

*Members present* - Fred Fee, Ken Phillips, Brian Williams, Derek Humble, Adrian Sheehan, Val Clark, Kath Carter, Dave Fereday.

1. *Apologies for absence* from Jan Wagenaar and Christine Platteeuw.
2. *Minutes of last meeting* were adopted
3. *Matters arising from the minutes*
  - 3.1. *Events*
    - 3.1.1. The **Skittles evening** was well attended, well organised and well enjoyed.
    - 3.1.2. The **Clearwell Caves** trip went well in no small part because of the good organisation.
    - 3.1.3. Those visiting **Windsor** had a very good day crowned with lovely hot Summer weather.
    - 3.1.4. Mixed weather on the **Lakes** trip didn't dampen the spirit of the walkers who completed all the walks, except for Fred who was injured on the first walk. Dave's flexible organisation prevailed over the effects of the weather.
    - 3.1.5. Paul Mellor, Paul Coleman and Colin Wallace were pre-walking the Valley of the Rocks on the day of this meeting in preparation for the **Linton/Lynmouth** trip. We will eat at the Windmill pub on the way back. Only one place remains.
    - 3.1.6. Ken gave Dave the list of participants for the **Boules** evening. Dave will organise.
    - 3.1.7. The **Barbecue** has finally been booked (they had trouble with their telephones). Derek may be able to do the walk.
    - 3.1.8. The organisation of the **Kidderminster** trip is well underway. The Down Inn, Bridgenorth is booked as is the train, with Ken obtaining concessionary fares.
    - 3.1.9. Dave will provide an 11½-mile walk from Rock to Port Isaac for the **Newquay** trip and he will help Ken organise a short walk. Dave and Ken will finalise the itinerary.
    - 3.1.10. The number of bookings for the **Westonbirt** trip is now 22: the trip will definitely go ahead.
  - 3.2. *Area AGM*
    - 3.2.1. The AGM date is now fixed for 7 November from 2-4pm, with the big hall in Ponthir available for three hours at £10 per hour. We should cater for 50 (60 estimated to attend). Area will pay £3 per person and Ponthir Hall can provide the catering for that price. Ken noted that their catering is good. Ken will book the hall, the food and the drink. Dave will lead a short walk from the hall in the morning.
  - 3.3. *South Gwent Ramblers AGM*
    - 3.3.1. The budget for last year's AGM was £75. Ken and Brian indicated that we could afford the same this year. Derek said that the cost is a small price to pay for the enhanced participation. The committee agreed. Diana Osman has booked the hall and will do a walk.

### 3.4. *Distribution of material to members*

- 3.4.1. Fred suggested previously that we could consider sending committee meetings agendas and minutes by email. The committee agreed. Ken will send Fred the Agenda and Fred will circulate the agenda and minutes by email in future.
- 3.4.2. The question then arose: "Can we send newsletters and walks programmes by email?". Fred will find out more about the practicalities of sending material either by email or by mail and the problems of maintaining separate lists for each.

## 4. *Officers' reports*

### 4.1. *Secretary* Ken Phillips

#### 4.1.1. Ken presented a list of correspondence:

- |     |      |                                      |      |
|-----|------|--------------------------------------|------|
| 1.  | F.F. | Walking Holiday 2011                 | Dave |
| 2.  | K.P. | Letter to Adrian Sheehan re Area AGM | File |
| 3.  | A.S. | Hosting 2011 Welsh Council           | File |
| 4.  | R.A. | Volunteer Survey Results             | File |
| 5.  | R.A. | Led Walks Accreditation              | File |
| 6.  | A.S. | Ebbw Vale Eisteddfod - SGR Programme | Dave |
| 7.  | R.A. | May Volunteer Update                 | File |
| 8.  | R.A. | May Walking Forward                  | File |
| 9.  | R.A. | June Walking Forward                 | File |
| 10. | R.A. | June Volunteer Update                | File |

#### 4.1.2. Fred confirmed that the Scotland trip is in hand.

#### 4.1.3. Area is holding the Welsh Council meeting and Maggie Thomas is organising it. The date will be in April, probably in Cross Keys College. Public transport and cost were key factors in choosing the venue.

#### 4.1.4. Audrey Winkinson (Ramblers Association Lead Walks leader) has asked us whether we need any leader training. Fred said that most of the long walkers tend to know what they are doing when leading, but training could be useful to fill in gaps. Adrian wondered if we were too blasé and may eventually get caught out, citing the problems encountered by groups on walks this winter. Ken also pointed to the perennial problem of where we store equipment which may be needed for walks leaders. Ken will write to Audrey what is on offer.

