

LLANTWIT MAJOR TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE FOOTPATH FORUM
HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2013

Present: Councillors: K Geary
E Williams
M Marsh

Mr G Teague – Public Rights of Way Officer
Mrs H March – Friends of the Heritage Coast
Mrs B Richards – History Society
Mr G Ingram – Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales
Mrs A James – U3A Representative
Mr I Fraser – Ramblers Association
Miss H Mills - Glamorgan Heritage Coast

Apologies: Mr M Lewis – NFU

Councillor K Geary opened the meeting by welcoming Mr Fraser and Miss Mills both new to the Forum being replacements for Mr Woosnam and Miss Ashong. The Chairman expressed thanks from all members of the Forum for the huge contribution both had made over a number of years and passed best wishes to them and their families.

Report

Footpath Forum members had previously been circulated with a copy of the report of the meeting of the Footpath Forum which had been held on 2 July 2013. It was agreed that the report was an accurate recording of the meeting.

Rural Footpaths Grants

Mr Teague updated the members with progress to date which was that the proposal would be to return to the Creation Agreement which should be covered by the grants that are still available. The amount to be offered is to be adjusted to provide a higher figure than previously offered as an incentive. This way forward was agreed by all present.

Proposed Presentation to Promote Walking in the Vale

We had received the offer of a presentation on a project to promote walking in the rural Vale and what it could mean for Llantwit Major. Helen Blackmore the coordinator of the project is prepared to attend the Footpath Forum and to take note of the Forums priorities and concerns at the same time.

It was agreed by all present to invite Helen to the next meeting on 7 January 2014.

Member's Reports

Mr Fraser reported that he had received a complaint that the stile at the Castle Ditches was too high with a large drop down which could be dangerous. A possible solution would be to put steps in.

Mrs March reported that work had been carried out on the stile on FP23 with brambles cut back and removed but it was still difficult to get over the stile as it was very narrow.

Mrs Richards said that she had little to add to what was covered in her annual report prepared on behalf of the History Society. She had recently walked a number of footpaths and noted that they were in good condition.

Mr Ingram delivered his report:

Serious amounts of scrub on the rear field have been cleared, and also grazed. The horses are due to be taken off for the winter in the next week.

Some mowing was carried out on the front (cliff) field) but it has been decided to use a larger mower as the vegetation here is very well established.

The path between the two enclosures is being up graded to take larger machinery and an initial work party will be starting blackthorn removal on the Castle ditch western slopes on Friday 11th October. This will be ongoing.

A moth night was held in September and over 100 species were recorded. A bat evening in September had to be cancelled because of bad weather (the bats couldn't get ATC clearance for take-off!)

It is hoped to start some hedge laying in November at the eastern end of the Reserve.

The Llantwit Major Arts and Crafts Society, under the leadership of Pat Mears, held a very successful exhibition at St. Donats Arts centre of members pictures of the Reserve,(the exhibition is ongoing) under the theme "Wild Cwm Colhuw"

The Glamorgan Heritage Rangers under Chief Ranger, Paul Dunn were very speedy in repairing vandalised cliff top fencing above the beach car park, and sincere thanks must go to them for their prompt response.

Mr Teague handed out his updates to all present and a map showing the annual clearance programme. He assured all that routine maintenance would continue the annual clearance highlighted specific areas on a rolling programme.

He advised that the path by Dimhole was too big but Natural Resources Wales would be attempting to rectify the situation this year if possible; public safety funding should be available.

Dates and Time of Next Meetings

The next meeting of the Footpath Forum will be held on 7 January 2014 at 6.30pm in the Heritage Centre, Town Hall.