

Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting held on 7 May 2015.

Those present:

Allan Davies, Sue Driver, Gloria Drury, Chris Everett, Chris Gaymer, Ken Mill, Peter Randall, Heather Rickards, Jean Williams.

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

1. **Welcome.** Heather opened the meeting, thanked all for attending and particularly welcomed Gloria, who was attending for the first time.
2. **Apologies for absence.** Joy Harrison, Gill King.
3. **The minutes from the committee meeting** held on the 12 January 2015 were amended to clarify that the role of Chairman of Avon Area had been offered to all on the committee but nobody had volunteered. Peter then proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record, and Allan seconded this.
4. **Matters arising from previous minutes:**
 - 6c. *Isle of Wight Trip.* This took place in March/April. Very successful. Thanks to Jamie, Ken, Anne and Charlie for walk planning and leading, and to Heather for organising the holiday.
 - 7b. *Ramblers Worldwide Holidays.* The group has received £130 commission from Ramblers Holidays. Peter has provisionally booked them to speak at our next AGM.

5. Avon Area Meeting feedback

Chris Gaymer had been unable to make the last Avon Area meeting, but should be able to attend the next one (7 September). On 4 July there is to be a Development Day in the Bristol area (venue tba). Ken has signed up for one of the events.

Area are hosting an evening for group officers on 2 July, to include a walk, meal, discussion followed by pudding.

6. Future of website hosting

Ramblers are looking to migrate all websites from third-party providers to their own site to reflect their corporate style and to save money. The decision was taken to wait until nearer the time when ours is due for renewal before taking any action.

7. Future direction for Forgotten Landscape project

Ken to contact Mike for latest information, maps etc.

8. Officers' Reports:

These were circulated prior to the meeting, but with additional discussion. (*Reports in italics*):

a) Social Secretary's report. (Gill King)

None received. Gill requested ideas for a venue for the Christmas Lunch. None was offered by the committee, though Sue reported that a new café was going to be opened in the grounds of Leyhill prison, which we should investigate.

Gill is considering arranging an Autumn break for the group.

b) Chairman's report. (Heather Rickards)

We have swept through the last programme with only minor disruption from the weather and have continued to have good numbers attending our varied walks.

The holiday in the Isle of Wight went well. Jenny Aspinall has looked into arranging an Autumn week-end break in the Gower, but has decided that it would be better postponed to next Spring. We look forward to the coach trip to Swanage in July arranged by Jean Williams.

South Gloucestershire Council are making a real effort to clear foot path blockages and disputes. I hope we can use these newly opened paths in the near future.

The Forgotten Landscape and Coastal Path projects (both covering the Severnside area) seem to be waking from their Winter sleep! The latest information will be given at the meeting.

I would like to raise the question (again) of the 4 monthly programme. For various reasons, the need to synchronise with Avon Area News has reduced, and filling our programme 3 months at a time may have advantages. We can discuss this.

Thanks, as always, for your work, support and enthusiasm which makes Severnside so successful.

The subject of the frequency of the programme was discussed. We currently have a 4-monthly programme to synchronise with the production of Avon Area News. However, a survey of recipients is being conducted with the next edition which might determine the future of AAN. Despite the difficulty of filling the later walks on the programme, it was decided that the convenience of only holding 3 meetings a year and the extra cost (about £80) of printing and posting an extra programme currently outweighed the benefits. A show of hands indicated that the majority agreed with this decision, but that it should be reviewed at the AGM to give the membership the chance to vote on it.

c) Secretary's report. (Chris Everett)

Membership numbers have been rising steadily over the last year or two and now stand at 158. There have been no injuries sustained on walks in the present period, and we have had good turnouts for all the walks this year. Ramblers membership services had some problems earlier in the year when the monthly reports they sent didn't tally. However, they were quick to respond to all my queries and provided helpful replies. Unfortunately they also messed up Ros's membership as she changed from joint membership with Peter to individual. We have both approached them about this, and it hasn't been totally resolved to her satisfaction. The ramblers membership team are obviously now being monitored, since every communication is now followed up by a request for feedback, which I personally find rather irritating.

