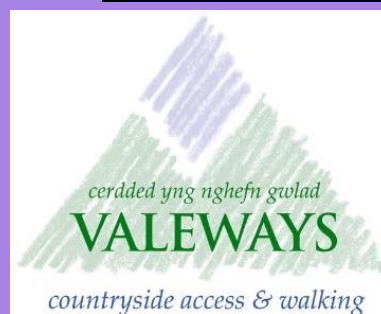


*Countryside Access and Walking*

# VALEWAYS

*Cerdded yng nghefn gwlad*



October 2021

## Another Very Successful Walking Festival



The 2021 Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival took place between 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September and we were blessed with great weather and a huge variety of walks. In total 26 led walks were on offer across the idyllic countryside and coast of the Vale. Over 285 walkers (and 10 dogs) comprising local walkers and those from further afield including Chepstow, Swansea and Shropshire. The walks included 7 miles on the first day to view the sea stack near Southerndown. This was enjoyed by all 19 walkers despite the blistering heat. Some cooling off at the local hostelry was certainly needed. Several others were purely for the enjoyment of walking in rural nature, with the longest walk being 12 miles.

However there was something for everyone including walks with historical links to castles, manor houses, churches, ancient bridges, Barry Docks Office, and the Penarth Women's Trail. Other topics included nature reserves, a tour of trees, and the revelation of the existence of wasp moths at Porthkerry.

One walker stated "Thanks for putting on another excellent walking festival. I really enjoyed the three walks I did, learnt more about the Vale and enjoyed good company too".

Many of the hidden gems on view were not previously known to local walkers, who were amazed at what is on their doorsteps, and the visitors were impressed by the facilities and attractions that are available in the Vale. Thank you to our all of our walk leaders, walkers, walk and clear volunteers, and the Vale of Glamorgan's Public Rights of Way and Events Teams for their contributions to another fantastic festival.

## Walk and Clear Report

The regular Tuesday volunteers went into overdrive to undertake additional clearance and repair work in the run up to the walking festival. Extra days were added to the schedule of works, and groups were divided up to tackle a number of issues per shift. Both Walk Leaders and walkers were most grateful for the work undertaken to ensure all walks could be enjoyed safely and without incident.



The group has also been given some new high viz tabards donated by a follower of the walk and clear group on Instagram. He thinks our W&C team do a fantastic job and wanted to donate the vests that he had already printed, in recognition of their efforts.

Also, thanks to volunteer Huw who posts all the photographs of the clearance works.

## Approaching autumn

The walk offerings for October to December have the usual variety that Valeways walks and the countryside are famous for.



Thanks to our new walk leader Charles we are now able to offer health walks every Thursday with Charles's new fortnightly Well Bean stroller group meeting on alternate Thursday afternoons at 2:30 pm at the Well-Bean Cafe, Golau Caredig, Barry CF62 7AZ. The walks alternate with Paul's, now well established, Penarth Coffee Shop Strollers

## Another new walk

Fy enw I yw Gwenda Fitzpatrick, yn y rhaglen nesaf, byddwn yn cynnig teithiau cerdded I pobl sydd a diddorded yn ymarfer yr Iaith Cymraeg os dach chi'n dysgu, neu os ydych yn siarad Cymraeg yn rhugl dod a fwynhau sgwrs gyda pobl eraill. Dim yn medru siarad Cymraeg – dim problem dewch I fwynhau'r gwpeini.

My name is Gwenda Fitzpatrick, and in the next programme, I'll be offering walks for people who are either Welsh learners and want to practice their Welsh, or for Welsh speakers who just would like to have an opportunity to speak to others through the medium of Welsh. Can't speak Welsh – no problem, come along anyway and enjoy the company.

## Trustees news

### Brenda Gibbins steps down as Secretary

We were sad to receive the news that one of the most trusted and respected members of the Trustee Committee had decided to stand down from her role as Secretary after giving many years of unique service to Valeways.

