

*Members present* - Ken Phillips, Val Clark, Derek Humble, Diana Osman.

1. *Apologies for absence* from Brian Williams, Fred Fee, Adrian Sheehan, Dave Fereday, Christine Platteeuw, Jan Wagenaar, Kath Carter.

2. *Minutes of last meeting* were adopted

3. *Matters arising from the minutes*

3.1. *Re para 3.2* "CRV vetting" should read "CRB vetting".

3.2. *Re para 5.5* Dave was reminded to check out the Croquet Evening for 2010.

4. *Ramblers financial problems*

Further to the note sent out with the agenda, on the 3 July we received an email from Beverley Penny, Ramblers Cymru Director, confirming the reduction of staff at the Wales Office and also her own departure. There has been no further communication from head office. Ken rang Ramblers Cymru on a membership matter and was told that all mail sent to Cardiff is not opened there but was sent on to London. A report from Welsh Council states that Ramblers Scotland is seriously thinking of going it alone and there is speculation that Wales may follow!!

5. *Officers' reports*

5.1. *Secretary* Ken Phillips

Little correspondence has been received since the last meeting. The RA advised that the rules governing Stepping Stone Walks have been relaxed and leaders no longer have to attend a training session before being able to lead a walk. They do not have to issue a questionnaire to new walkers or complete and submit a report to Ramblers Cymru. We were advised that information on the RA website will replace all circulars, newsletters bulletins, handbooks, fact sheets and other resources in order to eliminate costly paper copies.

5.2. *Treasurer* Ken Phillips *pp* Brian Williams

Our current bank balance is £984.94 with interest payments to come. At the request of the Area Treasurer, we have prepared an anticipated year-end statement and this will form the basis for next years budget. We are aiming to keep a £1000 working balance. The minutes of the Area meeting held on the 16 September suggest no problems are foreseen.

The area treasurer advises that we might consider allocating reserves as designated funds: this has the advantage that, should the Ramblers fold, we would not have to return any designated funds. The Treasurer and Chairman to investigate.

5.3. *Footpaths Officer* Derek Humble

There have been a number of Footpath Diversion Applications and Diversion orders, none of which are contentious. One planning permission application involves horses and we have made suggestions to the landowner to enhance the safety of our walkers.

Newport City Council have produced walks leaflets, available from Libraries and the Civic Centre. The Footpaths Volunteer Group are presently engaged in waymarking and improving/maintaining the paths involved. It was thought that it might have been prudent to withhold publication of the leaflets until this work was completed. Derek was asked to obtain some of the leaflets.

5.4. *Rambles Officer* Christine Plateeuw was not present.

5.5. *Membership Secretary* Val Clark

Our membership at the end of August was 190. We are still at a loss as to how the head office arrive at these figures. Maggie Thomas, Area Membership Secretary, is on the case and hopefully we should have a more reliable report in the not to distant future.

5.6. *Publicity Secretary* Fred Fee was not present.

5.7. *IT Officer's report* Keith Cooper was not present.

6. *Calendar of events for 2009/10*

We discussed the list of events which were distributed with the agenda and listed below are our comments. However it was agreed that the remaining members of the committee be advised and to seek their comments before proceeding any further.

6.1. *Tredegar House or Clearwell Caves* A Sunday walk in January 2010 followed by a tour of the caves was suggested.

6.2. *Llancaich Fawr* No visit planned in the near future.

6.3. *Weekend Away to Manor House, Dartmoor in February* This event was advertised in our September newsletter and has met with the approval of 15 members to date. Ken will discuss the subject down in Newquay and make a booking on his return.

6.4. *Skittles* We will hold the first of our two annual skittles evenings in April.

6.5. *Coach Trips* We felt that four coach trips were too many and we would consider London, Lynmouth and Kidderminster (rail trip). We went to West Wales last year and will possibly pencil Pembroke in for 2011. **If there are any other suggestions the above considerations are not set in stone.**

6.6. *Weekend Away in June to the Lake District* Dave Fereday has offered to organise a visit. We would like to know if it would be for all members or only the hardiest of our long walkers.

6.7. *Weekend Away in October alternative 1 - Derby* Ken advised that he had been contacted by the Portland Hotel in Buxton. It is a Rambler Friendly hotel with 22 en-suite rooms. Dinner, Bed and Breakfast is £35.00. Dave, it even has a real ale bar!!

6.8. *Weekend Away in October alternative 2 - Barmouth* Derek fancies visiting this area. We have been to Dolgellau many years ago. With Cadair Idris and the coast available, it is a good area to walk. Derek will investigate further.

7. *AOB*

7.1. Diana was asked if the walk for the AGM was finalised. She advised that she had not sorted it yet but confirmed she would by the AGM. Ken will contact Kath to discuss the refreshments. We will cater for the same numbers as last year.

7.2. Ken asked those present if they will continue on the committee next year. Sadly Diana feels she cannot but offered her help should we require it. Hopefully everyone else will continue. These minutes will be sent out in the near future and if anyone feels that they cannot continue, please contact Ken as soon as possible.

7.3. Christmas Walk - Derek pointed out that the information on the Newsletter was incorrect. The walk will take place on Tuesday 29 December. This information will be printed in our next programme at the end of November.

8. *Next committee meeting* on Thursday, 21 January 2010 at 7.00pm