The Ramblers report received yesterday is still wrong. This has been reported.

d) Treasurer's report. (Peter Randall)

Group Account

As at 31 December the bank balance stood at £864.67 and during the last 4 months the following movements have taken place: -

Receipts

- *Transfer from Group* £106.13
- *Bank Interest* £ 0.43

Payments

- *Stamps & Stationery* £ 23.28
- *Website Hosting* £ 80.24
- *Programme Printing* £ 51.51

As at 30 April the bank balance stands at £816.20 (adjusted to include petty cash £871.69).

There is an outstanding invoice due from Ramblers Worldwide Holidays re programme advert.

A sum of £400 (minimum) has been ring fenced for Forgotten Landscape project.

Social Fund

As at 31 December the bank balance stood at £1,827.30 and during the last 4 months the following movements have taken place: -

Receipts

- *Isle of Wight Holiday* £ 4,479.00
- *Xmas Lunch (late payment)* £ 35.90
- *Quiz Night* £ 312.00

Payments

- *Isle of Wight Holiday* £5,891.00
- *Quiz Night* £ 242.74

As at 30 April the bank balance stands at £520.46 (adjusted to include petty cash £547.41). There are no outstanding payments.

A new Group budget from 1st October 2015 will shortly need to be agreed and hope that we can continue to move closer to being self-funded by 2020.

e) Walk co-ordinator's report. (Ken Mill for Joy Harrison)

All dates now filled.

f) Footpath Officer's report. (Allan Davies)

A stone stile at Milbury Heath that Jean Aellen had reported as dangerous to S Glos Council was repaired very promptly.

A footpath which had remained closed following a dispute with the farmer at the time of the building of the Second Severn Crossing has been re-opened. Ken had reported it to S Glos council. Heather reported that signage was clear and accredited Ramblers with the work.

g) Publicity Officer's report. (Sue Driver)

Local magazines listed below are finding space to advertise our walks programme:

4 forward - Rockhampton

Bradley stoke Matters- Bradley Stoke

Inview – Pilning and Severn Beach

Meeting Point – Olveston

Litch gate – Almonsbury

Observer – weekly

Thornbury Magazine - Thornbury

Sevenside also receive air time on Radio Bradley Stoke.

I have noticed over the past few months that the "Observer" are not always publishing our walks, I have enquired with other clubs and they are experiencing the same.

Hopefully, the advertising is bringing in new walkers.

The Observer is inconsistent on its reporting despite receiving regular notices.

Radio Bradley Stoke advertise our walks, but more descriptive detail on the walks would be an advantage.

h) Web editor's report. (Ken Mill)

'Website

Currently as a Group we pay £71.86 per year for hosting our website with 123-Reg. We also pay £8.38 (for a 2 year period) for our domain name – sevenside-ramblers.org.uk. This makes a total of £80.24 to keep our website up and running.

There are moves afoot at Ramblers to discourage use of third parties for the hosting of Group Websites.

Extract from Ramblers Guidance:

Third party hosts

Please don't create a new website for your area or group outside of Ramblers-webs or the main area and group web pages. We no longer provide any guidance on running such sites, and web hosting with third party providers should not be financed from area or group funds.

This is partly because we have already invested in hosting services centrally, making our hosting more economic, but also to ensure it's easy to hand websites on to new webmasters. There have been many cases of areas or groups losing control of a site or being unable to maintain it when an individual volunteer moves on.

If your area or group already has a website hosted with another provider, we encourage you to plan to migrate the content of the site to the main area and group pages, and to a Ramblers-webs site if you wish, particularly if you are paying hosting charges.

All area and group websites hosted with third parties must comply with our **requirements for area and group websites** set out below.

Requirements for area and group websites

Group and area websites must include:

company name, company registration number, place of registration, registered office address and charity numbers for **both** England and Wales and Scotland (irrespective of where your area or group is based). You can find this under **Company information** on the **Contact us** page

- the **Ramblers logo**
- a prominent link to the main site (www.ramblers.org.uk)
- joining information and a link to our joining page (www.ramblers.org.uk/join)
- a clear statement that the area or group is part of the Ramblers and that we're a charity (please don't say "affiliated to" or call yourselves a "club").