#### 4.1.5. Adrian noted a letter from Maggie Thomas asking for details of August walks for use in Eisteddford publicity.

#### 4.1.6. Ken noted that we will have to provide someone at the Civic Centre to direct walkers to the venue of the Area walk.

#### 4.1.7. After receiving an email from the Ramblers Association asking us to contact politicians, Ken asked for our views on campaigning in general. Kath thought that if members were interested in a particular subject, they would campaign. Generally, we would look to Area.

### 4.2. *Treasurer* Brian Williams

Our allocation from the Ramblers Association, as previously warned, has been reduced for the second half of this year. So instead of the budget application of £556 we only received £162, i.e. a reduction of £394. A letter from the Area treasurer was read out explaining this situation. (*The letter from Area explained, among other things, that there was no contribution from Area since Area wish to maintain their reserves at present, a course of action unanimously agreed at the last Area committee meeting.*)

We have again this year been asked to provide a budget for the forthcoming year, based on figures as at the end of the financial year 30 Sep 2010, which will require some crystal ball

gazing for the months of July, August and September. Next year's Group allocation will be based on the resultant figure which has been submitted at £898.

The projected end of the financial year balance will be approximately £845. Should the Ramblers Association, as last year, cut us back on our budget request, our reserves will be further diminished. We have asked that this situation does not re-occur. At present our actual balance stands at £1,603 from which the cost of coach hire for three forthcoming events has to be deducted.

The coach trip to Windsor broke even.

- 4.2.1. The Ramblers Association offered 56p per member - not enough to run the group. Ken said that our reserves are diminishing and approaching the 40% of expenditure target set by the Ramblers Association (~£500).

4.3. *Footpaths Officer* Derek Humble presented his report:

Sixteen documents have been received for diversions, extinguishments and planning applications which may affect public footpaths in our area since our last meeting in March. There has been no need to comment or object to any of the proposals.

A number of Orders have been made in reference to diversions from the past year or so, but these are all part of the due legal process involved in improving routes for walkers benefits.

A planned extinguishment at Caerleon has been declined due to a walker wanting to continue his regular stroll along the cul-de-sac path and back again. The Council are very accommodating in this respect.

Plans are afoot again to restrict traffic movements on two roads in Wentwood in order to combat raves and fly tipping.

Celtic Manor have applied to convert a barn into a dwelling, refurbish an existing farmhouse, Draenllwyn Farm, on Catsash Road and relocate Little Bulmore Farm to this site, also known as Haines Farm.

Efforts are continuing to establish new and improved rights of way, especially in the Caldicot and Wentlloo Levels areas in conjunction with Coastal Access objectives.

4.4. *Rambles Officer* Dave Fereday

- 4.4.1. Dave said that the dates of the programmes were out of sync with the request for August walks for the Eisteddford. We decided to stay with the current format rather than make any changes.

- 4.4.2. Dave will be sending email requesting walks for the next programme soon.e

4.5. *Membership Secretary* Val Clark reported that membership at 31 May was 184. The new system is settling down now, but numbers vary from month to month, since late payers are marked as lapsed for a while. Variations are not particularly important at the moment, but could be if the Ramblers Association starts to use membership numbers for calculating funding.

4.6. *Publicity Secretary* Fred Fee

- 4.6.1. Fred thanked Dave for providing data for printing the programmes in good time and in very good order.

- 4.6.2. Some errors have appeared lately in Argus What's On entries for our walks. Fred will keep an eye on future entries and let the Argus know if errors continue.

- 4.6.3. The newsletter was laid out, printed and distributed.

- 4.6.4. Details of the forthcoming Monmouthshire Walking Festival were circulated by email.

4.7. *IT Officer's report* Keith Cooper. Fred gave Keith the walks programmes and Keith updated the web site quickly. Other details, such as the list of committee members, have also been updated.

4.8. *Area matters* Adrian

4.8.1. Matters concerning finance, the Eisteddford and the Welsh Council meeting have been covered above.

4.8.2. Lower Wye have a stand booked for the Monmouthshire Show and have asked other groups if they would be interested in joining them (and sharing the cost). Ken suggested that Area should pay. Adrian has had feedback that the affect on membership would be vestigial.

4.8.3. The decimation of the Welsh Office has lead to documents being ignored. Any outstanding matters may be worth raising afresh.

5. *AOB*

5.1. Kath proposed the skittles match be held in November. Ken will liaise with Kath and Dave.

5.2. Ken thanked Taha Lazim for his work for the group. Taha has now left Newport for a new post in Aberystwyth. We wish him well.

6. *Next committee meeting* on 23 September