

## Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting held on 1 September 2014.

### Those present:

Sue Driver, Chris Everett, Joy Harrison, Gill King, Ann Light, Ken Mill, Mike Norman, Peter Randall, Heather Rickards, Jean Williams.

### Meeting commenced at 7.40pm

1. **Welcome.** Heather opened the meeting and thanked all for attending.
2. **Apologies for absence.** Allan Davies, Chris Gaymer.
3. **The minutes from the committee meeting** held on the 8 May 2014 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Mike proposed acceptance and Peter seconded.
4. **Matters arising from previous minutes:**
  - a. *Training days for publicity 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> June in Taunton:* Sue attended and found it useful, though generally attendance was poor.
  - b. *Inclusion of other group walks to fill programme:* The empty spaces on the programme are likely to be filled by members before the end date for submission, but if any do remain empty Joy will check walks of neighbouring groups.
  - c. *Potential 3-day HF Brecon trip.* 26 people showed interest for 3-6 September and Chris E had arranged this. Ken and Mike walk-leading.
  - d. *Potential coach trip to Shaldon next year:* Chris and Andy had proposed a walk of about 5 miles when returning from Dartmoor. Would need to investigate whether an alternative longer walk would be feasible.

### 5. Officers Reports

These were circulated prior to the meeting, but with additional discussion. Heather questioned the advantage of prior circulation, but the committee opted to retain the system.

#### **Social Secretary's report. (Gill King)**

- *Weekend on Exmoor 10-12 Oct 2014.* Fully booked. 2 walks on Saturday of varying length pre-walked. Itinerary ready for distribution. Gill to email details to participants. *Action: Gill*
- *Christmas lunch* booked for 14 Dec 2014 at Tortworth again. 28 places - first come first served. £17.50 per head. Flyer to be sent out with next programme.
- *Skittles night* Sat 8 Nov 2014 at Hallen. Ploughman's buffet. £8 per head. In aid of County Air Ambulance Trust. Info to be included in next programme.
- *Pub Quiz at Filton Golf Club.* Arrange for Feb 2015 - should allow enough notice to hold it in Filton Golf Club. Approach Carolyn and Robert again.

#### **Chairman's report. (Heather Rickards)**

'I pass heartfelt thanks to all committee members for their work and advice this year. Our next AGM is in November and I hope you all offer to remain on the committee. Finding a new meeting point for our walks has been a concern, and thanks go to Peter for sorting out the venue at Aztec West which covers everything but our Friday Ambles. The Mall at Cribbs Causeway refuses to discuss the matter. Chris has offered to write to Bradley Stoke Council citing possibilities within the town.'

#### **Secretary's report. (Chris Everett)**

'Membership still stands at 151. We have welcomed six new members (Helen Johnson, Jan and Roger Taylor, Dora Torok, Paul and Caroline Hayward); Dora walks regularly with us and comes away on our breaks, Helen has walked with us on a couple of Sundays, Jan and Roger are now regulars on Friday Ambles and evening walks, and are working up to longer Sunday ones. I don't think Paul and Caroline have walked with us yet. The six new members have been offset by six leaving us. Chris Roberts will be greatly missed following her move to Taunton, Lina Hossein has moved away, Louise Davis joined us for a couple of walks but has now

Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting 1 September 2014 contd.

transferred to another group (probably Brunel), and Lesley Rossiter, Cathy Healing and Robert Hole have not walked with us for some time.'

**Treasurer's report. (Peter Randall)**

**Group Account - £972.40** (includes £21.93 petty cash) as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014

- We started the year with £680.40. Contributions from Group, Advertising (WWH), Holiday credits and contributions from the map reading course we have slightly increased the balance.
- Contributions from Group have reduced from £155 to £131 and a further reduction will prevail in 2014/15 to £106 as the group moves closer to being self-funded.
- We have allocated funds for the "Forgotten Landscape" project.

