

FOREST OF DEAN RAMBLERS

COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th FEBRUARY 2015

PRESENT: Mike Ingleby (Chair), Jackie Huck (Secretary), David Pollard (Treasurer), Maurice Cullis (Walks Co-ordinator), Malcolm Shergold (Webmaster), Ian Walding, John Bevan and Pam Cullis.

APOLOGIES: Babs Jones (Membership Secretary), Barbara Fisher (Publicity Secretary), Sheila Constable (Footpaths Secretary)

Mike thanked Maurice and Pam for hosting the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM:	ACTION:
<p>1. Minutes of meeting on 3rd December 2014: agreed and signed as an accurate record.</p>	
<p>2. Matters Arising:</p> <p>First Aid Course; Ian confirmed the previous provider was willing to undertake another course. Ian to submit a newsletter insert once further details become available. It was agreed appropriate for this course to be funded from general funds.</p> <p>Publication of minutes on website; Jackie to forward a copy of the confirmed minutes to Malcolm for publication on the website.</p> <p>Printing of leaflets and programme; David will work with Rod Goodman for the next print run and then take over this responsibility. The working deadline is 14th February and John S had confirmed to Mike the newsletter would also be available by this date.</p> <p>Other matters arising would be covered under later agenda items.</p>	<p>Ian Walding</p> <p>Jackie Huck and Malcolm Shergold</p> <p>David Pollard</p>
<p>3. Chair's report:</p> <p>Mike provided reflections on his first three months as Chair. Membership is strong with a full and varied programme of walks. The small, and growing, Working Party volunteers are now looking for projects whilst the Footpath Committee would welcome new members to cope with preservation work. The routes of the three leafleted waymarked trails are regularly monitored and remedial action taken where necessary. Looking to the future of this relatively new committee, Mike considered there should be more support for footpath preservation and maintenance alongside a more general decision about either maintaining current activities or aspiring to take group activities to the next level.</p> <p>Item 15 will discuss 'The Big Pathwatch': this will encourage members to monitor footpaths in our area. Mike also asked everyone to consider the potential for our group to increase its activities. Both these issues to be further discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>Christmas Social: overall this event had been a success. The choice of walks had brought together different parts of the group and Mike hopes someone else will organise the next Christmas Social, using a similar format.</p> <p>Area Council: Mike attended the Area Council's meeting on 15th January. Much time was devoted to the disbanding of the Mid Gloucestershire Group due to their inability to form a committee, also the delegation for General Council was decided upon.</p> <p>Dunster Holiday: nothing to add.</p>	<p>All</p>

<p>There were a number of other matters for discussion which the Chair would raise under late agenda items.</p>	
<p>4. Secretary's report:</p> <p>Committee members' contact details had been circulated to all. Also contact details (minus telephone numbers) of office holders had been sent to Area and Central Office.</p>	
<p>5. Treasurer's report:</p> <p>David had met with Rod Goodman for the final handover and was working through the process to change to signatories. Jackie to send David a copy of the minutes of the last AGM needed to confirm the names of the new committee officers.</p> <p>David provided a summary of the two accounts held and outlined the appropriate uses for each. The Unity Trust account (based in Birmingham) is the main account for walking activities, including website costs, and is the required account to receive central funds, any local donations and to make walking related payments. The account operates as a current account. The balance stands at £359.02</p> <p>The Coventry Building Society account is held locally and supports local infrastructure projects. Its principle income is from donations, "Exploring Historic Dean" and sales of our leaflets. It may be used to fund expenses incurred to print leaflets, the book and building/infrastructure costs for projects. There is no cheque book facility. The current balance stands at £3960.93.</p> <p>In addition the PayPal account feeds into the Coventry Building Society account. The balance stands at £17.44 and David will transfer funds when necessary.</p> <p>David advised using the Unity Trust account for social events since it had cheque book facilities. He felt there would be no governance issues provided the relevant payments nett to zero.</p>	<p>David Pollard and Jackie Huck</p>
<p>6. Walk Coordinator's report:</p> <p>The next programme has 38 walks however there is currently a three week period (end of March/beginning of April) with no mid week walk. Maurice was still "encouraging" new walks to be added, especially those from "Exploring Historic Dean".</p> <p>The varied programme offered 9 walks of less than 7 miles, 18 walks at 7-10 miles and 11 at over 10 miles.</p>	
<p>7. Footpath Secretary's report:</p> <p>An update will be provided at the next meeting since Sheila was unable to attend.</p>	
<p>8. Membership Secretary's report:</p> <p>As at the end of January, membership stood at 216; changes include 2 reinstated members and 2 new members. Babs had sent John S a newsletter insert requesting members inform her of any relevant change in circumstance.</p>	
<p>9. Publicity Officer's report:</p> <p>Although unable at the last minute to attend the meeting, Barbara had sent through draft proposals for the inauguration of the Upper Forge Bridge for consideration. It was agreed for the Chair to initially</p>	<p>Barbara Fisher and Mike Ingleby</p>

