

Eleven Rivers (Draft Project Name) Wysis Way/Gloucestershire Way/3 Choirs Way

**Stakeholders Meeting** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 Maisemore Village Hall

### **Present**

GS(Creator) DH (Temporary Chair and Cotswold Warden) RH (Temp Secretary and Cirencester Ramblers), HG (GCC PROW Area Officer), BJ (Cotswold Natural Landscape [CNL]), MG (Lower Wye Ramblers), TF (Leadon Vale Ramblers), CM (Gloucestershire Ramblers), MH (Gloucestershire Ramblers), PL (Gloucestershire Walking Group).

### **Apologies**

JF (Cotswold Voluntary Wardens), PF (Stroud Walking Group), JW (GCC PROW Area Officer), JL (Forest of Dean Ramblers), PS (North Cotswold Ramblers), PG (Gloucester Ramblers).

Request for Contact

WS (Worcestershire PROW Officer), LB (Worcestershire Ramblers)

### **Meeting**

1. Introductions from representatives of stakeholders and apologies (please see above)
2. GS author and creator of the three ways presented a quick history. The paths were created in the 1990's following a request for long distance routes from the Countryside Commission (now Natural England). The 200 members of Cleeve and Tewkesbury walking groups helped to design and walk the routes and then help to establish by using and waymarking the routes. GS noted that the Gloucestershire Way was created before the Cotswold Way became a National Trail. The work was supported by Gloucestershire County Council and also received a Millennium Heritage Fund award of £40k. When opened the Gloucestershire Way was walked by GCC Councillors and Ramblers Groups. The Way was blessed by the Bishops of Tewkesbury and Gloucester and vicars in the Forest of Dean.
3. Current State of the paths - DH has recently walked all three routes and confirmed these are open and available. There are a number of issues, significantly the route of the GW on the Severn bank north of Gloucester. There are other minor issues plus places where there may be a need for a minor route modification. DH noted that in several places the signage could be improved: new or replacement way marks, finger posts and repeater signage on highways.
4. Progress to date  
Waymarks/Sign heads – Gloucestershire PROW have indicated they may be able to fund waymarks for the routes. We need to identify suppliers and the quantity required. We also noted that additional sign heads (finger posts), vinyl stickers and other signage would be useful. It was agreed in future all the routes will be signed in both directions.

**Action** When installing or replacing signage waymarks will indicate the line of the route in both directions.

**Action** As the signage in GCC is held in different locations HG will collate and collect all the signage held by PROW.

Cicerone - All three books describing the routes are still in print and available from GS. DH has approached Cicerone and has received a very positive response. The initial plan is to include all routes in one book, plus issue an e book and accompanying gpx route. It is anticipated the process of rewriting the book in the Cicerone house style, preparing the maps and other extras will take two years, DH has agreed to lead on this project.

Community Payback – The Severn River bank is to be considered by the Community Payback team and a site visit is planned for the Spring (HG). If Community Payback are unable to take on this task then potentially Ramblers/CNL volunteers may be able to clear the route. As this section is regularly flooded an alternative route may be useful.

Long Distance Walkers Association – The routes and gpx will be available on the LDWA website

Website DH has created a website, this is available to view but please note this is still under construction. <https://cheltenhamoutlier.uk/> It was agreed the notes from the Stakeholders meeting will be made available on the website substituting initials for names. In the longer term for promotion we may need to consider social media – Facebook and Twitter.

## 5. Support for the Routes

Tasks for supporting organisations:

- i. Regular Monitoring.
- ii. Minor maintenance (vegetation/waymarks/signage)
- iii. Major maintenance (repair to gates/stiles/significant obstructions) Other than the CNL area this will need referring to PROW.
- iv. Identifying and supporting route changes including diversions.

Cotswold Voluntary Wardens (400 members) work for CNL. Parish wardens walk each parish (most are covered) and have recently supported the Macmillan Way installing waymarks. The wardens' clear vegetation and work parties take on more significant tasks. The wardens would be available to support the sections of Eleven Rivers in the CNL area (WW/GW).

Leadon Vale Ramblers will walk the section of the 3CW in Herefordshire at least once per year.

Lower Wye Ramblers will support the short section of the WW in their area.

Gloucestershire has several groups which undertake practical footpath work; Cirencester Ramblers Path Maintenance Volunteers [PMV], Bramble Team, Stroud Rambling Group and Gloucestershire Walking Group.

Cirencester PMV have been working on the WW since 2016 and will continue this support.

Stroud Rambling Group will undertake to annually walk the WW between the Daneway Inn (Bisley with Lypiatt) and Cud Hill (Upton St Leonards)

Worcestershire Ramblers may be able to support the project.

Worcestershire PROW (WS) have a number of promoted routes they already support however Will confirmed PROW would to pick up any reported issues that fall on the route.

Contact has not yet been established with Monmouthshire PROW, Herefordshire PROW, Forestry England or Malvern Hills Trust.

6. Current Route Issues

Severn Bank north of Gloucester – (See Above) HG is working with Community Payback who are looking to take on the task in the Spring.

Carrington Bridge – the route has been altered by the construction of a new bridge – the obstruction will be resolved by a short reroute and new kissing gates.

Proposed housing developments in Tewkesbury and elsewhere are being monitored by to ensure PROW are protected.

The sections of the routes which use minor rural roads may require further action.

7. Aspirations - Longer term goals to ensure accessibility and inclusivity:

Stile free routes

Links to public transport

Accommodation guides

Process to encourage the walking public to report path issues and/or regularly monitor routes.

8. Promotion – (See above) Continue to develop guide books, web site etc.

9. Name of Project – Proposals - Three Marches Way : Telford Bridge Walks (the three routes meet at the Telford Bridge in Gloucester) : Eleven Rivers - Latter agreed as a working title.

10. Next Meeting

2.0 pm Monday 26th June 2023

Maisemore Village Hall (The hall has now been booked)