

**SOUTHERN WILTSHIRE AREA BOARD**  
**(27 September 2012)**

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**Progress report: Rights of Way project**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Area Board on the progress of this project.
2. To seek funding for the Southern Wiltshire Walks Guide.

**Progress Report:**

**Installing the gates**

Gates have now been ordered and are being distributed and installed.

- 2 of the 5 wooden gates that are made locally and funded by the New Forest National Park have been installed in Landford.
- An order of 39 metal gates has been received to start us off.
- On 15 October and 19 November, new volunteers worked alongside South Wilts Ramblers and the Wiltshire Council Rights of Way team to install 8 metal kissing gates in Downton.
- 2 have been installed in Odstock.
- 4 gates have been delivered to Laverstock and installation will be coordinated by volunteers at the River Bourne Community Farm.
- 4 gates have been delivered to Redlynch and local volunteer will organise installation, with support from Rights of Way.
- The one gate for Coombe Bissett will also be installed shortly.
- This leaves: Downton (6), Winterslow (14), Grimstead (7), Whiteparish, Landford and Redlynch (wooden gates)

**Volunteer recruitment:**

Our campaign to recruit volunteers is now well underway. We had a good turnout at our recent work days in Downton, working with the South Wiltshire Ramblers. People can sign up to get involved at:

[www.southernwiltshirewalks.weebly.com](http://www.southernwiltshirewalks.weebly.com)

Communities with volunteers with the right skills that want to started locally can contact the Rights of Way Team who will assist them.

We would like to recruit local tradesmen to help with the installations in return for some advertising in the walks publication. We are teaming up with the Ramblers who are assisting with volunteer training during their monthly sessions.

### **Walks publication**

At the cross-parish footpath meeting Susan Barnhurst-Davies from Downton agreed to take a lead role in this project.

We are currently still awaiting receipt of all 15 walks from the parish councils. Once we have these walks we will be able to get the guide designed and printed.

It is estimated that the cost of designing and printing 500 guides, A5 laminated walks in a folder, will be £1,623. This price includes the design of standardised maps to provide consistent artwork. To have only 250 printed it will be approximately £1,193.

As discussed previously, the idea is to produce a series of walks (short and long) in our community area to promote walking and enjoying our countryside. The walks could link up to special places of interest and also local shops and pubs. The publication would also advertise the local businesses who installed kissing gates. It would be made available throughout the community area.

The guide will provide a focal point that will bring together footpath representative from across our 15 parishes, with the long-term objective of strengthening community ownership and participation in our community's footpaths.

We have asked local businesses to support this project and we are awaiting responses.

The total amount requested from the area board is £1,700 in order to print 500.

The guide will be sold for £5 and distributed to local outlets to be sold. It is envisaged that the revenue generated from sales should be re-invested in the footpath network, via a cross community area footpath group, set up as a result of this project.

### **Moving forward – Creating a Cross-Community Area Footpath Group**

It is our ambition to encourage local collaboration amongst parish councils, local footpath groups and interested parties by creating a cross-community area independent footpath group that will carry forward the good work so far. The details of this group need to be widely discussed but the concept is quite simple.

A community-area wide footpath group would be able to take a more joined up approach to footpaths across our area. It would be able to continue with practical things such as bulk purchasing, and it would also be able to apply collectively for grants, from various sources. It would also receive revenue from sales of the Southern Wiltshire Walks Guide.

I will be airing this idea on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November with the volunteers who attend the kissing gates project continuing at Witherington Farm to begin to gauge views. I will report back at the meeting.

### **Recommendation**

That the Board sets aside a maximum of £1,700 for the design and print of the first order of

the Southern Wiltshire Walks guide.

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