<p>discuss these with Barbara. He would then meet her and other key officers ahead of the next meeting and report back.</p>	
<p>10. Webmaster's report:</p> <p>Malcolm confirmed that a "working parties" section had been added to the website and that a "walks archive" would be available post publication of the next programme.</p>	
<p>11. Non-Officer members' reports:</p> <p>There were no further reports.</p>	
<p>12. Walk Leaders support and training:</p> <p>Mike had attended the Ramblers Volunteer Development Day held in Exeter on 24th January, selecting the 'Leading Walks' workshops. He found the programme well run and a useful forum to talk to members of other groups about a range of issues. These development days are to be repeated at Cardiff on 3rd July and Bristol on 4th July. Mike will put a piece in the Newsletter encouraging attendance, he also reminded members that further details could be found in the previously circulated information.</p> <p>Malcolm suggested a mentoring arrangement to support new leaders together with local workshops for more experienced leaders.</p>	<p>Mike Ingleby</p>
<p>13. Inauguration of the Upper Forge Bridge:</p> <p>This issue was covered at agenda item 9 above.</p>	
<p>14. Footpath maintenance and volunteering:</p> <p>Mike confirmed that issues in relation to insurance and programming of footpath maintenance Working Parties had been resolved. He wished for this important area of our responsibilities to take more prominence on our website and requested working party members submit pictures of their work to Malcolm.</p> <p>Rod Goodman will continue to coordinate maintenance work until a successor is in place.</p> <p>The non-slip pads for Upper Forge Bridge had arrived and John B would arrange for a group of volunteers to install them. Reports of rotten planks at Saunders Green Bridge had been made to Dave Street who had ordered replacement wood for installation.</p> <p>The potential for taking on a new project was discussed. Mike had become aware the landowner of the Tack (land alongside the Severn from Lydney Harbour towards Aylburton) may allow a permissive footpath to be created across the Tack. It was agreed in principle to consider our involvement should there be proposals to make this area more accessible.</p>	<p>John Bevan</p>
<p>15. The Big Pathwatch 2015:</p> <p>The Ramblers is launching an ambitious new project to coincide with its 80th year. The aim is to survey all public rights of way in Britain from June to the end of Autumn to create a national picture of the path network. All area and group chairs and footpath secretaries are to receive further information over the next few weeks.</p> <p>It was noted how short the timescale would be from receiving more detailed information and the survey commencement making it difficult to have timely discussions about our engagement since the</p>	

<p>next committee meeting would not be until May. It was agreed that, logically, our catchment area should be FoDDC boundary with potentially members surveying designated patches. No more could be done at this stage.</p>	
<p>16. Promotion and community involvement:</p> <p>Mike reported on a productive meeting Kate Wyatt, Community Engagement Officer at the FoDDC whose role includes supporting voluntary groups with resources such as training and access to funding from grants. She is co-ordinating the Lydney "Walkers are Welcome" Town application and has links to Lydney Festival. Mike informed her of our initial thoughts on the potential to link with Lydney Festival by putting on walking events and Kate would be keen to support this. She would also be supportive of any future plans to hold a walking festival in the area.</p> <p>The committee agreed for Mike to make contact with Lydney Festival to explore the possible inclusion of 2 or 3 walks in their programme of events in June and July. Mike would also canvass for interest in leading one of these walks.</p> <p>Mike had received an email from Monmouthshire Walking Festival offering to stage a combined festival this year. He considered this proposal worth further investigation to identify potential mutual benefits and the committee supported this follow up.</p>	<p>Mike Ingleby</p> <p>Mike Ingleby</p>
<p>17. Internal communications:</p> <p>Mike raised the issue of making most effective use of our programme and newsletter. It was agreed the addition of footpath maintenance working parties and Footpath Committee meetings, as well as publishing minutes on the website, had improved communications. Mike expressed everyone's gratitude to John S for taking responsibility for the newsletter and asked the committee to increase their support by identifying newsletter items at each meeting and sending relevant inserts to John S.</p> <p>Malcolm would consider the potential to make use of Facebook and report back.</p>	<p>Malcolm Shergold</p>
<p>18. AOB: none</p>	
<p>19. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6th May 2015 at 7.00pm</p>	