**Social Fund Account - £540.49** (includes £19.50 petty cash) as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014

- The year started with a bank balance of £231.44.
  - Throughout the year surpluses were made on the following activity or week-end breaks
- |                    |                                      |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Xmas Lunch         | 35.70                                |
| Quiz Evening       | 82.59                                |
| Haytor             | 24.56                                |
| Exmouth Coach Trip | 83.00                                |
| Brecon             | 65.00* (expenses yet to be deducted) |

Separate financial summaries will be prepared at the year-end with only the details of the group account being issued to Ramblers.

**Walk co-ordinator's report. (Joy Harrison)**

Three Sunday walks still vacant. Mike offered to fill one. Will investigate neighbouring groups' walks if any remaining empty.

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

Nothing to report.

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

Attended training day in Taunton. Ramblers advocate use of social media to publicise events, especially Twitter. No-one present had experience of this.

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

**Website:**

- Website updated with details of new meeting point at Aztec West
- Website updated to repair a number of broken links.
- Photos added and grateful to all our contributors for providing a record of our walks.
- Committee meeting minutes added to website.

**Facebook:**

- Severnside Facebook page being maintained with links to photos from our walks and upcoming walks.
- Could do with more Members to sign up to Facebook.
- Links to articles published by Ordnance Survey, Country Walking and Trail Magazines, National Trust, Woodland Trust etc.

**Ramblers Website:**

- The Ramblers Website will be changing and improving during the next few months. This means changes to the way we use it.
- Changes include a new group walks and events search as well as a new and improved way for groups to upload this information.

Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting 1 September 2014 contd.

- All areas and groups now have their own editable pages on the Ramblers website. These pages won't replace local websites, but they will provide a single place on the main website for basic information about all areas and groups.
- We will be able to add group information during August before the pages go live to the public around 15 Sept 14. Each page will have its own web address and include contact details and links to local websites, with group walks listings and space for groups to give more information about themselves. I am registered as the Editor for Severnside.
- See screenshot on page 4.
- I would like to get Andy Pearson's permission to use some of his photos on the new webpages.

**SGC RofW Liaison Meeting:**

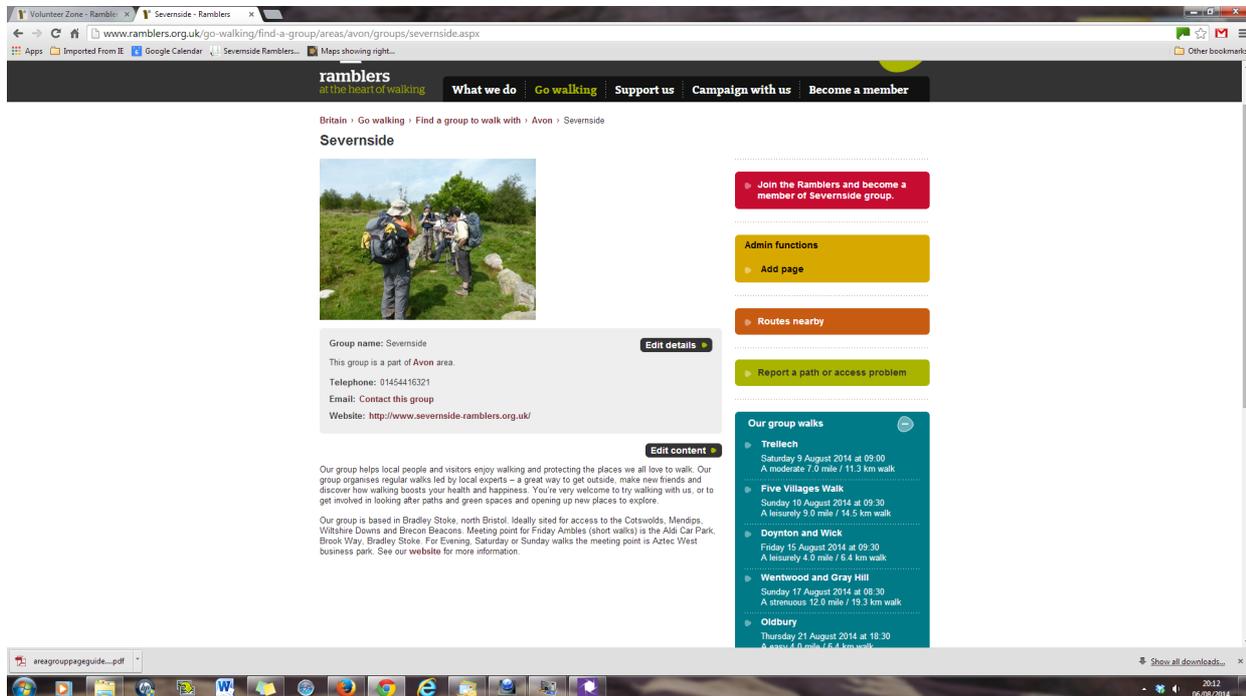
- Meeting held on 18 June 14.
- Update on Avon Ramblers Working Parties.
- The next footpath surveys will be in the Olveston area.
- Next meeting - 8 October 14.

