



South Gwent Ramblers



Minutes of the committee meeting held on 12 July 2007

Members present – Derek Humble, Ken Phillips, Val Clarke, Christine Platteeuw, Diana Osman, Fred Fee and Adrian Sheehan.

1. *Apologies for absence* from Brian Williams, Jan Waagener, Kath Carter.

2. *Minutes of last meeting* were adopted

2.1. *Matters arising from the minutes*

2.1.1. **Item 2.1.1** Adrian has complements slips and headed paper.

2.1.2. **Item 2.1.3** Fred sent the promised email.

2.1.3. **Item 2.1.4**

Map and Compass Ken will get in touch with Ian and ask him if he would like to organise another Map and Compass event comprising an evening of theory in Newport Civic Centre and a Sunday of practise outdoors.

Barbecue is still on with Kath to getting supplies except for the meat, Fred getting the meat, Adrian to bag a barbecue site at Cwmcarn and Jan to do the walk.

Tewkesbury will comprise a walk in Tewkesbury to Twyning (2 miles) along the river bank, lunch, a boat back and an optional visit to Tewkesbury Abbey if time allows. The coach will then take us to Dumbleton Hall from which a circular walk (5 miles) will allow us to return in time for a meal in the Hall.

3. Autumn Programme

3.1. **All walks should start at 9:30 at the weekend.** The 10am start for short walks is abandoned after a four month trial because it did not produce the expected result of more new walkers. The committee agreed to encourage leaders to start their walks at 9:30 and to lessen the number of walks starting at other times

3.2. **Christmas programme** – Thursday 13 December 7pm at Newport Golf Club for a carvery and Friday 28 December at the White Hart, Llangybi for the walk and dinner to be booked by Ken

3.3. **Slide show** of New Zealand given by Fred– Wednesday 14 November 7pm at Newport Civic Centre.

3.4. **Skittles evening** at Cwmbrân. Kath will book.

3.5. **AGM** Diana will book a room in a pub so that better quality refreshments will be more easily at hand.

4. Officers' reports

4.1. Secretary

- 4.1.1. Keith forwarded an email from RA Welsh Office to Ken and Fred asking for publicity material for the RA stall at the Welsh Show. Fred emailed a copy of the then current programme so that it could be copied and distributed at the show.
- 4.1.2. Alun Booth was involved in obtaining a grant for canals and towpaths regeneration in Gwent and thinks that the grant could well be used to improve footpaths.
- 4.1.3. Ken reports that the Ruperra Trust is now split in two parts dealing respectively with conservation and with problems arising from the development of the Ruperra Castle site. We agreed that we should continue to support them.
- 4.1.4. Christine will look into an SGR contribution to the RA Festival of Winter Walks, and inform the RA if we can provide a suitable walk for Sunday 30 December.
- 4.1.5. Ken reported that he was happy to get involved in the campaign to open up Coastal Access in Wales, after talking to Beverley Penney of RA Wales. A meeting is to be held at which Beverley Penney and RA members will discuss coastal access with representatives of all interested groups including Newport CC, Cardiff CC, Monmouthshire CC and the Welsh Assembly.

4.2. Treasurer Brian reported

- 4.2.1. The Current Account at 12 July 2007 holds £1,719.93, inclusive of the second and final payment from Area treasurer.

Excursions	Westonbirt	income £330.00	expenditure £330.00	broke even
	Exmouth	income £630.00	expenditure £626.95	profit £3.05

Budget report

All indications are that we will not exceed out budget figures. The situation at present is:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget (£)</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure (£)</u>
Access	45	25
Countryside	108	59
Promoting walking	543	314
Prewalk expenses	<u>750</u>	<u>290</u>
	<u>1446</u>	<u>688</u>

- 4.2.2. Ken and Brian attended a treasurers' meeting where the new budgetry system again provided the meat of the discussion.
- 4.2.3. Ken noted that we now receive a sum earmarked *inter alia* for expenses incurred by members when pre-walking. We agreed that we should encourage members to make use of this money. Ken will send claim forms to all leaders. Fred will produce the form.
- 4.2.4. Money could also be spent on better display equipment and any equipment that could be used by leaders.

4.3. Footpaths Officer Derek reported

- 4.3.1. There have been a few minor diversions which have little if any affect to users.
- 4.3.2. I have lodged an objection to a planned footpath diversion at Llandevaud which, if carried out, would detract greatly from the existing path which

diagonally crosses a meadow and turn it into a fenced field edge path requiring regular maintenance. It is very unlikely that this diversion will now take place.

- 4.3.3. Three footpaths are being realigned at Newport Golf Club in the interests of Health and Safety and also making the boundary of Risca Comprehensive School more secure.
- 4.3.4. We have received copies of the Newport City Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan Assessment Report 2007 which provides detailed information on their initial consultations and research regarding access to the countryside in Newport over the next ten years. They are looking for comments and issues that may have not been included. I generally concur with their views and look forward to the draft ROWIP in November.
- 4.3.5. The RA has scored a notable victory in the House of Lords which completely overturns “the iniquitous rulings made in lower courts which made it unjustly easy for landowners to deny the existence of rights of way by using evidence which wasn’t made public, for example letters to solicitors or private conversations to imply the footpaths to be private”.
- 4.3.6. This landmark ruling will mean that actions to stop paths being recognised as rights of way must be transparent.

4.4. *Rambles Officer* Christine reported

- 4.4.1. Christine reported that only one short and two evening walks needed to be filled. Ken agreed to provide the evening walks and Fred agreed to provide the short walk.
- 4.4.2. Two emails have arrived from organisations asking for our participation in their work:
 - **Kaleidoscope** offer support services, meeting places and a forum for ex-addicts and are successful in preventing addiction from recurring. Christine indicated that they are welcome to attend our meetings to set out their stall and that they could come on our walks with a view to joining RA.
 - Organisers of an **Alzheimer’s memory walk** on 23 September asked if we could join the event as sponsored walkers. We replied that we could help with the organisation of the event, but that we cannot raise money for another Charity under the terms of our running as a Charity ourselves, and would be bound to carry out publicity work at the event.

4.5. *Membership Secretary* Val reported that we now have 195 members.

4.6. *Publicity Secretary* Fred reported

- 4.6.1. Summer programmes were produced, printed and distributed to members, to Newport, Abergavenny and Caerphilly Tourist Information Offices as well as to other interested parties such as RA Area.
- 4.6.2. The Wye Valley “Look What’s On” guide, Newport CC and Monmouthshire CC internal newsletters, the Argus and Newport CC’s “Activities for the over 50s” all feature our walks.
- 4.6.3. Seven organisations now receive our programmes electronically.

4.6.4. Fred has an email list of 22 active members and hopes to add others soon.

4.6.5. Fred suggested that copies of walks programmes that are sent out to organisations and other non-members should include a letter asking them if they would like to receive the programmes electronically. The meeting agreed and Fred will produce and print the letters to accompany the next issue of the walks programmes.

4.7. *IT Officer's report* Keith was not present.

5. *A.O.B.*

Ken will write to Newport CC to confirm that we are happy with the Newport CC Rights of Way Improvement Plan Assessment Report.

6. *Next Committee Meeting* is on 11 October at 7:30pm at Newport Civic Centre