



## South Gwent Ramblers

Minutes of the committee meeting held on  
22 August 2001



Members present - Ken Phillips (KP), Brian Williams (BW), Ray Cantwell (RC), Adrian Sheehan (AS), Fred Fee (FF), Keith Cooper (KC), Howard Harvey (HH).

1. *Apologies for absence* from Ian, Val and Andrew

2. *Minutes of last meeting*

2nd para of item 7c change "40% of the allocation" to "40% of the budget"

item 7e last line change "may" to "said we should"

item 8 change "It" to "KC"

3. *Matters arising from the minutes*

item 7f AS has sent notes to Kath and will send to Ken

item 7h viii Ken has Flatholm article

4. *SGR policy - Foot and Mouth epidemic*

FF noted that the high ground from Pontypool to Blorengre was not closed. Only NW and S Gwent are open. Ray's proposed walk cannot be made and he will substitute a 10-mile round walk (Caeleon-Ivy Bridge-Newbridge-Caerleon).

5. *Ruperra Trust*

Sue Price thanked us for our letter and for direct help (Keith and family have given their help). The letter indicated that our donation would be used for footpaths. A walk will be arranged and a site chosen for a commemorative bench. BW has a program of Ruperra Trust walks and events for July/August. AS has changed the date of the proposed walk (was to have been the date of the meeting). KP will let Ruperra Trust know that he will receive future communication.

6. *Officers' reports*

a. *Secretary KP*

i. KP presented a list of correspondence - see attached sheet.

ii. *Flatholm and London trips* both went well. One of the organisers of the London trip, Irene, received a letter of thanks from the two guides who appreciated our company. The trip was well appreciated by members of the committee who went on the trip.

iii. KP asked Dave McCabe (Newport CC) if they had received CROW money. He indicated that no additional money was received, but promised to extend activities into non-statutory areas. KC had received a response from Edwina Hart (Welsh Assembly) that grants were block grants or specific grants and that, in line with Local Government requests, the block grant includes £2.4 for footpaths &c.

iv. RC has asked for and KP will ask for English only documents in future from RA since Cymraig documents are a waste of money for us.

v. KP filled in a questionnaire from RA.

b. *Treasurer BW*

Current balance is £1696.88. We donated £100 to the Ruperra Conservation Trust for footpaths work, paid £120 deposit for the Germany trip (14 booked so far - see below). We received a letter from MIND thanking us for our donation in memory of Lorraine Steele; the money was allocated to Newport MIND.

c. *Footpaths Officer RC*

i. *Footpaths* have seen little activity. RC has not heard from Dave McCabe and will ring him if he does not hear from him soon. RC sent a protest to Newport CC about their amendment to the Newport Unitary Development Plan; they intend to reduce green space in many areas and this will lead to urban sprawl to the detriment of footpaths. KP asked if there were any proposals for airports and RC said that there were only rumours.

ii. *German walking holiday* is going ahead on 27 May 2002 at a cost of £169 per head. So far 14 have been booked. RC will make any further bookings subject to availability.

d. *Rambles Officer* AS recorded the following report:

I The limited summer walks programme went as planned. Although walks were not classified according to difficulty, the venue and the leader were an indication of what the walk might be like and those who came on particular walks enjoyed them.

The autumn programme has been published. This includes some evening walks and at least one walk each weekend. There are fewer long walks than in some previous programmes. The spread of foot and mouth locally has already caused some changes and will probably cause more as restrictions close more footpaths. All changes are posted on the website and walk leaders have been asked to keep the rambles officer informed in advance where possible.

A walking "weekend" in Germany has been proposed by Ray Cantwell. There has been a lot of interest and it should take place during the spring bank holiday 2001.

Discussion of walks followed:

i. *Summer programme of walks* was limited, but well attended by a mix of long and short walkers. KP noted that long and short walks in the current programme are bunched. AS agreed but circumstances forced this arrangement. HH offered a walk in one of the gaps and could ring round. KP may do the same.

ii. HH noted that the walks were not being advertised in the Argus. KP will ring Kath.

iii. RC's walk will differ from that of the programme because of the Foot & Mouth epidemic.

iv. *Walk and Talk* encourages new walkers, but we do not have the necessary walks in the circumstance. We will forget them for this year, but reconsider in the light of the circumstances next year.

v. AS would like a meeting for the coming *walks programmes*. KP agreed. KP and FF thanked AS for the effort he had made to pull together programmes in this difficult year. KP noted that sending letters does not usually get results and that 'phoning leaders was the only way to obtain results. AS agreed.

vi. KP indicated that we are to obtain a seat when we have a location decided at Ruperra.

