

# FOREST OF DEAN RAMBLERS

## COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016

**PRESENT:** Peter Robbins (Chair), Jackie Huck (Secretary), Maurice Cullis (Walks Co-ordinator), Malcolm Shergold (Webmaster), Babs Jones (Membership Secretary), Ian Walding, Pam Cullis, John Bevan and Ronnie Walker.

**APOLOGIES:** David Pollard (Treasurer)

Peter thanked Maurice and Pam for hosting the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM:	ACTION:
<p><b>1. Minutes of meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2016:</b> agreed and signed as an accurate record.</p>	<p>Jackie to send to Malcolm for publication on the website.</p>
<p><b>2. Matters Arising:</b></p> <p>All outstanding actions from the previous meeting were confirmed as completed. There were no other matters arising not covered under later agenda items.</p>	
<p><b>3. Chair's report:</b></p> <p>Peter had invited the Area Chair, Ray Chaney and Area Treasurer, Gwen Chaney to one of our walks in order to discuss a number of issues but in particular the hosting of the Area AGM. It was agreed to look at hosting for the 2016/17 AGM.</p> <p>A similar invitation had also been issued to Richard Holmes, Area Footpaths Officer. During the walk Richard was thanked for all the support he had given our group and was updated on how we were approaching footpath issues. Richard had offered to hold a Leadership/Navigation course which would be discussed in detail at agenda item 12.</p> <p>Peter expressed his thanks to the committee for all they do, especially Jackie, David, Malcolm, Babs, Maurice, Pam for her wonderful hosting and Ronnie and all the leaders for the variety of walks the FoDR offers.</p> <p>Peter went on to say that he had accepted the role of Chair on an interim basis until the next AGM. He had thought carefully about his intentions and, with the committee's support, would be prepared to stand for election at the AGM in November. The committee fully supported his nomination.</p>	
<p><b>4. Secretary's report.</b></p> <p><b>Bridge at Stowfield:</b> Jackie reported on the contact made by Lydbrook Parish Council requesting our support in their campaign to get the bridge reopened. LPC were trying to get Gloucestershire CC to acknowledge they had a joint responsibility with Herefordshire CC to repair this right of way. HCC had already accepted their responsibility for the Welsh Bicknor side. Forms had been completed by John, Ian and Jackie whilst Peter had provided a statement on behalf of our group.</p> <p><b>Calls for volunteers in the last newsletter:</b> no responses had been received following requests for help with book and leaflet sales, footpath maintenance and new leaders. After a discussion it was agreed to renew these calls at the AGM and Jackie agreed to consider how best to do this in an informal manner.</p>	<p>Jackie to prepare an informal method of asking for volunteers at the AGM.</p>

<p><b>5. Treasurer' report:</b></p> <p>Prior to the meeting David had provided the current balances of the two accounts held. The Unity Trust account stands at £741.25. David could foresee no further expenses before the year end on 30<sup>th</sup> September and advised a transfer of £500 to the Projects and Publications Account. This was endorsed by the committee.</p> <p>The Coventry Building Society account stands at £2350.51. 50 copies of our book had been sold in this financial year by means other than on line sales via the website. This leaves a stock of 946, less any web sales, with a value based on production costs of £2535.28. It was agreed to offer, as a special promotion, sale of Exploring Historic Dean to MonDean Walking Festival participants at members' rate, ie £8.</p>	<p>Jackie to inform David of the transfer endorsement and promotional price of EHD.</p>
<p><b>6. Walk Coordinator's report:</b></p> <p>The next programme will close early October and to date only 5 walks had been posted on the draft programme. Maurice stated that although there was often a last minute rush, he would have preferred more walks to have been posted and he would be prompting members over the next few weeks.</p> <p>Maurice confirmed he would be using the new Ramblers Holiday logo in future programmes.</p>	<p>Maurice to use new Ramblers Holidays logo</p>
<p><b>7. Membership Secretary's report:</b></p> <p>Babs reported a current membership total of 216. There had been one new member since the last report and one reinstated member.</p>	
<p><b>8. Webmaster's report:</b></p> <p>Malcolm confirmed all was working well and that there had been a steady flow of on line sales for walks leaflets in PDF but only a few hard copy sales of Exploring Historic Dean.</p>	
<p><b>9. Book and Leaflet Sales and Distribution:</b></p> <p>Jackie reported that the process to support distribution and sales of Exploring Historic Dean (EHD) and walk leaflets had settled down well. She thanked John and Jean Sheraton, Barbara Fisher and Carol Lambert for their work. A volunteer to liaise with the new Beechenhurst Lodge was still needed however Jackie would cover this outlet in the interim.</p>	
<p><b>10. Footpath matters:</b></p> <p>Peter reported that Jenny Robbins had agreed to shadow Richard Holmes for 3 months to better understand the scope of responsibilities required of the Footpaths Officer and she will provide a report for the committee but is not seeking to be a committee member. Jenny will attend the next Area Footpath meeting as part of this shadowing. The committee expressed their thanks to Jenny for her willingness to try out this role. Carol Lambert and John Baker continue to be the "eyes on the ground" for issues requiring a site visit and the committee are also grateful for their work in supporting public rights of way.</p> <p>Jackie updated members on progress since the last meeting. The process for monitoring our three leafleted trails had settled down well with Chris Wasley's coordination and her liaison with the Forestry Commission had been established. Maurice had now collected the equipment from Rod Goodman and would look to set up a working party in the New Year. A call for more working party volunteers would be made at the AGM.</p> <p>Malcolm agreed to post advice and an appropriate link to GCC on our website for members of the public who wish to report a public right of way access problem.</p>	<p>Malcolm to post advice/link regarding PROW and GCC.</p>