Brenda's husband, Phil Gibbins, joined Valeways in 2008 as a volunteer Walk Leader and Brenda was soon out helping him as 'backstop' on his walks until a hip replacement limited her stile climbing. Later, Phil coerced her into joining as a Trustee and she took on the role of secretary.

Despite no longer joining walks Brenda has happy memories of exploring the Vale, memorably accompanying the late Cen Williams in tracking down the remote Vale churches which housed stained glass windows of the artist Frank Roper.



When asked about her thoughts on Valeways she said, *"It has been rewarding to belong to an organisation which has done so much to promote the Vale and its footpaths. Also, I remain Guardian of the Festival Banner, displayed near my house for the last 8 years!"*

Photo: Phil and Brenda manning the Valeways stand at the Vale Show.

### We are fortunate to welcome our new Minutes Secretary Angharad Hills.

Here she introduces herself:

"I moved to Barry when I took early retirement. After a period of enjoying the luxury of doing nothing, I saw the advert for a Minutes Secretary for Valeways Trustees - I used to take Minutes regularly in my working life and I enjoy walking, so it seemed like an ideal opportunity to get involved in my new local community. I'm very pleased to be able to support Valeways in this way."





## **Valeways seeks additional trustees,**

The key tasks for the trustees are:

1. Taking responsibility for the way the charity is run (in the absence of paid employees, all management responsibility falls on the trustees and other volunteers).
2. Specific tasks will be undertaken by trustees according to any specialist skills or experience.
3. Approval of plans/strategies presented.
4. Approval of work undertaken on behalf of the charity.
5. Approval of financial reports and accounts prepared by the Treasurer.
6. The initial responsibility for any new trustee is simply to attend meetings and gradually learn about the charity; what's going on in public and behind the scenes.

It really isn't onerous, so long as we have enough people to spread the work around. If you would like to learn more about becoming a Valeways trustee please contact Peter Weston at [peter.weston1952@gmail.com](mailto:peter.weston1952@gmail.com)

## **Graham Woosnam**

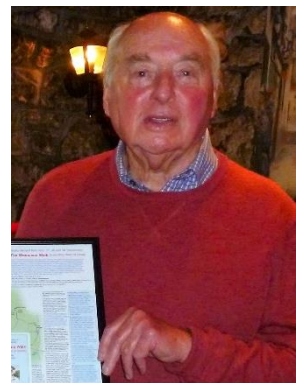
Sadly Valeways has just lost the last of its active founder members with the recent death of Graham Woosnam. Phil Gibbins remembers Graham:

"It was my great good fortune that when I became a Walk Leader it was Graham who lead me through the process of learning how to do it. I thus had the best introduction by, literally, following in the footsteps of the man who knew more about pathways in the Vale than anyone else.

Active in all aspects of Valeways Graham was most significantly instrumental in the creation of the Millenium Heritage Trail. He achieved this by the then far from simple expedient of getting out and finding how useable the recorded rights of way for the planned route were. The initial discoveries were that problems were many and varied. Graham persisted with the recording of the actual state of the paths and with the persuasion needed to get these put right. His memorial is the major national footpath that can still be enjoyed today.

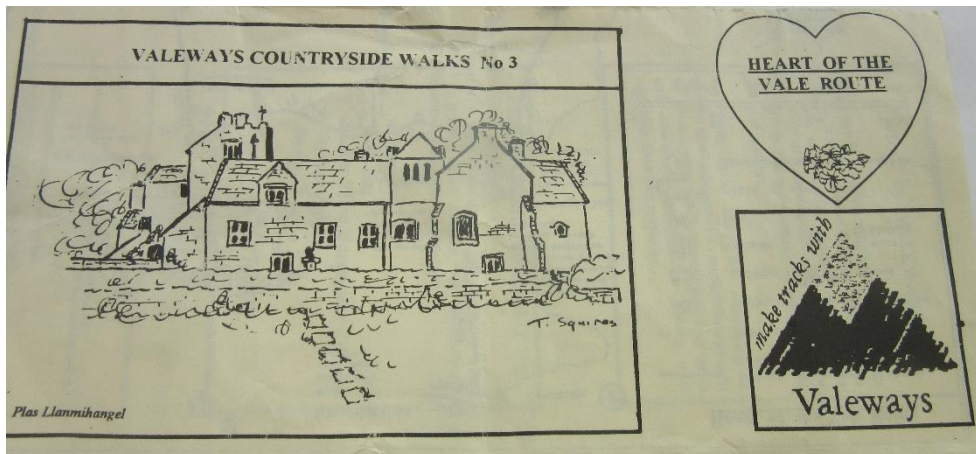
Among his enthusiasms there was a long held support for Cardiff City Football Club whose ups, and downs, would be noted by a glass of scotch.