vii. KP proposed a *trip to the Eden Project*. It is a four hour coach trip. RC reckoned that it was well worth it judging, from the Kingfisher brochure, even though the site was not yet mature or even because it is not yet mature. Kp proposed a visit in April 2002 with a possible overnight stay.

viii. KP proposed a combined *Slimbridge Bird Reserve/Berkley Castle (Gloucestershire) trip*, possibly in October. BW recommends later for the migratory birds which will be missing earlier, possibly for the Spring migration. KP will get details and we will consider it at the walks programme meeting.

ix. Christmas lunch will be on 28 December at the Huntsman and KP will ask Gill Griffin if she will organise a walk.

x. KP notes that the Portland Hotel at Portland Bill are offering walks for groups of 20 to 30 for £35 dinner, b&b. This could be considered in the walks meeting as a weekend away.

xi. RC offered a 4.5 mile, possibly extended to an 8 mile, easy valley of rocks walk at Linton by coach for £9.

xii. RC offered to lead a walk from Ilfracombe to Leigh of about 8 miles and would ring the Waverley operators.

xiii. BW offered to lead a walk in Dorset in a well waymarked area as a coach trip with a meal on the way back.

e. *Membership Secretary* VC not present, but membership is generally moribund probably because of the Foot and Mouth epidemic.

f. *Publicity Secretary* KS has received the walks programmes.

g. *IT Officer's report* KC - see attached sheet

7. *Any other business.*

- a. The AGM will be held on Thursday 18 October. We have a questionnaire from Sue Gitting about our policies in relation to RA policies to be considered at the meeting. Brief officer's reports would be appreciated by 11 October.
- b. KP will ask Dave McCabe to the AGM.

8. *Next Committee Meetings*

AGM: Thursday 18 October

Walks meeting: Wednesday 14 November

## Correspondence 22 August 2001

1. R.A. Motions passed at G.C. 2001	File
2. R.A. Update on passing G.C. Motions	File
3. R.A. Panel report on Walk Leading	Adrian
4. R.A. Countryside Update - June 2001	Ray
5. R.A. W.C.E.C. Minutes - 21/6/01	File
6. R.A. Welsh Council 2002	File
7. R.A. W.C.E.C. -Bulletin 8	File
8. R.A. Access Bulletin - July 2001	Ray
9. R.A. Footpath Campaigner - July 2001	Ray
10. R.A. Walk & Talk Literature	Adrian
11. R.A. A.G.M. Questionnaire	Action
12. Letter from Ruperra Trust	File
13. Letter from N.B.C.	Action
14. Misc Holiday data	File
15. R.A. E.C. Minutes 6/8 April	File
16. R.A. Access Bulletin - Aug.2001	Ray
17. R.A. Countryside Update - July 2001	Ray
18. R.A. Footpath Campaigner - August 2001	Ray
19. R.A. Foot & Mouth update	File
20. R.A. Publicity/Recruitment Info.	Discuss
21. R.A. Technology Questionnaire	Keith
22. R.A. Recruitment request	Distribute
23. R.A. F & M Update / Paths for people / CROW info	Discuss/File
24. R.A. Roadshows	Discuss/File
25. R.A. Training Day	Discuss/File
26. C.C.W. Roadshows	Discuss/File
27. New Magazine - Natur Cymru	Discuss/File

## **South Gwent Ramblers - I.T. Officers Report 22.08.01**

*Membership Enquires* None

*Footpaths* One problem passed on to Judy Cox.

*Website* We have now had 1557 hits, 272 since the last meeting.

*The Festival of The Countryside* I have e-mailed our walks program and details are included in their 'Calendar of Event's'.

*Database of walks* No further progress.

## **Greater Gwent Area - Delegates Report 22.08.01**

Area Committee meeting held 8 August. Significant items as follows

Committee confirmed the recommendations of the special meeting (no quorum) to

\* In response to Nick Barretts' request, to forego the Q4 area entitlement and to pledge similar for Q4 next year subject to review.

N.B. There has been a change of emphasis from centre and they have made some considerable cost savings to reduce their deficit.

\* Make a £500 contribution, on behalf of area and groups, to the Denbigh Moors Appeal. Most swaying argument was from Derrick Hynam essentially 'we do not know the area and the impact that the wind farm will have, but the Ramblers from there believe it is wrong and we should support their more informed judgement'.

\* Area are considering having a central venue for committee meetings.

\* Ray Wensley has started to put together what he feels is required for a Greater Gwent Area website. He has space on a server and has purchased the 'domain name' of ra-gga.co.uk.

He is offering area groups space to rent (at a reasonable rate). I do not think that we need to change our service provider as I am unlikely to use the extra facilities Ray can provide.

Keith Cooper  
I.T. Officer  
22.08.01