



*Members present (34)* - Julie Davies, Ted Clevely, John Smith, Paul Mellor, Dave Evans, Olimpia Evans, Jean Butt, Iris Buckingham, Liz Salmon, Paul Coleman, Ken Poole, Jan Lavis, Brian Williams, Peter Elliott, Sid Carnell, Linda Westerberg, Mary Raymond, Margaret Nunn, Fred Fee, Maureen Fee, Dave Fereday, Joan Lang, Mike Fallaize, Lorna Hall, Roger Binding, Colin Wallace, Ken Phillips, Pam Jones, Richard Atack, Franco Ciavetta, Ivor Barclay, Sue Shea, Sheila Holmes, Charles Goodreid.

*Apologies for absence* from Gill Griffin, Gary Morgan, Steph Lyons, Derek Humble, Denise Humble, Andrew Willmott, Steve Atkins, Gary Morgan.

1. *Chairman's welcome* Ken Phillips
2. *Minutes of last AGM* were adopted
3. *Matters arising from the minutes* Each time a Ramblers Association member books a holiday with RWH and informs RWH before they go that they are from South Gwent Ramblers and wish to partake in the Walking Partnership offer, the RWH will donate a sum to the Group. As a result of Peter and Helen's Holiday RWH) we received &60 (£80 last year).
4. *Officers' reports*
  - 4.1. *Secretary* Colin Wallace No report sent
  - 4.2. *Treasurer* Ken Phillips presented the accounts (see the end of these minutes for the accounts)
    - 4.2.1. Ken reported that we had £847.49 in hand, an increase on £24.64 from last year, which generally reflected the figures elsewhere in Greater Gwent Area. Some deposits for 2016 will be paid in 2017.
    - 4.2.2. We will apply for budget fund of £745 for 2017 from Greater Gwent Area. The applications was made before the end of the financial year. The lowering budget amount is an effort to keep our budget in line with the requirements set out by the Charities Commission.
    - 4.2.3. Ivor suggested that we may be able to print our Programmes, Newsletters &c more cheaply by using commercial printers. Fred and Ken said that printing in-house was competitive and allowed a shorter lead time for settling the Walks Programme.
    - 4.2.4. Ramblers Association HQ was hinting at a 20% cut in budget for the coming year. Ramblers Cymru (Welsh Ramblers) wishes to keep Welsh budgets in line with last year if they can.
    - 4.2.5. Lorna wondered if we could give more to the Ruperra Trust. We currently pay the standard club membership rate for the Trust. It would be difficult to pay more because of Charity Commission rules.
  - 4.3. *Footpaths Officer* Derek Humble (read by Ken in Derek's absence)

There has been quite a mixed bag of amendments, extinguishments and planning proposals this year, but nothing of any great importance save for the Public Enquiry at the Old Mill, Langstone. The addition of a bridleway was due to be decided this month but new guidelines have been issued so it might be a while before this is done and dusted.

The proposed gypsy site at Bulmore Road has been refused, but another has been granted at Hartridge where there are plans to close a footpath.

There have been a couple of footpath complaints sent into our website and where justified, they have been attended to.

The recently completed footpath/cycleway from Newport Bridge to the Distributor Bridge along the east bank of the Usk is not on the original line of the several routes it purports to join up, so measures are in place to put this right.

Newport City Council is looking to replace the Access Officer who has just left.

4.3. *Rambles Officer* Dave Fereday report to come

4.4. *Membership Secretary* Joan Lang reported a drop in membership. Two have sadly died and two have moved away from the area. Joan said that word-of-mouth was the best way to attract members, and when new members join, we ensure that they mention South Gwent Ramblers on the membership form so that we receive appropriate funds.

4.5. *Publicity Secretary and IT Officer* Fred Fee

As usual, Dave gives me the Walks Programme data and I use the data via a couple of scripts to set out the programme, print it and, with the help of other members, mainly Ted, Ken, Dave and Roger, stuff envelopes and post them. Our web sites are then updated and the data is changed again to make it suitable for the Ramblers Association's to which it is uploaded. Any changes in the walks programme after it is published, have to go through the same process and are least favourite of my jobs because the Ramblers Association web site is Mac hostile. Walks are also advertised in the What's On section in Friday's Argus.

I also receive details of forthcoming activities and reports of activities after they have been enjoyed by the members. Ken has been the editor of these details and I set out the newsletter and include the forthcoming events in the newsletter.

I also receive emails sourced from our web site, as do Dave, Derek and Joan. I pick up the miscellanea of emails not appropriate to the others, such as holiday adverts for circulation. Colin receives communications from the Ramblers Association, Greater Gwent Area and elsewhere, some of which I circulate.

I keep the web site operational and up to date. The provider of the on-line space for the web site provides for the automatic distribution of emails and I have taken advantage of this to distribute emails to the appropriate South Gwent Ramblers officers.

I keep a database of emails and address so that we can communicate with members of the Group.

Fred and Derek led walks for the Newport CC "Walk the Port" walking festival day, ably assisted by Julie Ted, Ivor and Roger. Fred, with Ted and Julie, led one of the 9-mile walks round Bettws and Derek, with Ivor and Roger, led the 16-mile "Newport Skyline" walk. It was the inaugural walking event for Newport CC and it went very well. The numbers attending were rendered disappointing by the appalling weather, where rain for most of the morning turned into a two-hour torrent in the afternoon. Undaunted, all who took part enjoyed themselves and many said in polls that they would be back next year.

4.6. *Area Representative* Adrian Sheehan

4.6.1. The Greater Gwent Area AGM was hosted by South Gwent Ramblers and a member of Ramblers Cymru spoke at the meeting.

