

FOREST OF DEAN RAMBLERS

COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON

Tuesday 31st January 2017 at The Catholic Hall, High Nash, Coleford

PRESENT: Peter Robbins (Chair), Jackie Huck (Secretary), Ian Walding (Walks Co-ordinator), Malcolm Shergold (Webmaster), John Bevan and Ronnie Walker.

Sue Marshall was in attendance.

APOLOGIES: David Pollard (Treasurer), John Baker (Footpaths Officer), Maurice Cullis, Pam Cullis

AGENDA ITEM:	ACTION:
<p>1. Minutes of meeting on 13th September 2016: agreed and signed as an accurate record.</p>	<p>Jackie to send to Malcolm for publication on the website.</p>
<p>2. Matters Arising:</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>3. Chair's report:</p> <p>Peter reported on the successful Christmas lunch at which 35 members attended. There had been two walks. Jackie had led the longer, 6 mile walk whilst Jenny and Peter had led the shorter 4 mile walk. He requested the committee agree to a similar event for 2017 but to hold the lunch at The Beeches, Gloucestershire College, Five Acres and to offer two walks from this base. Members agreed noting that the date may have to be on a weekday.</p> <p>The new walk leaders' course on 21st January 2017 had been very well attended and received. Peter wished to formally record the Group's thanks to Richard Holmes for running this course and confirmed that Jenny had already written to him. It is hoped to gain a few new leaders from this investment and Jackie had emailed attendees with names and contact details of experienced leaders who were willing to be a mentor.</p> <p>It was noted how good Yorkley Community Centre was a venue to hire and it was agreed to use this Centre as often as possible in the future.</p>	<p>Peter to arrange Christmas lunch and walk for 2017</p>
<p>4. Secretary's report.</p> <p>Jackie had nothing to report under this agenda item beyond undertaking usual her secretarial duties however she would raise other matters later in the agenda.</p>	
<p>5. Treasurer' report:</p> <p>David had been unable to attend the meeting due to illness however he had emailed through the current balances of the two accounts held. The Unity Trust account stands at £411.15 whilst the Coventry Building Society account stands at £3095.51. PayPal (online sales) stands at £142.52.</p> <p>Current stocks of EHD stand at 912.</p> <p>In David's absence Jackie shared a reserves and running costs analysis which had been provided by Area. In summary, the FoD Group may not receive it's second half year share of national funding</p>	

<p>(or it may be reduced) since our current level of reserves were above the 40% to 100% of total annual running costs as allowed by CO. Jackie referred to discussions on this subject at the previous meeting where it had been agreed to encourage members to claim all appropriate and proper expenses relating to the running of the Group. This had not always happened and this had masked our true costs. It was also noted that the new walk leaders' course and the emergency outdoor first aid course were new initiatives, the funding for which had previously been flagged up to Area.</p>	
<p>6. Walk Coordinator's report:</p> <p>Ian reported a total of 29 walks on the new programme which runs from March to the end of June. There will be a good spread across weekdays and over weekends offering a great range of walks overall. Ronnie will now add in the walks for the North Wales trip in April.</p> <p>Ian requested some help with pulling together his first programme as Walks Coordinator.</p>	<p>Ronnie to put North Wales walks on the programme</p> <p>Malcolm to help Ian as required.</p>
<p>7. Membership Secretary's report:</p> <p>Jackie had additionally taken on this role following its vacancy post AGM. She reported a current membership total of 211 as at 31st December 2016. There had been four new members during the month of December.</p> <p>Jackie had noted that many members had not given their email addresses to The Ramblers nationally at the time of joining or renewing. She intended to ask via the next newsletter if any member who didn't wish for this information to be held nationally but might be prepared for the local group to hold it, to get in touch with her. There had been two walk changes/issues recently (one in adverse weather and one road closure) where emails had been used as the only method of communication available.</p>	<p>Jackie to provide Ronnie with a newsletter item.</p>
<p>8. Webmaster's report:</p> <p>Malcolm confirmed all was working well. He had devised a mechanism for adding a newsflash to the web page however recent experience showed an adjustment for automatic expiry was required.</p>	<p>Malcolm to set up an expiry mechanism for newsflashes.</p>
<p>9. Footpath Officer's report:</p> <p>In his absence John had provided a Footpath report for the meeting covering the period October to December 2016. There had been 7 footpath issues reported, one resolved through Ramblers' action and a fallen tree at Biston Farm had been removed.</p> <p>There had been one footpath diversion application at Bromesberrow to divert the footpath through a ploughed field to follow the line of the brook at the edge of the field. There was no objection to this diversion. There had been 15 planning applications over the period but none had implications for footpaths.</p> <p>John's report also provided an update on the position regarding the Lower Lydbrook iron bridge. The structural report from GCC is awaited and all relevant parties are now aware. Finally, the report drew members attention to an appeal lodged by Wessex Solar against the FoDDC's rejection of a solar farm being installed at Cowell's Farm between Newnham and Westbury.</p> <p>It was noted how well Chris Wasley had been coordinating issues from the three leafleted walk trails. Maurice had previously stated his intention to set up a working party in the New Year.</p> <p>Malcolm agreed to post 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>Maurice to set up footpath maintenance working party.</p> <p>Malcolm to post GCC PROW link on web page.</p>

