement but it was thought that it would take some two or three years before the arrangement would be operational.

6. Path Watch Scheme

The idea was discussed that it might be possible for people to take responsibility for a particular walk – to walk it regularly and report any problems that might arise. In principal

this was thought to be a good idea but the meeting agreed that it would be more relevant when the project was more advanced.

7. Current Action re Paths

Martin Rea reported on the present action that was in progress re the Rights of Way.

SHER20 – (Grovewood – Mr Cambridge). It appears that there is an ongoing problem with this path that the occupier of the land refuses to resolve. Therefore, the meeting requested, through the Chairman, that the Parish Council should request the County Council to issue an Enforcement Notice.

SHER11/13/14/15 – (Ladyswood – Mr Sweet). Jay Dunn reported that, following the report that had been sent on the Footpaths to the County Council, these sections had been inspected and so it seemed sensible to await developments from the County Council.

8. Publicity.

Martin Rea reported that a piece about the new Footpath Group had been included in the June issue of the Sherston Parish Council circulation.

The Sherston Cliffhanger – the new newsletter due to commence in October – would be a good vehicle for any reporting on Group progress and to encourage people to get involved in the project.

There is a Footpath page on the Sherston website [www.sherston.org](http://www.sherston.org.uk) .uk which will need to be expanded to give details of the Group

The Chairman suggested that the members of the Group could try to come up with ideas as to how the project could be publicised. This will be more relevant when matters are a little further advanced.

9. Booklet.

It was proposed that one of the main aims to support this project would be to produce a new publication for Sherston that would incorporate information about the parish walks.

Over the years several leaflets/booklets have been produced that give very interesting facts and comment about the Parish but it might be more effective to have all this information pulled together into one publication. This should be an attractive and 'user-friendly' product that, hopefully, could also produce some revenue.

The 'Walks on Wheels' booklet produced by the Cotswold Conservation Board was shown to the meeting as a good example of the sort of thing that might be produced.

Although it would be important not to make the publication too complicated, it could include historical, geological, ecological and topographical information about the Parish together with the suggested walks.

Phylip Harries has agreed to produce a 'mock up' of a publication and he asked that if any members of the Group have any relevant documents they could be passed to him.

10. Grove Community Wood.

Martin Rea reported that the Parish Council have acquired this piece of woodland for benefit of the Parish. Firstly a stock-proof fence is to be erected and then discussions will take place as to future management of the site..It was agreed that it would be sensible for the Footpath Group to include those resident who were interested in helping with Grove Wood.

11. Promoting Walking in the Parish.

The meeting discussed the formation of a regular walking group in due course. There are several such groups already in the wider area. The local Cotswold Warden is Noel Banks and Malmesbury have a Footpath Group.

During an earlier discussion Martin Rea reported that he was trying to encourage the local Scout Group to adopt the walking of the Rights of Way as a Community Project. Work in progress!

It was proposed and agreed that the walks described in Pat Gubbins' booklet 'Walks Around Sherston' should be divided up between the Group and they would walk the 'adopted' route – noting interesting aspects of the walks and taking some photos of views or features.

Walk 1 - Morris
Walk 2 - Freeth
Walk 3 - Harries
Walk 4 - Dunn
Walk 5 - Shard
Walk 6 - Osborn
Walk 7 - Harries
Walk 8 - Rea
Walk 9 - Dunn
Walk 10 Freeth

Those who were not present at the meeting but who had expressed an interest in the Group would be invited to adopt one or two of the routes. There was no problem in more than one or two people reporting on the same route.

12. AOB

It was agreed that the Group should acquire some useful publications: Malmesbury Footpath Group booklet (Maggie McKenna); Out in the Country, produced by Natural England (Martin Rea); Rights of Way – A Guide to Law and Practice (Martin Rea).

13. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the Chairman should find out from the County representative when it might be possible for him to come to talk to us, as this might provide us with a date for our next meeting.

MM
05.07.08