But it was his public spiritedness in ensuring the future for walkers in the Vale for which he will be celebrated."



## Valeways self-led Walk Leaflets

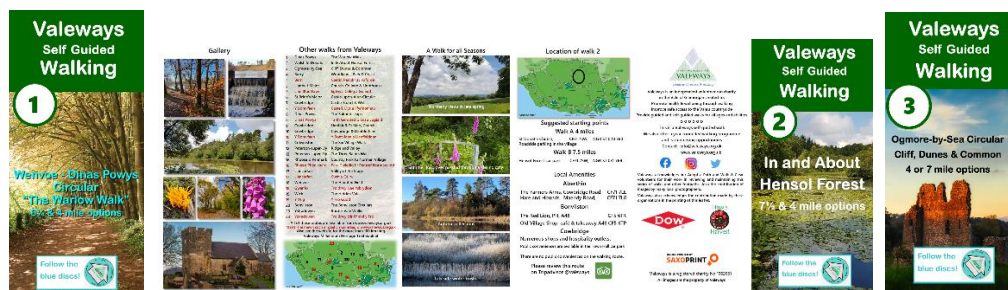
Graham was also involved in the production of the first Valeways walk leaflets and here we chart the changes to the leaflets still being used after 30 years. Some of you probably still have the original copies, and many of you will have been involved in providing maps, photographs, text and also checking the walk routes under the adopt a path scheme.



No publication date on this one but credits are given to Graham Woosnam for the map and notes, T. Squires for the illustrations and D. Rees for technical advice.

The leaflet also mentions 'future leaflets' and I have found more paper copies of these. The first dated one I have found is in 1992 and includes more hand drawn maps provided by South Glamorgan County Council. Later editions were printed on glossier paper, with colour photographs and even the Valeways website address. At this stage Valeways had published 19 different walking brochures for the use of the public to follow tried and trusted routes across the county. These walks are 5 to 13 miles long and all have shorter options. Some of the original routes have been updated by the Vale Trails leaflets (<https://www.visitthevale.com/see-do/walking>) which include additional information aimed at visiting tourists not so familiar with the terrain and hospitality providers.

However, the recent Covid lockdown work started on the design of three of the original leaflets.



The three new style leaflets describe walks in the Wenvoe/Dinas Powys, Hensol and Ogmore-by-Sea areas are now being distributed throughout the Vale for you to pick up at no cost.

As ever, each of the 19 routes is adopted by a volunteer who passes on any maintenance issues to the walk and clear volunteers.

Volunteers Alan, Greg, Paul and Peter worked together to re-write, design, and proofread the first batch of new brochures and are grateful to those who donated photographs. We would also like to thank Huw for donating the funds raised selling the produce from his garden and allotment and to everyone who bought the fruit and veg.

If you would like to take part in any part of this programme, we have another 16 leaflets to update and we would welcome some help, whether it be donating images, writing, design and proofreading. If you can help please contact Alan at [alan\\_simmonds@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alan_simmonds@hotmail.co.uk)

All leaflets can be downloaded from [www.valeways.org.uk](http://www.valeways.org.uk) Downloading to a phone is a good option in that all can be expanded or reduced without the use of mobile data or hitting a 4G blindspot.