

LLANTWIT MAJOR TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE FOOTPATH FORUM
HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2014

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
Mrs B Greenfield - Glamorgan Heritage Coast

In Attendance: Mrs H Blackmore – Creative Rural Communities, VOGC
(For Item 2 on the Agenda)

Apologies: Mr M Lewis – NFU

Councillor K Geary opened the meeting by welcoming Mrs Helen Blackmore from Creative Rural Communities, VOGC who had been invited to give a presentation to the Footpath Forum on raising the profile of walking in the Vale.

Mrs Blackmore gave an informative presentation (copy attached) and took questions from members. She handed out questionnaires seeking opinions on Project ideas; members were asked to return completed questionnaires to the Town Hall within 3 weeks.

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 8 October 2013. It was agreed that the report was an accurate recording of the meeting.

Rural Footpaths Grants

Mr Teague was able to advise that progress was being made and that Mr Navidi had accepted the offer of compensation to an agreed amount. The other 2 areas of the footpath route were still under discussion and Mr Teague was waiting for written proof of ownership of the land in question. The Town Council Footpath Forum representatives were meeting with Mr Mark Cottray on 8 January 2014 to complete the Grant Application form.

Recommended: Following the meeting to be held on 8 January 2014 with Mr Cottray it is proposed that the Town Council match funding for the project would not exceed £2,500.

Member's Reports

Mr Fraser reported that a section of the FP1 from Colhuw to Tresilian Bay was difficult to negotiate owing to deep rutting of the path and could anything be done to improve the situation. Mr Teague advised that he would have the area checked and would hope to have the path scraped and a suitable material added however the work would possibly have to wait until the next financial year.

Mrs March reported that FP23 from the far end of Church Lane down to Dimhole was still overgrown.

Mrs Richards said that the VOGC Highways Department should be commended for the excellent job they carried out in clearing the storm damage to the beach and the car park.

Mr Teague had been unable to bring his latest report on the maintenance programme with him but would forward it for circulation at the earliest opportunity.

Mr Ingram delivered his report:

Blackthorn and scrub clearance continues apace, with a large area of the “Castle Ditches” bank having been cut down.

The aim is to clear completely this bank to allow regeneration of the grasses and wildflowers.

The field in front has now been identified as having resident harvest mice, a shy species, not easy to spot and as a result rather a rarity.

This field will be mown with when conditions permit, again to allow regeneration of the natural floral and vegetation cover.

The footpath (FP4) between the two enclosures is scheduled to be upgraded when the weather permits.

There has already been a positive result from the scrub clearance and grazing of the first (northern)field, as a flourishing crop of waxcaps (amongst other fungi species) appeared, a fungi which only thrives on unimproved grassland.

There will be further events planned during the spring, with the installation of bat boxes. tit boxes and hopefully ongoing species audit.

Cwm Colhuw Reserve is recognised and noted as being one of the few unimproved calcareous grasslands in Wales.

Dates and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Footpath Forum will be held on 1 April 2014 at 6.30pm in the Heritage Centre, Town Hall.