

FOOTSTEPS

DFBS Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2024

Welcome! Maybe after the weather we have had, this newsletter could have been titled **Muddy Footprints!**

First off...we walkers live in quite a wide area, each of us knowing our own locations better than most,...and for some of us, finding where a walk starts can sometimes be a challenge. I use What Three Words....it is so easy to use, on computers, laptops or phones...

<https://what3words.com>

Every 3 metre square of the world has been given a unique combination of three words. Used for e-commerce and delivery, navigation, emergencies and more.

We are aware that some of our members do not have their own transport and may be missing out on joining many of the walks on our programme. For those living in Dronfield and the surrounding areas we already have a few drivers willing to offer a free lift. Please contact

admin@dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk

or any committee member or walk leader if you wish to make use of this and every effort will be made to arrange a lift. The only stipulation is to bring along spare footwear in case of muddy conditions!

Anyone who normally drives to walks and is willing to provide a lift please also contact the above.

Summer Walks Programme 2024

The summer walks programme will be sent out at the same time as this newsletter. We hope you like the balance of walks in terms of distance and location. Don't forget that from the 9th May onwards our Thursday evening walks will start in addition to regular daytime walks that are usually on either a Tuesday or a Saturday. As ever, we welcome your feedback, just send an email to admin@dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk.

There is limited space on the document that we email to you, so our main aim is to provide the essential details such as location and starting point. If you need more information about the walk e.g links to Google Maps or Grid References/What3Words for the start point, you will find these on our website at

<https://dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk>. Starting this year we have also included the number of stiles on the walk as this was something our members have often requested. If this information is missing, please check the website again nearer to the date of the walk.

We hope you enjoy walking with us this summer, a few weeks of dry weather wouldn't go amiss!

Website Refresh

Within the next month we will be making some design changes to our website and apart from a different look you will notice that some of the pages are accessed in a different way. All the usual content such as walk reports and the walks calendar will still be there.

An invitation to join some easy canal walks from David Blackburn

I shall be pleased to see you on one (or more) of these spring and summer short walks, partly on the towpath with some field footpaths and tracks too

MONDAY MEANDERS (Afternoons – 2pm start)

13 May- Shireoaks and Lindrick Dale – 4.5 miles See the boats in the marina, including historic Dawn Rose, and walk to Brancliffe Grange and pretty Lindrick Dale. Then to Turnerwood, perhaps have a coffee or ice cream, and back along the towpath to start point

8 July – Tapton Lock and the Peace Garden – 3.5 Miles Follow towpath by canal and river, past the weirs that control water levels then up through a golf course and round to Tapton Park. We shall look around the lovely Peace Gardens, passing railway pioneer George Stephenson's former home. Over a railway bridge (70 steps) and back onto towpath with an opportunity for a drink, snack or ice cream at the end

WEDNESDAY WANDERS (Mornings - 10 am start)

5 June - Staveley and Norbriggs Flash Nature Reserve - 3.5 miles Follow the canal past Staveley Town Basin and just beyond end of restored canal see work on the new bridge that will kick start further canal restoration. Then follows a walk along the 'puddle bank' and a short distance on the disused Norbriggs Arm which originally carried coal from a local colliery, We then walk through the Norbriggs Flash nature reserve and back to the start along the Arkwright trail, a former railway line

14 August – Kiveton Waters and along the top of Norwood Tunnel – 4 miles Explore Kiveton Country Park and walk over the top of Norwood Tunnel, once the longest canal tunnel in the country and then past the long Norwood locks flight. You will see how complex and expensive restoring this part of canal will be. Up the hill to Wales and then round more of the extensive park

For more information or to reserve a place, please email me on cuckooway@chesterfield-canal-trust.org.uk or text on 07848 805282.

David would also be delighted to hear from anyone who might like to discuss adding a walk to the programme.

Although his primary aim is for shorter walks, happy to consider both longer walks and different days (Saturday Strollers or Striders perhaps ??)

Maintenance of paths

We now have a core team of volunteers prepared to work on cutting back overgrown areas of footpaths in our area. Anyone who is leading a walk but feels that the proposed route is in need of clearing before doing the walk should email the admin address above.

We will also consider working on any footpaths we normally use on our walks if any member finds they are in need of attention, again please email admin@dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk to let us know the area needing work.

