

The Worcestershire Warden

June 2011

'Welcome to the newsletter for all Countryside Service volunteers'

Bredon Community Play & Recreation Group



A local community in Bredon, South Worcestershire has been successful in receiving funding for the re-development of their recreation ground which is owned by the Parish Council and situated in the centre of the village. A local resident – Malcolm Dunn championed the Project and with the support of other local people set up a community group – Bredon Community Play & Recreation. The group, with the support and involvement of many local people and organisations, has been responsible for the majority of the work required to make the project successful, this included grant applications, consultations, planning meetings, and resulted in funding from different sources, including RDPE LEADER, Big Lottery Fund's Community Spaces programme and Playbuilder. The overall vision is to create an inviting and inclusive space for all in the community wanting to enjoy the outdoors through play, sport and recreation.

The development includes new and adventurous play equipment for children of all ages and areas of Natural Play as well as Older Youth Zones. Wildlife areas, social seating, a path network and areas of new planting of plants and shrubs are also included in the re-development plans. Members of the Community Greenspace Team within Worcestershire's Countryside Service have worked with local residents and volunteers to clear vegetation and prune trees and shrubs in areas adjacent to the recreation ground and sports pitches. This clearance work was in preparation for shrub planting by classes of school children from the local Primary School. The main ground works on the site should be completed by the summer and the Greenspace Team will continue to work with local volunteers during the Autumn & Winter on establishing and maintaining the more natural areas of the recreation ground and setting up a regular small work party for the continuing care of the site.

Clifton on Teme Bridleway 506 Bridge Replacement



Bridleway CT-506 crosses Sapey Brook at Hope Mill to the south west of Clifton-on-Teme. There was a ford with a treacherous approach down the bank from the mill side and a narrow bridge requiring a new deck for walkers.

It was decided to replace the bridge with a bridle bridge, refurbish the unstable stone abutments and improve the approach to the ford, should some riders wish to continue using it.

The photographs show the original bridge and the new bridge under construction and in use. The timber deck will receive a volunteer applied anti slip coating in the near future.

Spring Clean Your Parish Bridges And Prolong Their Lives!

The life of a timber bridge can be significantly extended by cleaning out the soil and organic matter that accumulates on the top of the beams in the gaps between the deck boards. This material absorbs and retains rainfall and starts the rotting process, which then penetrates ever deeper until the beam requires replacement. The remainder of the bridge may well be sound and have a good many years usage remaining, but it will have to be replaced.

Tools required are a rigid spatula with a blade width of 25mm for use on older bridges with wider spaced deck boards and a screw driver with a 5-10mm wide flat blade for use on current specification 'easy access' bridges.

An average length bridge will take about 15-20 minutes to clean.

Walks and Events

The Countryside Services walks and events can be found at the following link on our website. Many of the walks have been put forward by Parish Paths Wardens so please support where you can and encourage others to do so to.

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/environment-and-planning/countryside/explore-the-countryside/guided-walks-and-events.aspx>

Public rights of way Martley Parish footpath 671: Drainage

A stretch of the Geopark Way was affected by springs running into the footpath for 35m. The surface is particularly steep and surface is Martley clay making it difficult to negotiate year round. The Earth Heritage Trust assisted towards the project and a contractor installed drainage pipe and stone to improve the surface.

Before



After



Recreational Route Wardens hit the trails.

Thirty three new Recreational Route Wardens (RRW's) have volunteered to adopt their own circular walk or section of a linear trail. This new scheme has been pioneered by our Access Development Officer's Vicky Powell and Jon White as a cost saving initiative following BOLD principals. Each new RRW is responsible for the routine inspection of their waymarked walk, which is typically from 4 to 8 miles long. The routes are inspected about 4 times a year and details are returned to the relevant Officer. The new RRW's have a very similar role to that of our PPW's (Parish Path Wardens) as they both have the flexibility to get involved with hands-on path maintenance and negotiate improvements with landowners. All new RRW's attend a specialised ½ day training course as well as the PPW Essentials training day, so far 25 RRW's have been trained.

We have 11 free spaces left to monitor walks in the following Parishes Shelsley Beauchamp, Great Witley, Upper Arley, Bewdley, Worcester, Himbleton, Flyford Flavel, Abberton, Wyre Piddle, Pershore, Great Comberton so if you are considering being a volunteer or you know someone who is interested then contact Amanda Hill for further details.

Risk Assessments

It is now possible for you to access our generic activity risk assessments on our website. These are regularly updated so that a current copy is always available. If you are leading guided walks or volunteer work parties this will be a useful link for you to use in your preparation work.

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/environment-and-planning/countryside/volunteering.aspx>

Improvements to Footpath Worcester 764 (Powick)

Footpath Worcester 764 provides a pleasant scenic walk that is just less than 2 miles long. The footpath starts near Powick Mill (the first commercial hydroelectric power station to be built in Britain) and the medieval Powick Bridge. The footpath follows the River Teme until it flows into the River Severn then follows the River Severn to the new Connect 2 Bridge.

A few years ago access along this route was greatly improved by the installation of RADAR kissing gates. However, recent feedback from John Cuthbertson of the Disabled Ramblers highlighted a few issues for us to consider. John was hoping to organise a 10k ramble which was to include this footpath but felt that some improvements were necessary.

With the advice and comments from John Cuthbertson we were able to identify improvements which would increase the accessibility of the route. Wooden fencing near a pedestrian gate and a steep gradient caused a problem for mobility scooters. The gradient has been reduced, a RADAR kissing gate installed and the wooden fencing removed.



Further along the footpath a RADAR kissing gate had been installed adjacent to a field gate. Feedback suggested that the kissing gate was too close to an incline. However, further improvements have been made to increase the safety of mobility scooter users as they pass through the gate. Fencing has been installed with a kick board and the surface improved into the field.

All of these improvements were completed prior to the ramble on Sunday 12th June 2011 by Will Hall and the Probation Team. The photos below show that the day was a great success although a little wet.



Contact Details:

Access Volunteers – Amanda Hill, Tel: 01905 768289, e-mail ahill3@worcestershire.gov.uk

Tree Wardens – Wade Muggleton, Tel: 01905 766491, e-mail:

wmuggleton@worcestershire.gov.uk