<p>10. Proposed walking holiday, Skipton May 2018: Peter explained the proposed holiday would be for 7 nights on a DB&B basis and that an initial booking for 50 people had been made. A coach to and from Skipton (which would also be available for transporting to walks) would cost £3100. A minimum booking of 20 rooms provided free accommodation for the coach driver.</p> <p>During an in depth discussion Sue Marshall answered a range of questions from committee members about her experiences of organising other similar holidays and of the practical matters which needed to be covered. It was agreed that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The discrepancy between the hotel's T&Cs and their contract form regarding the timing of deposit payments needed to be resolved. The former required deposits within two weeks of signing the contract although it had been understood from the hotel deposits would not be required until October 2017. The committee agreed to authorise the Chair signing the contract subject to his being satisfied that October 2017 for deposit payments was the correct date. 2) The organisers (Jenny and Sue) to check the position with regard to Ramblers' insurance and if there is a requirement to "advertise" these holiday walks on our programme they should be annotated as "limited numbers and pre booking essential". 3) At the relevant time, members should be asked for £50pp deposit despite the hotel requiring only £10pp. 4) Chair to discuss and agree with Treasurer how monies are to be handled, eg is a new separate account required. 5) For any matters requiring committee decision ahead of a formal meeting, Chair and Treasurer action could be taken. 6) Progress reports to come to each committee meeting. <p>The costs, inclusive of hotel, coach travel, all tips and contingencies, would be £495pp or £595 with single supplement. Any excess will be refunded on a per person basis after the holiday.</p> <p>Members thanked Sue for her attendance which had been most helpful. They also expressed thanks to Jenny for her work to date and for being willing, with Sue, to organise this holiday.</p>	<p>Peter to sign contract if satisfied about the timing of the deposit payments.</p> <p>Jenny and Sue to check out insurance issues</p> <p>Peter and David to agree money handling arrangements.</p>
<p>11. Committee vacancies: Jackie reported that she may have a willing volunteer to take on the role of Membership Secretary. First she needed to experience the first round of responsibilities of this role and to write a short role description. The person concerned would then be in a position to make a final decision.</p> <p>The post of Treasurer will fall vacant at the next AGM and, since this is a critical post, a period of shadowing would be beneficial. Committee members were asked to consider if they knew of a suitable replacement and to let the Chair know so that a personal approach could be made.</p> <p>It was agreed to ask each current post holder if they would be willing to write a short role description with an estimate of the time required to undertake the duties. This would help when talking to group members about the need for new committee officers and for succession following AGMs.</p>	<p>Peter: role of Chair</p> <p>Jackie: Secretary and Membership Secretary roles</p> <p>David: role of Treasurer</p> <p>Malcolm: role of Webmaster.</p> <p>Ian: role of Walks Coordinator</p> <p>John: role of Footpath Officer</p>
<p>12. AOB: Emergency Outdoor first Aid course: Jackie reported that all 16 places on this course had been filled. She had been working with Allan Gibbs (Trainer) to put together a relevant programme for the day and all other arrangements had now been finalised.</p> <p>MonDean Walking Festival: since there had been no contact from the organisers and enquires had drawn a blank, it was assumed this walking festival would not take place in 2017.</p> <p>Sales of EHD: Ronnie reported he had sold 20 copies to Taurus Crafts and 2 to Inspirations,</p>	

<p>Lydney.</p> <p>Coleford Area Walking Festival: we had recently been contacted with regard to participating in this new walking festival. Unfortunately the dates clashed with a number of commitments members could not alter therefore Jackie would write to decline.</p> <p>Wild Boar PhD: Peter reported contact from another PhD student regarding a wild boar study. The thesis seemed very similar to that of our previous contact and Peter would put them in touch with one another.</p>	<p>Jackie to contact organisers.</p> <p>Peter to respond.</p>
<p>13. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 23rd May 2017 at 7.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.</p>	<p>Jackie to book Yorkley Community Centre (or use Catholic hall if no available)</p>