4.6.2. The Area committee remains the same and directly supports Groups. For example, Area helps Islwyn group to overcome footpath problems.

4.6.3. The Ramblers Association usually gives Area the full amount requested by Groups in their budgets. This year, there is a chance that the Ramblers Association may not give the full amount. Area will cover any shortfall that may occur.

4.6.4. The Ramblers Association has a new chair, Vanessa Griffiths, while Alan Norton still chairs Ramblers Cymru.

4.6.5. Adrian mentioned that the Ramblers Association Pathwatch scheme is being reintroduced. The scheme involves a Ramblers Association selecting a one kilometre square, walking all the paths in the square and reporting any defects as well as any good features within the square. A smartphone app allows all this to be done. From experience last year, Fred found the app easy to use.

4.6.6. Ramblers Cymru is down to two but project funds are available for other staff on a short-term basis when needed.

- 4.6.7. At the Area AGM there was some discussion of Area and Group jobs. With no final consensus, no changes are in the offing.
- 4.6.8. Overall Area Membership stayed the same one the year.
- 4.6.9. Some Groups are having problems finding leaders for short walks. The Area AGM suggestion was to look at walks on the Ramblers Association web site and at walks on other Groups' web sites.

## 6. *Activities*

- 6.1. Ken said that the Christmas Dinner would be held on 8 December at Newport Golf club and feature a carvery and pudding all for £15.
- 6.2. Peter was hoping to repeat the successful walk and Christmas Dinner at Wetherspoons Ebbw Vale. Sadly, wetherspoons is no longer offering a Christmas Dinner or group bookings. As a result Peter can no longer offer this event.
- 6.3. Fred will provide a 5-mile walk before a lunch at the Hall Inn on 29 December. None-walkers are welcome to join the walkers for the meal.
- 6.4. A proposal for a trip to Okehampton met with a mixed reception and it was decided no to proceed with the proposed trip this year.
- 6.5. A skittles match will take place in March. Colin will get let Jan Wagenaar know the details.
- 6.6. A trip in April/May was mooted and Joan volunteered a trip to a National Trust venue - Stourhead Gardens in Wiltshire. She will provide a 5-mile walk.
- 6.7. Fred suggested a trip to Bath in July and agreed to provide a walk and may organise a meal on the way back.
- 6.8. The July Boules always provides fun in the sun and we agreed to continue with one this year.
- 6.9. Regarding the week away in October to Scarborough, Joan said that she had spoken to several coach firms who all had difficulty finding suitable accommodation. Ivor suggested going to Whitby instead. Roger said that accommodation in the Whitby area was expensive. Joan suggested going to Newquay again instead of Scarborough, a suggestion that was well received.
- 6.10. Skittles was pencilled in for October.
- 6.11. Dave suggested that we should provide an evening walk every other Wednesday in the Summer. Liz noted that fortnightly walks worked well this year. The meeting agreed.

## 7. *AOB*

- 7.1. Some members were fined one Sunday for parking in the Civic centre lower car park when new regulations were introduced using a board similar enough to the old one that members did not notice the change. The committee decided to reimburse part of the fines. Peter talked to the CEO of Newport CC amongst others. The CEO said that we could park in the Newport CC's upper car park on Sundays. Colin sent a letter to the Council confirming that we were very pleased with his offer and would be taking up the offer for the walks. Peter thought that this letter would make it very difficult for the Council to resist a challenge to any fine or clamping.

8. *Election of Officers to the Committee*

*Chair(wo)man* - [vacant]

*Vice Chair(wo)man* - [vacant]

*Secretary* - Colin Wallace

*Treasurer* - Roger Binding

*Rambles Officer* - Dave Fereday

*IT Officer* - Fred Fee

*Membership Secretary* - Joan Lang

*Footpath Officer* - Derek Humble

*Publicity Officer* - [vacant]

*Minutes Secretary* - Fred Fee

*Area Representatives* - Adrian Sheehan, Ivor Barclay, roger Binding

*Auditor* - Denise Humble

*Committee members:*

Adrian Sheehan. Brian Turner, Ivor Barclay, Julie Davies, Shiela Holmes.

Ken had made it known that he intended to resign at this meeting from his twin positions of Chairman and Treasurer. He graciously accepted thanks from the committee for being a most capable and popular chairman for over 20 years, steering South Gwent Ramblers on a steady and yet eventful course, and for all the other work that he has done, particularly on the social side. An era has thereby ended and a new one begun.

## South Gwent Ramblers Statement of Accounts 2015/2016

2014/2015

Opening Balance @ 1st October	<b>851.85</b>	1382.59
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### Income

1st Half Year Area Allocation	525.00	285.00
Nov 14 Prog Advert - Ramblers Holidays	60.00	60.00
Mar 15 Prog Advert - Ramblers Holidays	60.00	60.00
Bank Interest 2015	0.92	1.04
2nd Half Year Area Allocation	525.00	280.00
The Walking Partnership	80.00	50.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,250.92</b>	<b>736.04</b>

### Expenditure

SGR Annual General Meeting Costs	116.95	107.10
Prewalk Expense	218.71	237.57
Ruperra Trust	25.00	25.00
SGR Walks Programmes	402.79	297.40
SGR Newsletters & Publicity	254.28	185.93
Wales Air Ambulance	50.00	50.00
Admin	160.55	363.78
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,228.28</b>	<b>1266.78</b>

Excess of Income over Expenditure	<b>22.64</b>	-530.74
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<b>Closing balance @ 30th September 2016</b>	<b>874.49</b>	851.85
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Mr K.Phillips

Mrs D Humble

Treasurer

Auditor