



Newsletter and Programme May - August 2021

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Rail Rambles Website: www.railrambles.org - Leaflets available from Shrewsbury railway station and Tourist Information

Chair's Report from Neville Hubbard

We received the all clear to resume Group walks from the 12th April and our 4-month programme commences in May. There is no cap on the numbers aside from that placed by the walk leader as the government recognises the health and wellbeing benefits organised outdoor activity. The green light was also given for the key activities associated with path maintenance.

Despite the backdrop of uncertainty and much trepidation, the walk leaders' response for the new programme has been excellent. Yes, there are gaps, but we will seek to plug the gaps with ad hoc walks as we move through the programme. I would like to thank walk leaders for coming forward to lead walks, I appreciate the circumstances are not easy. We will continue the practice of booking with the walk leaders so that the walk leader can control the number of walkers they are comfortable with or limited to due to car parking constraints. We will continue to avoid using pre-walk assembly points & will only publish the start point for each walk.

As for reinstatement of coach trips, meetings, training & social events we continue to be guided by the National Ramblers rule set that is regularly updated on the website. The advice given is regularly updated here: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/coronavirus>

I do hope you can get out and about and enjoy the walking programme and catch up with old friends. I am sure you will all play your part in welcoming our new members and make them feel relaxed and comfortable. See you soon – Nev.

ONLINE WALK LEADERS TRAINING

With no face-to-face training possible at the moment Ramblers have developed an online course. It covers what to consider before, during and after the walk, including safety and managing tricky situations, provides practical tips and gives you a chance to hear from other walk leaders. The course can be found in the Assemble section and you login with your normal Ramblers details.

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone/assemble.aspx>

- Go to your profile. To do this, click on your initials on the black menu bar in the top right of the screen and choose 'View profile details'.
- Click on the Training tab in your profile. See the image below to locate the Training tab. Here, you will see the training opportunities available for your role.
- Click on 'Go to course'. You should be able to clearly see the Walk Leadership Foundation course in the Training section of your profile. Click on Go to Course and you'll be able to get started!



As you will see from the gaps in the programme, we need to encourage some more walk leaders. Curt Williams (pictured) led his first walk on 15th December – a 9 miles Moderate+ from the Plough at Wistanstow. A beautiful walk and he did not lose anyone on the way. Curt has been doing the online course so ask him for any comments on it. He can certainly throw away those L plates now.

AWAY WEEK – ABERGAVENNY

We regret that, under the current situation, there is not the appetite to go ahead with the away week this year. Hopefully it can take place in 2022

Don't Lose Your Way

The Shropshire Don't Lose your Way Team held a launch meeting on Monday 12th April. Trevor Allison (Shropshire Walking Environment Secretary) will now provide a priority list of areas where opportunities exist to substantially enhance the walking network. Volunteers will look at the British Horse Society website to establish whether it can be used to submit claims. Will Tandy & Trevor Allison will brief the team after they have attended a training session on the 6th May. It was strongly felt that the Ramblers need to develop improved training material to ensure that a consistent approach is taken across all areas of the country. What is clear, is that more volunteers are needed to sift through the potential 1,594 miles of lost ways identified within Shropshire. It is vital that Shropshire plays its part to ensure that we enhance our walking network as much as possible. One example I found was a stretch of footpath that was included in the 1900 OS maps that would complete a lovely circular walk to Hanwood.

Anyone interested in participating contact Nev on reabrookwolf@aol.com



COACH TRIP REFUNDS



Due to continuing uncertainty regarding Covid restrictions the Committee has reluctantly decided to cancel coach trips. Currently Ramblers nationally have suspended coach travel and until informed otherwise we cannot make plans for future trips. Once we are advised accordingly, we can take steps to reinstate trips within our programme.

As well as the general uncertainty, we are of the opinion that coach travel with a large number of people in close proximity is not viably safe. Although vaccination is claimed to offer good protection against infection, there is still a need to maintain social distancing.

Moreover, coach companies may well limit the number of passengers in order to allow social distancing which would impact the cost of travel and mean that on current take up we would be oversubscribed. Nor do we want to risk organising new trips until there is greater certainty that we will not have to cancel.

Consequently, we will refund all money collected for the various trips: Slate Trail; West Kirby; Bangor and the admission cost to Downton Gorge which was organised around car sharing. This means that we will take new bookings once details of future trips are known.

Last year we carried forward the amounts we received from members in the hope that we could go ahead in 2021. With a further postponement until next year, we consider the time interval is now too long. Moreover, as a charitable organisation we are not able to accumulate balances over a lengthy period.

Whether payment was made by bank transfer or by cheque, reimbursement will be directly into a member's bank account. If you subscribed to more than one trip a single refund will be made. Some members also paid for friends and we would ask you to pass on the appropriate amount. We have in any case just the bank details of the person who paid.

If your bank details have changed since making payment (*after 1 October 2019*) please contact pgreeve@talktalk.net or telephone 01743 240686 with the name of the bank, account holder(s) account number and sort code. As soon as possible please.

We anticipate refunds will be completed over the next few weeks. As we all appreciate bank security is rightly protected and we need to follow a set procedure for each transaction. Any queries about the refunds please contact as above.

Finally, we all look forward to the days when we can enjoy a day's walking in a different area. We also appreciate the frustration of those prepared to organise and lead these trips.

Hopefully, our local walking programme will assume more normal conditions in the coming months and can then look forward to more distant locations.

