

Minutes of the meeting of the Sherston Footpaths Group held in Sherston Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 19 November 2008

Present:

Martin Rea
Maggie Mckenna
Phylip Harries
Stan Bunce
Pat Bunce
Guida Bryant
Nigel Freeth
Helen Freeth
Roger Allen
Sue McKechnie

1. Apologies were received from Steve and Jay Dunn, Graham and Sue Morris, Richard Skeffington and Andy Osborn .
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of 1 October 2008.

The Minutes of the above meeting were duly approved.

3. W.C.C. Rights of Way.

Martin Rea reported that he had heard nothing further from the C.C. following our previous meeting and that it was fairly clear that there isn't any great will to progress these projects immediately as they are short of finance, man-power and time. C.C. appeared to be reluctant to get involved in enforcement for the same reasons.

However, it was suggested that we should get C.C. to write to the relevant landowners in respect of over-cropping (RoW 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 31, 32). This would only be possible if we had an accurate record of these landowners and Nigel Freeth said he would try to find out the information required (with any input from the Group).

Apparently a C.C. database is in the process of being set up which will list this information.

4. Protocol.

Martin Rea suggested that there should be a 'protocol' for local complaints. W.C.C. want us to do the paperwork but Martin said it would be better for us to prepare a general letter explaining who we are and what we are about. This would be better PR and would pave the way for any future correspondence and action we might want to take. This letter would ask for offers of help in marking paths correctly and repair work etc. Nigel Freeth said that farmers are required to declare on their subsidy forms the condition of their RoW and Footpaths so this is a great incentive for them to co-operate. Martin will draft a letter for the Group to consider.

5. Current action re paths.

Footpath 13 – Footpaths 14/15.

Ladyswood House (Mr Sweet).

Stan Bunce reported that there were some signed – except 13 (stile in hedge overgrown); no signs at intersection of 14/15; no exit from the paddock.

Ladyswood Stables (Mr Mead/polo activity).

W.C.C. to enforce these on the basis previously reported by them to the Group.

Footpath 18 - Commonwood Road.

Hunting gate has been removed. Next two stiles overgrown. Gate has to be climbed.

Footpath 19.

There is no entrance back onto the road

Footpath 7.

Runs alongside buildings and is totally overgrown.

Martin Rea reported that he had done some research on how other councils dealt with their RoW. Stroud produced a plan but nothing seemed to have progressed further. Martin said he will talk to County and see if there will be a database. If so we will use to make our work simpler.

6. Parish Improvement Grant.

Martin Rea reported that this looked interesting and would look at it again next Spring. It could be a useful source to help with work etc. and includes permissive routes.

7. Walks Booklet.

Phylip Harries showed a 'dummy' to the Group for discussion. We will need an O.S. licence to reproduce any map – Phylip was hoping that we can get a 'blank' map from County to use as a template. He could then produce a simpler form of the map with appropriate walks numbered, maybe indicating the various interesting features.

Martin Rea reported that N.W.D.C. had various sources of funding but, as these needed to be allocated by March 2009, it is not realistic to think that we could be ready to make use of these.

Stan Bunce suggested limiting the number walks, maybe six to start with, but making sure they were interesting and of varied distance. Martin Rea said the Group should select the walks we want to concentrate on and get those 'up to scratch'. Various points were discussed: there should be a Village Walk; walks with access for pushchairs etc.; points of historical interest; advice on parking facilities etc.

Martin proposed that there should be a meeting exclusively on the Walks Booklet and this was agreed by the Group.

8. Working Party/Tree Warden

Tree Warden Scheme

Martin Rea said Parish Council was involved in a Tree Warden Scheme – he said he was not sure what this would involve but he would keep the Group informed of any developments.

Working Party

Clerk of the Parish Council was checking re the position on insurance for volunteers. Noel Banks would be asked to find out how Stroud Valley groups manage this. Sue McKechnie would contact the Colerne Parish Councillor (Russell Harding) to see if he could provide additional information.

9. Publicity – Cliffhanger

Martin Rea proposed that we should put in an article saying what we are doing and when our meetings are planned. This will help disseminate information and also farmers/landowners will be aware of our activities.

10. Matters Arising.

There were no additional points raised.

11. Next Meeting

Wednesday 21 January 2009.

It was proposed that this meeting should be specifically about the Walks Booklet.

MM

11.12.08