



Countryside Access and Walking

VALEWAYS

Cerdded yng nghefn gwlad



March 2021

We haven't been able to meet up during the latest lockdown but we have been busy with lots of activities associated with walking.

The Hidden History of Cadoxton – Nearing Completion

As reported in the last newsletter, the work has continued apace with this project. The route has been finalised and tested by a number of volunteers, the walk leaflet has been designed, and the narration for the film has been recorded in English and Welsh. Thanks to Paul Ogden and Peter Weston, pictured outside the recording studio in St Hilary.

Three children's trails have also been completed in conjunction with schools in the area.



Filming is planned on 8th May, if restrictions allow, so we are well ahead of the target completion of the end of May. Thanks go to Paul Hawkins for gaining the grant and seeing it through.

The Millennium Heritage Trail Comes of Age

Between the middle of October and early December my husband and I walked the Vale Millennium Trail plus a few other routes in the Vale – completing 130 miles raising over £2,000 for the Oasis charity our daughter Emma works for in Belgium. A charity supporting vulnerable women who have been exploited through human trafficking or domestic violence.

We chose dry days although we had some rather wet routes to walk, streams that had become rivers, full rivers overflowing the surrounding land, bogs, and the need to reroute due to unfriendly cows. Darkness fell early during those winter days and so several times we returned to our parked car having stumbled in the dark across fields!

The VMT is in 16 sections and we walked between two and four sections at a time – making several into circular routes. Many of the



routes took us to places we had never been before (having lived in Cowbridge for over 20 years). The views and local scenery were beautiful. The accompanying booklet details sites of historic interest such as World War II landing strips and the birthplace of Iolo Morgannwg.

Our two favourite sections were Penylln to Hensol (Walks 14 and 15) and coming across a beautiful lake with a boat house. The boat house is home to Ino-scents solid moisturisers and we ordered Christmas gifts from Sam. The other was Monknash to Colwinston (Walks 10,11 and 12) particularly from the back of The Fox pub in St Brides to Castle Upon Alun – beautiful views from Old Castle Down.

There were several surprises, friendly sheep, lamas, even blue skies, the most far west point in Wales and the highest point in the Vale. Only thrice were we able to stop at a café or pub – due to lockdown, but we took picnics with us.

We thoroughly recommend the VMT and we look forward to returning to sections in the Spring and Summer when the walks will be adorned with wildflowers of the season and will hopefully be less muddy!

Dale and Sarah Gooding

Sarah did such a good job of promoting their walk that the Cowbridge Bookshop sold out of the booklets and had to be hurriedly restocked in the run up to Christmas. The booklets are also available from Griffin Books and A.B. Snell in Penarth, and direct from Valeways.

Quite by chance, Glen, one of our regular walkers, mentioned that she had also walked the whole trail with Wenvoe Walkers. Not only that but she had been given a certificate!



Going BIG in Print Media – Update from Alan Simmonds

When Libraries, Surgeries, Sports Centres, Pubs and Coffee Shops re-open we will be ready to flood them with printed promotions for all of our walking activities.



With an idea from Lynne Frugtniet, design help from her daughter Bethan, and sponsorship from Comic Relief, we have designed four posters and nine flyers advertising our led walking and stroller activities. We are emphasizing the health and well-being benefits of walking quoting many of our strollers.

The other arm of our walking activities is the series of 19 self-guided walks throughout the Vale. Several are out of print at present but can be downloaded from the website.

Three of the original leaflets have been reviewed, rewritten and redesigned as a starting point to complete the whole series. This work has been funded by the industrial company Dow and our volunteer Huw Allaway's "Huw's Harvest" donation, so many of you have contributed and have enjoyed some fresh vegetables and plants in the process.

Virtual Walks

Walkers and walk leaders have been busy sharing their walks during lockdown. Huw Allaway posts his walk descriptions, and loads of photos, on the Valeways Facebook page and Rebecca has sent an email to all the regular Cowbridge Coffee Shop Strollers every two weeks updating walkers of the latest news in and around Cowbridge. The Facebook page and emails have allowed us all to keep in touch with each other which has been lovely during the times we have not been able to meet up.

Retiring Trustee – Mike Edwards

Mike Edwards retired as Chair of Trustees at the end of 2020. He can't recall when he started with Valeways but he has been admin volunteer, trustee and walk leader for a long time. He worked with the late Val Warlow when she set up the first Coffee Shop Strollers and he remains Walk Leader of the Barry Strollers.

Barry born and bred, Mike left school at 15 and completed a 5-year apprenticeship as a Vehicle Fitter, studying first at Llandaff Tech and then at the brand-new Barry Technical College.

He had a series of jobs in the area finishing up as a boiler operator at BP Chemicals.

After retiring he started volunteering in the community, holding office on the executive of the Older People's Forum before becoming involved with Valeways. He remains Treasurer of the BP Society to this day. He is married to Christine and has two adult children.



While he had regularly walked a succession of family dogs, Mike began serious walking for a living in his final job as a leaflet distributor covering 5 – 10 miles a day in an area stretching from Rhoose to Penarth. In his early Valeways days, he was limited to office support while he underwent three knee operations, and he represented Valeways on the Board of Trustees for GVS (Glamorgan Voluntary Service). Later he supported Val in setting up the health and well-being walks (aka Coffee Shop Strollers). This has been the most meaningful part of his contribution and he is anxious to re-start the Barry Strolls as soon as Covid regulations allow. Mike believes that the social aspect of Strolling is as valuable as the physical exercise. We would like to thank him for the many ways in which he has supported Valeways and hope he will Carry On Strolling.

Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival 2021

The Festival committee have decided to delay the 2021 festival to September 2021 in the hope that we will be freer of restrictions. We have finally decided on the dates:

Tuesday 7th to Sunday 12th September 2021

So, make a note in your diaries, and if you feel able to offer a walk, please let Rebecca know ASAP. We already have offers of eleven walks but always welcome more ideas and assistance with the running of the Festival.

Spring Walking Programme

Changes to the Walk Classifications

Since Valeways has been receiving requests for information about the difficulty of walks, number of stiles etc., work has been undertaken to revise and clarify the walk classifications as follows:

Strollers and health walks have no boot classification just the description: All Coffee Shop Strollers and Health & Well Being walks are easy- up to 1 hour, no stiles, steps or steep inclines.

1 Boot 🦶 **Progression Walks:** Approximately 1.5 hour's gentle terrain with limited stiles, steps or steep inclines.

2 Boot 🦶🦶 **Secondary walks:** Approximately 2 - 2.5 hours with some stiles, steps or steep inclines.

3 Boot 🦶🦶🦶 **Extended walks:** Approximately 3 - 4 hours. Many stiles, steps or steep inclines. Bring a drink and a snack



Valeways has achieved the Visit Britain's 'Good to go' status, declaring that we are well prepared to start our walking programme in a safe manner as soon as the restrictions are lifted.

The April to June walk programme is all planned and ready to launch the minute we are able to do so,

Looking forward to seeing you all before too long.

Best wishes, Rebecca