For example:

We're part of the Ramblers, the charity that helps everyone, everywhere, enjoy walking and protects the places we all love to walk. We're dedicated to looking after paths and green spaces, leading walks, opening up new places to explore and encouraging everyone to get outside and discover how walking boosts your health and your happiness.

Benefits of changing: The advantage is hosting is paid centrally by Ramblers and we would be saving the annual cost that we currently pay to 123-Reg. We would also be complying with the Ramblers corporate style. **Way ahead:** currently there has not been any direct contact with Ramblers over hosting of Severnside with 123-Reg. I have not investigated how much of our website would transfer as is, but there would be major changes to layout and style. The overall look would be similar to the Bristol Ramblers site see <http://www.bristolramblers.org.uk/>

It is my intention to continue as Web Editor.

Options:

1. We could do nothing and continue as is until we're told to change hosting.
2. As our hosting package is paid up until Feb 16 we could wait until the end of the year before investigating transfer of our site to Ramblers hosting.

Severnside Programme – June – September 15

We have another full programme of walks but there is one Sunday to be filled (20 Sept). See attached draft programme.

Coastal Access

Aust to Brean - For Severnside we're interested in the route from Aust to Avonmouth. In particular any potential improvements to the Severn Way.

Stage of progress - **Stage 2: Develop**

Natural England are now visiting all the land on this stretch of coast that is likely to be affected by our proposals and discussing the options in detail with people who own or manage the land.

Next steps - **Stage 3: Propose**

Natural England will publish the proposals in a report to the Secretary of State. These will be available on GOV.UK and advertised in the local press.

Copies of the report will be placed in council offices and other appropriate locations in the local area for people to view.

Anyone who wishes to comment will be able to make a representation on the report and owners or occupiers of affected land will be able to make an objection.

The report is expected to be published during 2016 and there will be an 8 week period for making a representation and/or objection.

For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-aust-to-brean-down>

Footpath Surveys

Olveston footpath survey has been completed and problem areas reported to South Gloucestershire Council. Oldbury on Severn is the next parish to be surveyed. If anyone would like to know more or help complete the surveys please get in touch.

Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

The next meeting to be held on Friday 3 July 15.

Ramblers Development Workshops

A Ramblers workshop is being held on 4 July 15 somewhere in Bristol. Venue to be confirmed. According to Ramblers website (see <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ramblers-volunteer-development-day-bristol-tickets-14651235239>) there are still vacancies.

Workshops on offer are:

Ramblers Routes - Full day session

Talking about walking: how to promote your Ramblers group - Full day session

The Big Pathwatch - Morning session

Leading walks: group management skills - Morning session

Basic rights of way law and changes to the path network - Morning session

Fighting cuts to path budgets: Part A - understand levers for change and good planning - Morning session

Beyond health walks: the benefits of short walks for everyone - Afternoon session

Leading walks: Navigation skills - Afternoon session

Rights of way: Specialist areas - Afternoon session

Fighting cuts to path budgets: Part B - tactics and the key to messaging - Afternoon session.'

9. Any suggestions from the committee concerning future events, procedures etc

- a) **Coach trip to Swanage 19 July.** Jean has booked a 36-seater coach and will pre-walk the routes with Ken shortly. It was agreed to give our membership priority for spaces before opening it to other groups.

- b) **S Glos Show stand 1 & 2 August, Westerleigh Road.** Our group has been invited to have a stand here as Kingswood had to decline. Chris G to liaise with organizers. Chris E to see what Ramblers publicity can offer (pens etc).

10. Any other business

- a) Various suggestions were made as to how best to thank Mike and Jan for their involvement with the group since its inception.
- b) **Venue for AGM.** Heather suggested that the Scout Hut at Pilning would offer an excellent venue, but not at the agreed date of 15 November as that clashes with an event there. It was agreed to move the date of the AGM to 22 November to enable us to use the hall.

11. Date and venue of next meeting

Thur 3 September 2015 Jean William's home. 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm.