

Coleford Walkers are Welcome Meeting

4/10/21

6pm

The Main Place

Chair: Simon Jones

Note taker: Ella Beard

Attendees: Stuart Cox, Ella Beard, Nick Penny, Kim Bick, (Bickys) Alison Stinton, (2nd Coleford Guides Wyedean Footcare.)
Geoff Sandles, Kathy Sandles, Debbie Sturgess, Rob Cole, Matt Beard, Jane Baird, Iain Baird, Steve Parry, Simon Jones

Apologies: None

Minutes

Agenda item: Introductions

Facilitator Simon Jones

Discussion:

To introduce ourselves to others attending.

Simon Jones, Local business owner at Forest Deli, keen walker, Chair of Steering group set up to obtain Walkers are Welcome status for Coleford.

Stuart Cox, Town Councillor, organiser Coleford Walking Festival, keen walker.

Ella Beard, Coordinator at Tourist Information Centre. (TIC)

Nick Penny, Mayor of Coleford, organiser Coleford Walking Festival.

Kim Bick, Local business owner at Bickys, Pyart Court,

Alison Stinton, local business owner at Wyedean Footcare, Podiatrist and Guider (2nd Coleford Guides).

Geoff Sandles, local resident and keen walker.

Kathy Sandles, local resident and keen walker.

Debbie Sturgess, local resident and keen walker.

Rob Cole, local resident and keen walker.

Matt Beard, Town Councillor, here observing.

Jane Baird, Volunteer at TIC and keen walker.

Iain Baird, Volunteer at TIC and keen walker when able.

Steve Parry, local resident and keen walker

Agenda item: Election of officers

Presenter: Simon

Discussion:

To elect officers of Coleford Welcomes Walkers Committee to carry forward plans and promote WaW

Simon Jones Stood down as Chair of the steering committee and was reelected as Chair of Coleford Welcomes Walkers.

Deputy Chair – Stuart Cox offered and was elected

Treasurer - Alison Stinton offered and was elected

Secretary - Ella Beard offered and was elected

Simon asked if all present would like to be involved as committee members

Jane, Debbie, Kathy, Geoff, Nick all agreed to be part of the committee.

Suggestion to involve young people from Schools, Guides, Scouting DoE etc. Alison has contacts which she is happy to use.

Committee members were all happy to share their email addresses below.

Geoff - Geoffsandles@gmail.com

Kathy - Lottie1853@gmail.com

Alison – alison@wyedeanfootcare.co.uk

Debbie – -Sturgessemails@gmail.com

Nick – office@nickpennyevents.co.uk

Jane – mummybaird1956@gmail.com

Ella – info@colefordtown.net

Simon – hello@forest-deli.co.uk

Stuart – stuart.cox50@btinternet.com

Agenda item: Walkers are Welcome

Presenter: Simon Jones

Discussion:

To explain what WaW is all about.

Explained that status is specifically Coleford not Forest of Dean. Status is only given to Towns not a wider area such as the Forest. The area covered was discussed as was that walks can be 'started' from Coleford, but not necessary to start walking here.

An opportunity to promote local businesses, bring more visitors into Town, to promote benefits of walking, health, relaxation and so on.

Promoting WaW has been shown to increase tourism, use of accommodation, businesses and promoting Town to the wider world.

National WaW holds an Annual get together which works its way around the accredited towns.

Regularly walking footpaths and reporting issues to a central 'area' which can then report to the appropriate authority, and follow up to chase progress.

Close liaison with Coleford Area Walking Festival.

Building a central repository of knowledge and information on Coleford Welcomes walkers Website. (Currently offline as hacked)

Stickers can be put up by those businesses who are keen to Welcome walkers and were given to business present Wyedean footcare, Bickys. Discussion re distribution of Stickers around town.

The official certificate will be displayed in the window of the TIC

Agenda item:

Presenter: All

Discussion:

The following general ideas and activities were discussed,

Website is <https://colefordwelcomeswalkers.co.uk> (appears to be fine Tues 5/10/21)

Facebook page has the same name. The national website links to our page.

Overshoes, umbrella stands, water for dogs were discussed as possible incentives for walkers and possibilities for businesses.

Lobbying was suggested... Highways for footpath to Perrygrove and Puzzlewood.

Footpaths – reporting those which are not classified as such by 2026 to get them included...

Slow response times following reporting of issues with Footpaths.

Maximise use of Hidden heritage and geology Apps – promote that they are free.

The TIC can promote using Coleford Town Twitter.

Tourism Association. Promote to and by Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism.

Stuart mentioned his work on list of walks being put on the Website .

Nick suggests working group to get work started on how we might move forward.

Nick suggested a Photography competition -Your favourite walk.

Sheila's invitation to Winchcombe WaW still stands. Possible sharing cars now could visit.

Alison mentioned Knighton sends out newsletter. Possible to do something similar?

Debbie and Kathy talked about problem paths and stiles.

Large percentage of visitors come to TIC to ask about walks.

Debbie mentioned linking OS walks put on maps on the OS app onto the website.

Nick suggests adding Trampers to our website.

Further discussion on involving young people from Schools, Guides, Scouting DoE etc. Alison has contacts.

Debbie suggested contacts with Highways.

Ella mentioned Geoff Wheeler, Footpaths officer.

We need to formalise these contacts

Debbie spoke about problems with Rock Lane.

Kathy mentioned the path at the back of the factory and that it is not kept clear.

We need to be monitoring footpaths and reporting and following up actions.

Debbie is liaising with Forestry England & Wendy Jackson from Regeneration at FoDDC. Asking re byelaws and sudden appearance of Cycle tracks where none existed before.

Re mountain bikers using walking paths which they shouldn't. Alison emphasized Nags Head is also used this way by Mountain bikers despite all the signs.

Meetings will take place every 2 months or so.

We need to set up a bank account. Alison is aware that most banks are charging for Charity accounts, but will investigate further.

Conclusions:

Lots of ideas and issues to address moving forward.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
✓ To write minutes and send to Simon for distribution	Ella	6/10/21
✓ To pull together actions and contact people individually to progress ideas	Simon	?

Action items

- ✓ To set up a bank account

Person responsible

Alison/Simon

Deadline

Next meeting