

Members present - Roger Binding, Phyllis Clayton, Fred Fee, Dave Fereday, Derek Humble, Joan Lang, Ken Phillips.

1. *Apologies for absence* None
2. *Minutes of last meeting* were adopted
3. *Matters arising from the minutes*
 - 3.1. *Re para 3.1* Ken reported that only two members had shown an interest in the first aid course. John Ebdon was favoured by Dawn Bishop. He can provide a 6hr course for £30 per person. Fred and Dave said that they should be added to the numbers for taking the course. Ken will contact John Ebdon.
 - 3.2. *Re para 3.2* No members have yet caused money to be sent to the Group via the Ramblers Worldwide Holidays Walking Partnership. Fred said that he had booked a holiday under the scheme and that the money would be paid as soon as the holiday was over and probably before the next meeting.

4. *Officers' reports*

4.1. *Secretary* Colin Wallace - Fred had received an email from Colin and there was nothing to report.

4.2. *Treasurer* Ken Phillips

Our bank balance at 19th March 2014 was £1452.66. Our latest bank balance at 22nd May 2014 is £1658.54.

We have received our final budget amount from Area of £395.00, £60 from Ramblers Holidays and 67p bank interest.

Expenditure includes stamps for programmes & newsletter £153.00, Prewalk Expense £20 and Admin & Stationery (6 months) £76.79

Budget wise we have spent £408.79 of the £910.00. We have £280 left on Publicity. £39 on Admin, £132 on Prewalk Expense and £50 for our annual donation to the Air Ambulance.

When we calculated our budget we included £200 for Walks Leader Courses and £200 for First Aid Courses. These amounts, if spent, would reduce our reserves to fall in line with the charity commissions levels. It is unlikely that we spend the full amount; however, I feel we should at least spend a certain sum to show we do want to reduce our reserves.

4.2.1. Ken asked whether Fred and Koirin had done anything re new publicity material for South Gwent Ramblers. Fred said no but would reconsider. Dave suggested keeping a stock of walks-related equipment such as a first aid kit, maps and a GPS. Joan suggested that a walk leader pass the equipment on to the leader of the next walk. Ken said that members who use a GPS already have their own and there are practicalities that militate against keeping such equipment.

4.3. *Footpaths Officer* Derek Humble

There has been a number of planning applications on various topics since our last meeting in January.

Two are for major housing developments in Bettws and Maindee which will not greatly affect the use of PROW's.

One is in regard to temporary car parking in Celtic Manor for construction workers building the International Conference Centre which could affect access to the Usk Valley Walk. I have asked that this route be made available at all times.

One footpath has been extinguished at Nash, but there is a new better path which replaces it.

I have objected again to a planned diversion of a footpath at Marshfield which I believe would not be in the best interests of Ramblers, following the landowners hope to get me to change my mind. If the owner saw fit to clear the intended diversion route, I might be more sympathetic to his cause.

Several circular routes are being readied by the volunteer group prior to publication of walking links to the Coastal Path in the St. Brides area.

Two people have expressed an interest in volunteering in rambling and footpath work in this area via Ramblers Cymru. I have explained briefly what is available.

- 4.4. *Rambles Officer* Dave Fereday had nothing to report bar that some members had provided walks and that he had worked to cajole further members to provide him with walks for the walks programme.
- 4.5. *Membership Secretary* Joan Lang reported that one member had left the Group and one had joined. This resulted in the total membership dropping from 145 to 135 (!) according to figures supplied by the Ramblers Association.
- 4.6. *Publicity Secretary* [Fred Fee *pro tem*] Fred reported that he continues to pass on offers and information received via the web sites to members via a circulation list.
- 4.7. *IT Officer's report* Fred Fee reported that he continues to keep the web site up to date, to publish and circulate the walks programme and any newsletter (aided by "Stuffers" who fill, address and stamp envelopes), to attend to emails received via the forms on the web sites and to keep our presence on the Ramblers Association web site up to date.

5. *Events calendar*

- 5.1. Ken reported that Ian's trip to *Scotland* was a success despite suffering innumerable attacks by wild haggis. Nine members braved the trip.
- 5.2. Ken asked Dave for the members intending to play in the *Boules* on 15 July so that he could determine the teams.
- 5.3. 27 July *Laugharne*: Dave and Ken have been to Laugharne. They found an excellent hotel for a meal only to find that a wedding reception had been booked for the same day. Undaunted, Ken has found another suitable hotel. 37 have booked so far. Dawn, Dave and Ken have come up with an itinerary: leave at 8:30am, drop the long walkers and take the rest to Laugharne, the short walkers then stay on the coach and go to the start of their walk to Saundersfoot and back to Laugharne. Dave wondered what would happen if Dawn could not lead the short walk. Ken will look at the list of people going to search for a replacement if needs be.
- 5.4. 10 August *Barbecue at Tintern*: Ken will collect names and will liaise with Koirin, Doug and John about provision of food. Derek once again will lead the walk and will enquire about possible consequences arising from a car boot sale on the day on the same site.
- 5.5. 6-10 October *Barmouth*: 39 are going with all rooms booked. IoW tours organised the Hotel Min y Mor and the coach. Ken and Koirin will organise the itinerary. Derek has reconnoitred a visit to Portmeirion.
- 5.6. 16 November *SGR AGM*: Colin will be asked to organise the AGM at Devauden with Colin and Sue organising the buffet. Roger volunteered a walk.
- 5.7. 11 December *Christmas Dinner*: the committee agreed with Ken to try to return to the Parc Golf Club. Sue Shae was reported to want a disco/dance but the committee did not favour one.

- 5.8. 7 December *Westonbirt Christmas Lights*: Paul Mellor has long wanted this trip to be provided. After the committee spent time possible formats to incorporate a walk and a view of the lights, Phyllis suggested a coach trip with coffee/lunch, a walk round with a guide and then view the lights on the evening at leisure. She even agreed to organise the trip!
- 5.9. *Christmas walk*: Fred has a few venues in mind and has been pre-walking with Ted Clevely but nothing is organised yet. The date will probably be 30 December.

6. *AOB*

- 6.1. Ken had heard some talk of *problems between cyclists and ramblers sharing a path*. Fred said that walking along paved paths was now uncomfortable because of constant disruption in progress to allow cyclists to pass, particularly on the many canals and paved ex-railways and ex-tramways. From the point of view of cyclists, Dave said that their progress was interrupted by walkers ignoring bells and being oblivious when wearing headphones. Derek said that a bigger problem was groups of cyclist spooking horses. Roger thought that cyclists should bear in mind the limited movement of walkers.
- 6.2. Ken distributed Ramblers Association "Volunteering Welcome" booklets to members at the meeting.
- 6.3. Ken asked about *the future of the walks programme*. **Evening walks** are not being well supported. Chris Burns and Liz Salmon like the walks because they work and the format really suits them. Dave wondered what would happen if they stopped. Roger was prepared to accept low numbers. **Medium walks** are poorly attended and have not been well attended for a while. Should the medium walkers be warned that they may disappear if they do not find support? Ken asked who the medium walkers were and the general consensus was that there weren't many of them. There followed a general discussion of the walks programme in general, but no solid conclusions arose.
- 6.4. Roger noted a *demand for walks on Bank Holidays*. Such walks had been abandoned a while ago because of lack of support but times have changed. Roger volunteered a walk for 24 August.

7. *Next committee meeting* on 28 October