



# South Gwent Ramblers



## Minutes of the committee meeting held on 24 April 2008

*Members present* Fred Fee, Ken Phillips, Val Clark, Christine Plateeuw, Derek Humble, Brian Turner, Diana Osman, Kath Carter, Julie Hepburn, Brian Williams, Jan Waagener.

1. *Apologies for absence* Adrian Sheehan

2. *Minutes of last meeting* were adopted

2.1. *Matters arising from the minutes*

2.1.1. Re paragraph 2.1.1 Diana has booked Llanishen village hall near Chepstow for the AGM.

2.1.2. Re paragraph 2.1.3-4 Kath's supplier is out of business. There was not enough demand to justify producing sweatshirts elsewhere.

2.1.3. Re paragraph 2.1.5 Diana has obtained Islwyn walks book and Lower Wye walks publication version 2.

2.1.4. Re paragraph 2.1.7 Maggie Thomas has obtained up-to-date members reports for the group.

3. *Calendar of Events*

3.1. Thanks to Peter Elliott and Dave Fereday for producing a marvellous slide show: sadly, the attendance was once again disappointing.

3.2. The Council administration has attempted to charge us for attending to the condition of the room after the last meeting, alleging that it was left untidy. Ken asked them to cancel the charge since, among other things, we left the room in better condition than we found it. He is still awaiting a response.

3.3. Thanks to Kath for a terrific skittles evening at Whiteheads Sports Club with well over 30 attending: Maureen Fee was champion with an outstanding display under pressure. The catering was generally thought to be quite disappointing and Jan, who is a member of the venue, said that he would try to organise better catering if we return there for another skittles evening.

3.4. Fred said that the Scotland trip is coming along fine and is currently fully booked.

3.5. Colin and Ted are organising a long and short walk in Bristol. Ken is to reconnoitre a short walk. The plan is that bus will deliver long and short walkers to the Bristol maritime area, then we will all walk 6 miles to the Downs. The short walkers will remain there taking in the views and refreshments while long walkers carry on. The bus will deliver the short walkers back to the maritime area to meet the long walkers.

3.6. The coach and pub for the Rhossili trip have been booked and Ken and Derek will reconnoitre.

3.7. There are now 37 numbers booked for the Newquay trip which is now closed because the hotel can't take any more! Dinah will organise short walks and Dave long walks.

#### 4. *Future events*

- 4.1. Fred is attempting to organise a walk at the Newport Wetlands Centre. He is awaiting a response to an e-mail to one of the leaders at the centre. The putative date for the walk is 1 August.
- 4.2. The barbecue will now take place in August. We discussed Wentwood as a venue but Derek reported that the barbecues there have been removed. We decided that the Cwmcarn venue went down so well last year that we should do it again. Jan will organise the walk, and Fred will arrive early to book a site.
- 4.3. Fred said that Maureen had been on holiday in the Pyrenees and a small firm had organised it. Fred will get in touch with them to see whether it is practical to organise the trip for the group of South Gwent Ramblers.

#### 5. *Stepping Stones*

This initiative by the Ramblers Association is intended to initiate people getting fit by providing very short 1.5- 2 miles walks. Ken and Brian Williams attended a course given by the Ramblers Association and now each of them have a certificate indicating that they are fully qualified Stepping Stones walks leaders. Each Stepping Stones walk must meet the needs of the disadvantaged and will therefore need more than one leader. Ken and Brian were doubtful that we could accommodate such walks in our programme.

#### 6. *April to July walks programme*

- 6.1. Thanks to Christine for producing a very good programme.
- 6.2. Fred reported that the programme had to be used on paper instead of cardboard because the printer feed had been worn by using the cardboard. The printer was only intended for taking cardboard covers of documents printed on normal paper, according to the UK service agents, since it is only intended for non-business use. Business printer would be much dearer. Julie suggested using coloured paper and Fred will obtain some for the next run.

#### 7. *Officers' reports*

7.1. *Secretary* Ken presented the correspondence that he had received:

RA	New format for Yearbook	Jan08	Discuss/File
RA	Footpath Worker	Feb08	Derek
RA	Footpath Matters	Feb08	Derek
RA	Festival of Winter Walks	Feb08	Christine
RA	Stepping Stone Courses	Feb08	Discuss/File
SGR	Letter to Newport CC re Slide Show Problem	Feb08	Discuss/File
GG	Letter from Area Membership Secretary	Mar08	Discuss/File
RH	Holiday Offers	Mar08	File
RA	Minutes of Trustees Meeting	Mar08	File
RH	Footpath Matters	Mar08	Derek
RA	Transport for Walks	Mar08	Discuss/File
RA	Auditors Information	Mar08	File
RA	Footpath Matters	Apr08	Derek
RA	General Council 2008 Agenda etc	Apr08	File
RA.	Group Newsletter	Apr08	File
RA	Welsh Rambler	Apr08	File

