

Members present - Phyllis Clayton, Fred Fee, Derek Humble, Joan Lang, Colin Wallace,, Ivor Barclay.

1. *Apologies for absence* from Ken Phillips, Brian Turner, Steve Atkins, Dave Fereday and Roger Binding
2. *Minutes of last meeting* were adopted
3. *Matters arising from the minutes*
 - 3.1. A First aid course will definitely be held.
 - 3.2. The Area Newsletter was produced and circulated.
 - 3.3. Ken has adjusted the format of the accounts to show the previous year's figures together with the current year's.
 - 3.4. Dave is not to be a leader at Buddleigh Salterton. Derek is now doing it.
 - 3.5. The Dewstow evening walk cannot now go ahead because of changes to the availability of the grounds.
 - 3.6. Colin requested information from the Rivermead Centre with a view to staging our AGM there but has not yet heard from them. Phyllis noted that Machen looked to be a suitable venue as a backup in case Rivermead was not found to be suitable.
4. *Officers' reports*
 - 4.1. *Secretary* Colin Wallace noted Ramblers Cymru are promoting the Big Welsh Walk on-line and in the Walk magazine. He thought that no action was needed on our part.
 - 4.2. *Treasurer* Ken Phillips (presented by Phyllis)
 - 4.2.1. Our bank balance at 1 March 2015 was £950.50.
 - 4.2.2. We started the year (1 October 2014) with a balance of £1382.59 and have spent £837.09 to date. We received 50% of our budget (£285) from Area, £60 for an advert and £50 from The Walking Partnership. Our expenditure has mainly been on Toner, AGM Costs, Programme Stamps and 5 year's worth of Web Costs. There have been a few prewalk claims & we renewed our Ruperra Membership.
 - 4.2.3. Our reserves were much higher than they should have been to meet the Charity Commission regulations and our reduced budget request for this year should result in a more acceptable reserve/turnover percentage.
 - 4.2.4. Ken has reminded our members in our next newsletter that they are able to claim pre-walk expenses and to contact him when they wish to do so.
 - 4.3. *Footpaths Officer* Derek Humble
 - 4.3.1. There have been several applications for footpath alterations since my last report, although none of them has been a cause for concern.
 - 4.3.2. Plans for new housing near Rodney Parade and Herbert Road have been submitted, but will not drastically alter use of nearby footpaths.
 - 4.3.3. Plans for a solar farm near Llanmartin have been resubmitted following a successful appeal for a similar installation in Monmouthshire. This would affect two footpaths which I would like to see kept the same as now.

4.3.4. After losing a planning application for a solar farm at Llanmartin, the applicants have now submitted another application, just as happened with an earlier failed application in Llanvaplly.

4.4. *Rambles Officer* Dave Fereday was not present

4.5. *Membership Secretary* Joan Lang reported that membership is now 141, having lost one (Koirin) and gained two. Chris Burns left then rejoined!

4.6. *Publicity Secretary* Fred Fee

4.6.1. Fred received an email from Tim Wroblewski, a consultant employed by Torfaen CBC to produce a "toolkit" addressing a number of "landscape crime" issues in parts of the South Wales Uplands. He asked for input from the Group about such issues. Fred thought of a number of such issues, for example fly tipping, arson and illegal off-roading. Derek volunteered to contact Mr Wroblewski.

4.6.2. A company called Micromarketing Ltd got in touch with me about one of their products, a key ring with a tab that contained a small sheet big enough to contain emergency details such as your name, date of birth, ICE, blood group, doctor, surgery, medication and medical condition. The price is £118.80 for 50 or £139.20 for 100 (ex VAT). The meeting was split 50/50 about their usefulness. Fred will contact other Groups in the Area to see how much interest there is in the idea.

4.7. *IT secretary* Fred Fee did the routine publishing and distributing of the walks programmes, and updated the South Gwent Ramblers web sites and our presence on the Ramblers Association site. He noted that the Ramblers Association site is beginning to introduce a small but increasing number of new members to South Gwent Ramblers..

5. *Events calendar*

5.1. *Skittles* The night was not well supported as is becoming usual and we almost made a loss. Phyllis asked for any other ideas and Ivor mentioned a talk on a walk to Santiago di Compostela.

5.2. *Buddleigh Salterton* The date is set at 17 May. Derek, Mary and Ken are doing the walks and the coach leaves at 8am. Derek and Mary will comment to Ken about any changes.

5.3. *Boules* has now been booked.

5.4. *Barbecue* is booked for Tintern on 2 August and a food organiser is needed

5.5. *Oxford* Joan noted that Derek will do the long walk and that she was leading a walk round Oxford. The coach leaves at 8:30am.

5.6. *Dewstow* The event has had to be cancelled because Dewstow wanted a guaranteed £7 for a minimum of 40 people and Colin thought we were unlikely to meet that number. The committee agreed.

5.7. *Slimbridge* Colin suggested going to Slimbridge. A minimum of 12 people are needed for a group visit which involves a talk before you are free to wander round Slimbridge at your leisure. Fred proposed that we go under our own steam and meet there as a group. If there is support for the idea, the booking has to be made a minimum of one month before the visit.

6. *AOB*

6.1. Fred noted that some recent walks have been longer and/or more strenuous than published in the programme. Members should keep more closely to the stated mileage and vigour. There was general agreement that this was so and that the committee should address the issue.

6.2. Kath's car is currently bed-ridden and it was proposed that a member could visit and take flowers.

6.3. A Miss LM Edwards has been in touch and no longer wishes to receive programmes &c. Fred will make sure that her wishes are fulfilled.

7. *Next committee meeting* on Tuesday 15 September