

Footpath Secretary Report

For Wellington Walkers Are Welcome AGM on Wednesday 3rd November 2021

This has been another significantly disrupted year due the restrictions of Covid-19 and general ill-health but key achievements since the last AGM in October 2020 have been:-

WELLINGTON STATION

The Friends of Wellington Station CCIF Funding Bid was successful and the "Wellington Ways" project (managed by TWC) began in earnest in February. From a WWAW standpoint the key elements of the project were designed to greatly enhance the station as a "Gateway" to the area through the provision of:-

A) **Visitor Information Boards** on each platform to primarily display the "Wellington and the Wrekin Forest Walks" guide along with associated leaflet dispensers for the guides themselves. The project also provided funding of over £1,300 for a full reprint of the guide itself.

B) New **Platform Directional Signs** to guide walkers to the appropriate station exits for our walks and for other major walks (Telford T50, Shropshire Way and the LA21 Walking with Giants walk)

It has been a long and tortuous route but, at long last, the designs & installation plans have been agreed by West Midlands Trains (WMT) and Network Rail (NWR). The work is now in the hands of the contractor and the TWC project team are now confident that these will be installed in the next few weeks.

NB. Other aspects of the "Wellington Ways" project (the Secret Garden, watering taps and improvements to the steps to the Bus Station) are still subject to discussions between WMT, NWR, contractors and our project team. It is hoped that agreement can be obtained before 31st October which is officially the end-date of the project (although there is an extension in place for the actual work to be completed by 31st March 2022).

PLANNING APPLICATIONS & HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION PROJECTS

I have commented on several schemes (including the TWC Traffic Management Consultation at The Wrekin) from a walker's perspective with varying degrees of success.

TWC PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY SUPPORT

As a group, WWAW have assisted TWC by providing feedback to their "Public Rights of Way Strategy Consultation". Outside of the consultation itself, we prepared a list of ROW which we feel require to have their categorisations raised to the highest level of importance (type A). This will hopefully ensure that all our "Wellington & the Wrekin Forest Walks" and "Wellington 360" routes fall within that category.

We subsequently carried out a review of the new online Definitive Map to identify significant inconsistencies within the Wellington area which require clarification. The findings of this review were forwarded to TWC ROW Team for action.

As a separate issue, we produced an overview of work required to bring the ROW Network to the west of The Wrekin back to an acceptable standard following decades of it being ignored and left to decay with the aim of developing a new W360 guide to that area. However, this work had to be placed in limbo pending a fresh review of the ROW since the fields were cropped.

LITTER PICKING

When able to do so, I have continued to litter pick the areas around Spring Hill, New Works car park, Bowring Park and, from time to time, other ad hoc locations in the area.

LINKS WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS & ORGANISATIONS

I am currently a committee member of the following local volunteer groups:-

Friends of Bowring Park (FOBP)
Friends of Wellington Station (FOWS)
Wellington LA21
Friends of The Wrekin (FOTW)

Bob Coalbran