<p><b>11. Leaders' development:</b> members received with the agenda papers a copy of Richard Holmes' course outline which he had delivered to South Cotswold group. It was agreed to put on such a course and of the dates Richard had provided, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2017 was the best. The course would be open to existing and aspiring leaders. In terms of venue, it was suggested that The Rising Sun at Moseley Green would be ideal as its location had easy access to woodland for the practical aspects of the course. Malcolm agreed to contact the landlord and would let Peter know the outcome. Peter would confirm the date with Richard and put an appropriate entry onto the programme.</p> <p><b>First Aid:</b> the need to run refresher First Aid courses was agreed. There would be a basic refresher open to all members, probably an evening as per previous courses. Ian Walding agreed to organise this. In addition, the need to put on more advanced training for leaders and aspiring leaders was discussed. It was agreed this was needed, especially since our programme contains walks in remote/difficult to access areas. Jackie had been in contact with a highly qualified trainer (used by the Brecon Beacons Park Society) who could provide the type and level of training we were seeking. He would deliver this locally and charge £350 for a full day for up to 15/16 people. It was agreed for Jackie to gauge interest of leaders for such a course and provided at least 10 signed up, Jackie should go ahead and arrange this.</p> <p>Jackie also asked if first aid kits should be provided to all leaders however members considered the logistical problems meant this was not a viable option. As part of the leaders' development course, advice would be given about what leaders should carry on their walks.</p>	<p>Malcolm to contact The Rising Sun and confirm back to Peter.</p> <p>Peter to confirm 21<sup>st</sup> Jan with Richard and post a programme entry</p> <p>Jackie to email all current leaders and if at least 10 interested to go ahead and arrange an advanced first aid course for the New Year.</p>
<p><b>12. Christmas Lunch and Walk:</b> Peter reported he was organising a Christmas lunch for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 1.30pm at The New Inn, Shortstanding. It will be traditional fayre at a cost of £15 per head. A maximum of 35 people can be accommodated and £5 deposit secures a place. Peter will post this on the next programme and also a message will go out to all members on email. The lunch will be preceded by a walk of 6 miles starting at 10am from the pub. Ronnie and Ian offered to lead a shorter walk of 4 miles to offer a choice; this will start at 11am.</p>	<p>Peter to post event on new programme.</p> <p>Jackie/Babs to send out an email to all members</p> <p>Peter, Ronnie and Ian to develop walks</p>
<p><b>13. AOB: Arrangements for AGM:</b> The committee reviewed and agreed the agenda for the AGM. Jackie requested help with the collation and distribution of papers since she will be unavailable at the critical time. Malcolm agreed to be the "post box" for the agenda, minutes of the last AGM (both from Jackie) and the financial accounts (from David) and then forward these to Babs for circulation to members on email. Babs also offered to print 12 hard copies of the papers for the meeting. Jackie thanked them for their support and said she would let David know.</p> <p>Pam confirmed that the Catholic Hall had been booked and she would need a cheque for £15 from David on the night.</p> <p>Committee members not standing for re-election were confirmed as Babs (Membership Secretary), Maurice (Walks Co-ordinator), and there is a vacancy for Publicity Officer. Ronnie stated his willingness to continue as newsletter editor and offered his services again as official auditor.</p> <p><b>Gloucestershire Area:</b> Peter felt we should better support the Gloucestershire Area Committee which has a valuable role in liaising with CO. He also considered advice should be given to leaders not to put on walks of 9 to 12 miles on Wednesdays since that clashed with the regular walk dates of the Gloucestershire Area Walking Group. After a discussion, and on balance, it was decided not to restrict the days of the week our leaders could put on walks. It has been a long standing policy not to allocate specific days for walks and the committee felt this approach had contributed to our wide and varied programme.</p> <p><b>Spread of walks:</b> Peter asked the committee to consider how best to advise leaders not to put on walks in similar areas at around the same time. This had happened recently and had upset two walk leaders that he knew of which had risked loss of goodwill. After a long discussion, the committee accepted this was a sensitive issue and that balance was needed between operating a self selecting programme and appearing to be selective about dates. Overall the best way forward was considered to be a mix of monitoring by the Walks Co-ordinator and advice by</p>	<p>Jackie to send agenda and draft minutes to Malcolm.</p> <p>Jackie to update David via email</p> <p>David to bring a cheque to the AGM</p>

word of mouth	
<b>Facebook:</b> Jenny Robbins had offered to set up a Forest of Dean Ramblers Facebook page and the committee warmly welcomed her offer.	
<b>14. Date of next meeting:</b> TBA following election of new committee at AGM	