## 7.2. *Treasurer Brian W*

- 7.2.1. The current bank balance stands at £1,681 and is inclusive of the first six months interest of £29-27.
- 7.2.2. Keith Cooper (IT Officer) has not confirmed if there is any alteration to his month allowance for running the website. As soon as the amount is confirmed a cheque in settlement will be sent.
- 7.2.3. The RA has informed us that we, along with all the other Groups in the country, may at some time have our accounts inspected by the auditors and as much notice as possible will be given.
- 7.2.4. The RA, in addition to the above, have issued a memorandum entitled 'Transport for Walks', in which they are trying to get some uniformity with regard to public transport, coach outings and the use of cars. It is requested we use public transport or coaches whenever possible to get to the starting point of the walk and thereby be environmentally friendly, and in the latter case, the pre-walk expenses are to be covered by those attending the trip. In the main, we use cars to reach our destination and we feel strongly that the expenses should be paid out of Group Funds as the budget figures are based on this assessment. Our attention has also been drawn to the Insurance aspect covering private cars. Any payments to compensate the owner for travelling costs should be purely on a voluntary basis, which is the case in our Group, as no monies are paid until the cars come back to Newport. This therefore, ensures the cover will not be invalidated. We note the RA appreciate that compliance to these changes will take time.

## 7.3. *Footpaths Officer Derek*

- 7.3.1. There have been several applications for footpath alterations since my last report, although none of them have been a cause for concern.
- 7.3.2. The paths around Berryhill Farm which I mentioned in my last report in January are awaiting confirmation orders for their diversion, and another path nearby at Parc Golf Club is to be re-routed to allow improvements to the course. I have not objected to the proposal which will eventually enhance enjoyment of the levels countryside for walkers.
- 7.3.3. There have been further planning issues regarding Robert Price's Transport Yard in Corporation Road, mainly on visual aspects. There is to be an appeal against the Planning Inspectorate.
- 7.3.4. There is no further news on the proposed changes to three paths at Newport Golf Club.
- 7.3.5. We are now waiting for the new ROWIP report from the City Council as promised.
- 7.3.6. Research is continuing into finding possible new rights of way in conjunction with coastal access on behalf of Newport City Council.
- 7.3.7. The Celtic Manor Golf Club have proposed to realign Footpath 13 which runs North to South from Bulmore Road to Catsash Road. Having walked the proposed route, I have no objection to its inception as the path is much easier to follow, is less noisy, and has some improved views over the existing path. There is much less chance of being struck by either a golf ball, or more importantly, a golf buggy.

- 7.4. *Rambles Officer* Christine reports that it was a pleasant surprise to easily fill slots for the short evening walks.
- 7.5. *Membership Secretary* Val reported that we now have 192 members which is lower than last year but still good considering that the number had dropped to the 180s since last meeting. Fred agreed to formulate a standard email to help answering enquiries from prospective new members.
- 7.6. *Publicity Secretary* Fred
- 7.6.1. I could not attend the last meeting. The period before the meeting was quiet with the normal distribution of programmes and various SGR copying jobs done.
- 7.6.2. Since the last meeting, I have set out, and, with help from friendly stuffers, printed and distributed two sets of programmes and a Newsletter and the Newsletter Extra. The distribution list now includes members, about 10 bureaucracies, and local Tourist Information Offices. Colin Wallace was not on any of the sets of address labels that we obtained from the Ramblers. I think I've finally got the Ramblers to put Colin on the South Gwent Ramblers list, but then again, I thought that the last twice as well. I have also bought 100 stamps.
- 7.6.3. Ken and I attended the inauguration of the Newport Wetlands Centre, a splendid do in a prosaic marquee at which the chairman of the Countryside Commission for Wales, the Mayor of Newport and various other dignitaries as well as some serfs and a group of schoolchildren enjoyed some surprisingly good speeches and brief walks to introduce us to the attractions of the Wetlands Centre.
- 7.6.4. At the meeting we met the office manager of the Countryside Commission for Wales who was enthusiastic when I suggested that I should send copies of the walks programme to them. I added them to my list of bureaucracies who receive programmes. Ken and I talked to one of the guides at the Centre, Richard Garman, who also used to be the chairman of the Cardiff Ramblers. We asked him if he would be willing to guide a group from South Gwent Ramblers on a visit of the Centre. He was quite keen for us to do so and suggested an evening in the summer so that we could take advantage of the long nights. I have sent him an e-mail and have not yet received a reply.
- 7.6.5. Fred asked if anyone worked at places that may take publicity material such as posters. Jan said the gyms might want them and took several copies from distribution.

## 8. *AOB*

- 8.1. Brian reminded everyone that expenses for reconnoitring are paid by the Ramblers Association and not by the group. Could anyone with outstanding expenses for pre-walking police admit them soon?
- 8.2. Fred noted that RA Wales head office in Cardiff has five large waistcoats awaiting us. With each one having high visibility markings and the Ramblers logo. They are contained in a carrier bag and weigh about two pounds. No one was going to Cardiff. So Fred will ring them and they will be posted to him.

*Next Committee Meeting* is on Thursday, 10 July.