

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year to everyone, and a big thank you to everyone who helped work on the footpaths in 2011. It was February last year when the five original members met with Steve Archer to discuss the setting up of the group. Just walking around the parish it is clear that we have done quite a lot of work since that time. Unfortunately new jobs keep arising so we will have plenty still to do in 2012.

I thought it would be worth writing this newsletter to keep you abreast of developments and also to request some help for the coming season.

MILWICH CIRCULAR WALKS BOOKLET

A total of £732 is now available to publish a Milwich Walks booklet. This will contain 11 or 12 circular walks based on Milwich of various lengths from 1-9 miles. The intention is to make it available free to parishioners and sell it to others at £3.50 which should raise some additional funds for our maintenance work. I am told by Rod, that 150 copies of the Stone Circles booklet have been sold in the Green Man alone, since it was first published.

The goal is to publish the booklet by April and to launch the booklet to parishioners by holding a led walk on one of the routes.

BRICK KILN PITS

There is a small pedestrian gate at Brick Kiln Pits which has been broken for some time. I have effected a temporary repair but the gate is in need of replacement soon. I have volunteered my (our) services to replace this gate in the spring.

The Parish Council have authorised the funds to replace the gate with a 4' field gate in green oak. This will be a relatively simple job requiring the digging of one hole for a new post and fitting the necessary gate hardware.



50M FROM GREEN MAN!

FRADSWELL MAINTENANCE

Fradswell have asked if we would carry out work in their area. Cllr. Malcolm Calhaem has volunteered to co-ordinate any work with landowners and to recruit some volunteers from the parish. My hope is that we can run a separate team in Fradswell if enough volunteers can be found.

Fradswell Parish Council has donated £50 to get the work started.

APPRECIATION OF OUR EFFORTS

Dear Parish Council

We recently came across your website and have downloaded your Milwich walks leaflets. On New Years day we had great pleasure in completing the Hilderstone walk, despite the mud and rain.

We should be grateful if you would pass on our appreciation to the people who prepared the walks leaflets and those heroic volunteers looking after the stiles and rights of way. Also congratulations to the Parish Council for supporting these activities. We look forward to completing the other walks in the near future.

Prue & Geoff Bradley

MAC FOOTPATH GROUP

HEALTH AND SAFETY

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

As a group, when we work on Council projects we are covered by the County Council Volunteer Insurance. However we must comply with their requirements regarding Health and Safety. One of these is to wear any necessary protective equipment.

One such requirement is to wear safety footwear. The Council will provide personal safety boots for anyone who does not have their own.

If you need a pair of boots, please let me know your shoe size as soon as possible and no later than the end of January and I will order these from Steve.

PLEA FOR HELP

I will obviously be busy sourcing materials, organising work sessions, liaising with the Council, arranging Fradswell work group etc. I would very much appreciate some help this year with this work. It would be very helpful if a few members would take responsibility for part of the parish.

This would involve:

- Checking for necessary work
- Prioritising the work with myself and others
- Liaising with the landowner

If we could have three or four people doing this, it would only involve a small amount of time each.

Malcolm Calhaem has volunteered to do this work in Fradswell. If anyone could volunteer to assist in part of Milwich please let me know by 15th January. We will then split the parish between the kind volunteers.

LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

The Local Community Fund (or as it used to be known, the Local Members Initiative) is a pot of money, controlled by the County Council. Each Councillor is allocated up to £10,000 to spend within their constituency. Milwich has not had much from this fund in the past as it is necessary to identify projects and apply for money.

Our work seemed like a good cause and so I applied for some funding to help extend our work. I am pleased to say we have now received £825 for further work. This will include many more dog gates, signs that identify we have done the work and other minor projects.

The design of the dog gate seems to work but I have located a source of galvanised brackets to make the job quicker and better. I will be ordering some of these for a trial on the new stile in The Allways and if satisfactory will be ordering material for 25 dog gates to be installed as and when we replace stiles and also to make a couple of local footpaths dog friendly.

2012 WORK SCHEDULE

I propose that we follow a similar pattern of work that seemed to suit us last year. Let's plan that the first Sunday morning of each month is a work session, commencing (weather permitting) on Sunday 4th March. This will usually be for stile replacement.

I will then arrange additional minor or urgent work sessions for any keen volunteers where we will do finger post replacements and other minor works.

There is one urgent safety job in Potmans Lane which we will need to do in January or February, I will ask for a couple of volunteers for this.