Observations on the Planning Application for the proposed Shrewsbury North-West Relief Road and the implications for the footpath network by Neil Mosley



Starting at the western end of the proposed road (Churncote Roundabout) the first right of way (ROW) affected is a footpath (0408/7/) from Welshpool Road to Calcott Lane. Because Calcott Lane will be severed by the NWRR, it will no longer be possible to access Bicton via this route. The footpath will terminate on the south side of a new multi-user route alongside the new road. This will give access westwards to Churncote Roundabout, and eastwards along the length of the NWRR. If the proposed housing development between Calcott Lane and Shepherd Lane is built, it will cease to be a rural footpath.

The west-east footpath (0408/9/1) between Calcott Lane and Shepherds Lane will be slightly diverted onto a proposed new bridleway on the north side of the NWRR linking Calcott Lane and Shepherd's Lane. This route will give access to the proposed footbridge over the NWRR some 140 metres east of Shepherd's Lane. These will provide a link between Bicton and Bicton Heath some 300 metres longer than the present shortest route.

The line of footpath 0443/8Y/1 & 2 (Welshpool Road to Shepherds Lane) will be unaffected and will follow a green corridor through the proposed housing site. Access to the proposed 'Shepherd's Lane' footbridge will be available from Shepherds Lane which will also be severed by the NWRR. The footbridge will be approached on both sides by sloping ramps going both west and east, so all possible routes will be catered for.

The next ROW affected is the little used (as a through route) footpath from Bicton Heath church to Severn Hospice (0408/13/1) and onto Holyhead Road. This footpath is already going to be diverted around a new building at Severn Hospice. Part of its current route crosses some rough scrubland which is scheduled for re-development, so it will ultimately become an urban footpath. With regard to the NWRR, it is proposed that this footpath will be diverted via the multi-user route over the new Clayton Way road bridge. The new bridge is the proposed new access to the Oxon Hall Caravan Park.

It is noted that the proposed bridleway route on the north side of the NWRR which stretches from Calcott Lane, via Shepherd's Lane, forms a new link along the south side of the Caravan Park, across Clayton Way, then parallel to the NWRR and out to the Holyhead Road. It then follows the road eastwards to connect with the Severn Way. This is a welcome alternative route as much of its length is away from the margins of the NWRR.

The next ROW's that are affected are the Severn Way and the footpath parallel to the river across Shelton Rough (0443/112/1). They will both be diverted through an underpass beneath the NWRR to continue along the Severn Way towards Shrewsbury.

Having crossed the River Severn, the next ROW encountered will be the dead-end Laundry Terrace footpath (0443/89/2). This will be connected to the multi-user route along the NWRR, giving a route on foot towards the Agricultural Showground and Berwick Road. In this same area there is no proposed connection from the multi-user route to the dead-end restricted byway leading towards Willow Pool (0443/113/3) which ends a few metres south of the NWRR.

The restricted byway along the northern portion of Gravel Hill Lane (0443/114/2) is proposed for a slight diversion of its northern 180 metres onto a vehicular track currently used to access the B5067 (Berwick Road). This removes any clash between walkers and vehicles leaving/accessing the B5067 and the new Berwick Road roundabout. It does not significantly affect users of the ROW.

The next ROW's affected are the footpaths leading from Corporation Lane (Coton Hill) west of the railway line, leading towards Hencott and Alkmund Park Farm. These footpaths will be rationalised e.g. diversion along the route beside the railway and through the Old River Bed, which has been in use for many years. A couple footpaths west of Hencott will be extinguished in this area, but this will not adversely affect footpath connectivity in this area.

The footpath from the existing railway bridge at Hencott towards Alkmund Park Farm (0443/94/1) will cross the NWRR via an accommodation bridge called the Marches Way Bridge (though the route of the Marches Way is no longer acknowledged by the Ordnance Survey). Adjacent to this bridge will be a link to the multi-user route on the south side, and on the north side a link will be provided to a new footpath route to cross the northern parapet of the road bridge over the Shrewsbury to Chester railway line. This new footpath will connect to the long out-

of-use route (0443/104/1) on a new alignment and extension which will eventually connect with the footpath from Crosshill to Hencott Pool (0443/96/1) at Hencott Pool.

The final ROW affected by the NWRR is footpath from Crosshill to Hencott Pool (0443/96/1). This is proposed to be an all-grade crossing of the NWRR, with access south from the multi-user route towards Shrewsbury, and across the NWRR north towards Bomere Heath. There will probably be advisory signs about the possible dangers of crossing the NWRR, but, as it is only a single carriageway in each direction with no central barrier, and so 7.3 metres wide, it will take less than 10 seconds to cross.



Walks for Shropshire Way Festival of Walks Saturday 19 September until Friday 25 September

All walking groups in Shropshire are invited to organise and lead a walk of any distance during the September week. It can be any distance but, in the spirit of the Festival, at least some of the route should be on the Shropshire Way Main Route and possibly finish at a cafe or a pub so the walkers can "toast the Way".

Please think of a walk you could lead in this week to support the SWA as part of our normal programme and email me (Di Higgs) the details before June 25th shrewsburyramblers14@gmail.com

The SWA Photo competition for 2022 Calendar

Have you been out walking on the Shropshire Way during recent months? Have you taken some wonderful photos along the Way? Then, please consider entering the Shropshire Way Association photo competition to find 14 stunning photos for a Shropshire Way 2022 calendar. Photos should be of views taken on the Shropshire Way at any time of year.



Photos taken on a digital camera are preferable to those taken on a smartphone, but either will be accepted as camera photos may be used to produce greetings cards. The minimum resolution required is 300 dots, or pixels, per square inch.

Entries should be sent to shropshirewayassociation@gmail.com before 30th June 2021. Please add your name, a mobile phone number and a brief description of the photo(s). The calendar will be ready for sale from August 2021 so that vital funds can be raised to maintain the comprehensive SWA website and the footpath itself. Winning photos will be announced in early July, ready for inclusion in the calendar. So, get clicking!