

WALKING AND EXPLORING WORKING GROUP

Summary: To inform the Executive Committee of the current priorities and progress of the Walking and Exploring Working Group

Author: Becky Jones (Trails, Access and Volunteer Officer)

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the current progress and priorities of the group

MEMBERSHIP

- Ed Macalister-Smith – Chair (in his role as Chair of the Cotswolds Trails and Access Partnership – CTAP)
- Tony Merry
- David Kerr
- Amanda Davis
- Becky Jones – lead officer
- Alana Hopkins – support officer

UPDATE

- The group postponed its planned meeting on April but is looking to arrange an online meeting for 2 June 2020.
- The group will play a key role in communicating key messages about access to the Cotswolds as we emerge from lockdown.
- Covid-19 has presented challenges for the Cotswold communities with increased conflicts between users, concerns from landowners and impact on businesses that rely on tourism.
- Covid-19 will also create huge potential opportunities for engaging with new audiences that have experienced, for the first time, the benefits of wellbeing that the countryside can offer.
- The main priorities going forward will be to embrace these new and diverse audiences and explore ways to keep them engaged with the Cotswolds.
- It will also be important to manage expectations of countryside access and promote sustainable, respectful enjoyment for everyone; ensuring that we engage with all interested groups such as the landowning community, parishes, tourism businesses, walking, cycling and riding groups.

MAY 2020