If anyone would be willing to join the volunteer team please email the above or speak to Joe Kelsall.

A number of high visibility waistcoats have been ordered for use by the group. These will be available shortly for use by walk leaders and back markers if required. The primary purpose is for use when doing footpath maintenance, we will also have a number of pairs of gloves for when clearing brambles and nettles!

An early heads up to record in your diary. Our group AGM has been booked for the evening of Wednesday 30th October 2024 at Dronfield Civic Hall. We also hope that we have many more members attend than usual....it is always a nice evening out..

2023 AGM Summary

Our AGM took place on 1 November last year and for those of you that didn't attend here are a few take aways or 'para llevar' for those of you on holiday in Spain or, if you were in China seeing your son and having a visit of a lifetime 'Dai zou':

1. Thirty-four of us turned out in the autumn weather, a little down on last year, but it included nine of your committee.

2. The Minutes of the previous year were accepted and approved.

3. There had been 67 walks in the year, totalling 315 miles along North Derbyshire's finest countryside, regularly attracting 15 to 20 of us, but sometimes more. We asked for some feedback on the walk programmes. The odd low turnout was considered to be linked to the poor weather forecast on the day.

4. We contributed to the Chesterfield Walking Festival with four walks.

5. We cut back on four occasions on overgrown vegetation along a stretch of the Dronfield Barn Rotary Walk and along a section of the North Chesterfield Way at Barlow. Get in touch with Joe if you would like to be part of this team. Our work was certainly appreciated by locals passing us and it was pleasing to make a difference.

6. We reported on the grant monies which has seen a revised and updated reprint of the North Chesterfield Way (NCW) and the purchase of battery powered gardening tools to help us with clearing vegetation. The re-launch of the NCW went ahead on 14th October and was well received by the 28 participants. There was even a Mayoral send off at the start and a Mayoral reception at the finish. Get your new NCW leaflet from

the Dronfield Library, The Barn, Steels, Peter or Joe.

7. Joe reported on our finances. We carry forward a healthy balance into this year of over £500 and have a slightly growing membership which stood at 128. Fortunately, our income from memberships slightly exceeds our expenditure and we can maintain the current membership fee of £5 for this year.

8. The committee was thanked for their work and re-appointed. The current committee comprises: Peter Hubbard, Adrian Slome, Jean Thorpe, Peter Carr, Joe Kelsall, Richard and Jane Smith, Steve and Ros Sadler, Vanessa Kavanagh, Richard Pearson, Graham Gill. Anyone wishing to be involved please let us know as it all helps to keep the Society using the 3R's - relevant, representative and resourceful!

9. The Christmas Tree Display at Dronfield Parish Church included one from the Society thanks to Angela Land, who was undertaking to do a repeat performance for Christmas 2023.

10. Please use our new email address to get in touch with your committee

admin@dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk

In addition, keep taking a look at our website, admirably kept up to date and relevant by Pete Hubbard.

11. Refreshments supplied and provided by Ros and Steve were well received as was the illustrated talk by Peter Brown which featured Peter on his journeys capturing images of birds by use of 'free transport' – bus (pass), boots and bike, all to raise money for Cancer Research.

12. We look forward to seeing you at our 2024 AGM on Wednesday 30 October.

We are actively looking for a speaker and if anyone knows of one (preferably someone inexpensive) then please email admin or speak to a committee member or walk leader.

Walks Insurance

When our insurance renewal was due early March we were quoted nearly £300 for Public Liability cover so we looked into alternatives and were helped by information from two other walking groups and as a result for £50 less we have Personal Accident cover in addition to Public Liability. As a condition of the new cover we now have an Accident Report Book to complete in the unfortunate event that one should occur.

Details should be sent to Phoebe Pearson at rp.pearson@talktalk.net including date/time/place and brief explanation of the incident, the names of a couple of witnesses and what action was taken. This would then help should any claim result.

FoDS Quiz....

Tuesday 26th March saw two of our teams from the Society enjoy an evening taking part in Friends of Dronfield Station (FoDS) annual quiz pitching their knowledge against teams from other organisations that support FoDS. It was a close run contest but in the end our team 'Uphill and Down Dale' came out winners for the second year running. A quiz is planned next year so will it be three years in a row?

So that's about it for this edition of Footsteps, thanks to all the contributors...and thanks to all our members who join us on our walks