

The Chain Gang Christmas report!

🌲 2015 🌲



You may have seen us lurking around the village and surrounds on dry weekends - and some wetter ones! We are the Chain-Gang, Ashton's answer to grotty footpaths. For quite a few years now it has been our pleasure to mend stiles, keep footpaths clear, build bridges and generally help make local walks walkable! Once led by Joe Aspey - author of the local footpath guide and thorough turncoat as he now resides in Broadway - we are now whipped into shape by our mad Landy driver, John *brrm-brrm* Kenrick.

We meet on the second Saturday each month and lean on shovels from 0930 til around lunch (we always end up in the pub by the way!) Don't hesitate to volunteer by emailing

John at johnkenrick@btinternet.com - always on the lookout for new peeps keen to join in this slightly esoteric fun!

You can always stay in touch through the year by the way by tuning in to Gordon Brown's *worldwidewebsphere* and going to the village website or by going to the Ashton Parish Council Facebook page - or simply looking up Foggy, Compo and Clegg here.....



The full list of reprobates include Martin Blakeman, Leo Enright, Justin Harber, David Hunter, Martin Everett, John Kenrick, Frank Moore, Paul Rowley, Simon Sellick (just retired bless) and Rob Smith.

By the way if you do see a prob somewhere, there is always:

<http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/website/Countryside/> and in the 'Parish' drop down list select Ashton under Hill and use the zoom slider on the left to show details of all the public rights of way in the Parish.

but it's probably quicker to come to us first! Email
leoeright2002@yahoo.co.uk

!! So what did you actually do in 2015 we hear you cry? !!

Of course, the whole gang pitches in and sets the pace but John Kenrick is our beloved obergruppenffuhrer and handles overall planning, with Paul *Radar O'Reilly* Rowley acting as ingenious quartermaster and Leo *schmoozer* Enright keeping the County Council on message. We try to break up tasks into regular maintenance and clearing and then the bigger stuff like new stiles and so on. The Wychavon Way, being our premier league path, also gets priority. So in no particular order - well reverse order in fact

24-Oct-15 - Dealt with the stile on Jamie Smith's land, revamping to incorporate a proper platform and a new waymarker. The stile not only had a steep drop on the lower side, it was muddy, a swamp for a lot of the year really. So here is the before and after....



12-Sep-15 - We installed a Kissing Gate on Wychavon Way on the hill above the Stile just mentioned [Justin *plumblin*e Harber in action below !] County likes KGs - they do assist the disabled - there is a local group of intrepid travellers who go up the hill and beyond



08-Aug-15 Wychavon Way - Can't remember what we did but it was truly marvellous!

11-Jul-15 - We cut back growth and repaired the stiles on what we call the Gorse Field, running below the track to Ashton Wood (above Wood Lane). This is a popular walking route, especially for dog owners and so is a regular gaunt for the Chain Gang!

20-Jun-15 - The Piggy Lane Story. We cleared the route along the field approached via Piggy lane - this was hot work, including the use of a huge Poldark-ian Scythe by the Gang. An iconic sight but not to dwell on that to long I feel.....

In the end, in consultation with WCC, we all realised that the commonly used northern side of the hedgerow was not actually the official footpath! All that burdock bashing for nought!



At some point, WCC is to re-establish the footpath on the south side and waymark it for us all, hoozah - we think!

09-May-15 - We repaired a Dog Gate below on the Wychavon Way..... hats off to Martin Blakeman for a piece of engineering so cunning you could microchip it and call it Fido.



18-Apr-15 - We completed the installation of brill new steps on the footpath between Steps Chandlers End and Gorse Hill. Quite a smart job that took a couple of weeks and two shifts of chain gangers and material kindly donated by John and Paul, thanks chaps!



14-Feb-15 - To get ahead of spring growth, Gorse Field got its first clearing - *in February* - how keen is that folks!

[An that's what we did - hope you approve and looking forward to 2016!](#)