**Coastal Access**

- Meeting held on 30 July with Emily Shaw (Ramblers) Justin Cook (Ramblers), Chris Bloor (representing Ramblers and Open Spaces Society).
- Topics discussed:
  - History of coastal access
  - Scheme run through
  - Natural England's report
  - Review of volunteer pack > example of previous volunteer report
  - Scheme changes
  - Meeting Natural England rep – Andrew Chester has been involved from the beginning and is very knowledgeable on key issues likely to be met with Landowners. Let NE lead it is their project but provide input where appropriate.
  - Media – possible contact with representatives of local groups. Ramblers will provide help with this.
  - Launch event – NE will arrange the main launch of the route. Ramblers will arrange their own event with support from local groups. There is an issue around Ramblers being seen as providing direct support to Natural England. Politics and red tape issue around Ramblers
  - Ramblers contacts – it was stressed that any comments, input from Ramblers Members must be passed through the nominated points of contact. It is important that there is not multiple views from Ramblers submitted to NE.
- Opportunity to get the Ramblers take on the overall project.
- Considered options for enhancing the Severn Way as the coastal route from Aust to Avonmouth Bridge.
- Meeting held on 4 August with Andrew Chester (Natural England) and Chris Bloor (Ramblers & Open Spaces Society) and to learn more about plans for the Aust to Brean coastal path.
- Topics discussed:
  - Overview of the 5 stage process to obtain approval for the route.
  - Currently at Stage 1 Prepare; investigating how to improve coastal access along an 80km stretch of the Severn Estuary from Aust to Brean Down. Access expected to be ready towards the end of 2016.
  - Discussed options for improvement of the Severn Way from Aust to Avonmouth Bridge. Possible options to be investigated and a Ramblers view to be passed back to NE for consideration.
  - Discussed possible route from Avonmouth Bridge to Brean Down, via Portishead, Clevedon and Weston - super - Mare. Where possible existing rights of way will be used. However there are a number of gaps where a route will need to be investigated.

## Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting September 2014 contd.

- From a Severnside point of view I'm particularly interested in the route from Aust to Avonmouth Bridge.
- If anyone has ideas for improvements for the route to Avonmouth Bridge please let me know.



Group screenshot from Ramblers site.

## 6. Feedback:

### a. New weekend meeting point / Friday meeting point

Aztec meeting point working well. Several venues around Bradley Stoke were suggested as meeting point for Friday Ambles but were rejected for reasons of accessibility or current use by others. Heather has approached the Mall but received no response. Joy suggested Little Stoke Community Hall. All committee will continue to assess alternatives, but in the meanwhile it was considered best to continue using Aldi to meet, especially since few cars were ever left there and amblers often used the opportunity to shop there afterwards.

*Action:* All

### b. Avon Area meeting report 27 July

Chris Gaymer reported:

1. Somebody called Neil, from Southwold, looks likely to take over as minutes secretary.
2. New Constitution had been drafted. Susan Carter (Bristol) suggested that it should be circulated round the Groups before being sent to Central Office. Any comments were to be returned quickly though, as CO needed to approve it in time for the AAC AGM for implementation in 2016.
3. Jill wanted articles for AAN by end of August.
4. Footpath sub-committee - Main point was concerns raised re protection of the green belt, as there seemed to be no coherent plan to protect this.
5. Countryside and Planning - In interests of transparency, it was decided that Chairman/Secretary/Treasurer of AAC should be invited to attend this sub committee.

## Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting September 2014 contd.

6. Footpath teams had installed 130 kissing gates, and repaired 40. Brunel were keen on forming a team.

7. Peter Gould was maintaining the AAC Website on a care and maintenance basis. There are problems with initiating major changes.

8. No group reports had been received.

9. Walking for Health - it was decided this was more purely social walking, of around 90 minutes a time and may not easily fit in with even short walk programmes.

10. Money - Adrian was not present, but would be handling the budget as usual.

11. £50 was voted to be given to WW walks.

12. Discussion on publicity. Publicity has to mostly lie with groups. Interesting that Brunel don't have the word 'Ramblers' in their title as they think it creates an image problem for younger walkers.

Outcome of discussion was that the most useful thing AA could do would be to have someone who could talk to the media on behalf of all the groups on more general subjects. There is a possibility that a member of Brunel might be able to produce a brief outline for all groups on handling publicity generally. Bristol wanted a plastic table cloth with a Ramblers logo on it for use at stalls, fairs, etc, to be used in conjunction with the banners we already have. This was being looked into.

13. Festival of winter walks to run from 20 December - 4 Jan with a walk every day. Jill will be collating this, and there will be a bit in the AAN about it and it will go on the AA website.

### c. **Keynsham Walkers are Welcome initiative**

David Waterstone is already involved, and Ken's involvement might increase in order to get more advance information that might be in time to include in our programme.

### d. **South Glos Walking for Health - the next step**

Joy has sent co-ordinator details of short walks on our programme between November and February.

### e. **Forgotten Landscape**

Mike reported that the website is currently dormant as they are waiting for a decision on Lottery funding sometime this month. If this is successful the project will be operational from Autumn 2014 to Spring 2018.

### f. **Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)**

Ken reported the following:

- Meeting held on 4 July 14. This was my first meeting and overall I found it interesting.
- Interesting presentation by Natural England on the Coastal Access project. For Severnside the link of interest is from Aust to the Avonmouth Bridge, the link will continue down to Brean. A bid for funding has been submitted and work could start later this year or early next year.
- See website for more information <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/coastalaccess>
- I have taken on the role of Ramblers representative for the implementation of the coastal path from Aust to Avonmouth. It remains to be seen what this will involve. Ron Phelps was the Ramblers Representative.
- Keynsham has joined the Walkers are Welcome Scheme.
- Major developments such as Stoke Gifford Transport Link, Filton Airfield, Western Approaches all have potential for impact on public rights of way. Look out for Public

## Minutes from Severnside Committee meeting September 2014 contd.

Consultations and submit comments regarding footpaths or any issues related to developments.

- Outdoorswest Website is to be updated. See <http://www.outdoorswest.org.uk/Home/>
- Next meeting - 7 November 14

### 7. AGM 16 November 2014

Peter reported that the speaker from the County Air Ambulance Trust has been booked, as has the Jubilee Hall at Bradley Stoke. Joy is leading the walk around Bradley Stoke beforehand and Heather asked for volunteers to help with food on the day. The group will supply wine again.

### 8. Policy for walk leaders when cancelling walks

Joy had recently cancelled a walk at short notice due to a bad weather forecast. It was agreed that although walks only went ahead at the leader's discretion, leaders are obliged to attend the meeting point and make every effort to inform anyone they expect to come of their decision.

### 9. Use of income from Ramblers Holidays Ltd

Ann suggested that in line with other groups, we might consider using the income from Ramblers Holidays to enhance the charitable aims of the group by providing tools such as secateurs to walk leaders. Although seen as a good idea, discussion of the logistics followed. Possible drawbacks were seen to be the inconsistency of commission so there may be no income to support the scheme in future years, and the cut-off point that defined the number of walks led in order to qualify. Peter is going to draw up a list of number of walks led per leader over the last 3 years to see if there is a trend.

*Action: Peter*

### 10. Any other business

#### **Policy of holiday cancellation**

Peter questioned whether we should refund money to members who had to cancel a holiday at short notice, with regard to the situation which had arisen for the Brecon break where a member of the group who had paid a deposit then cancelled, a replacement was found but HF retained the deposit. Peter was disputing this with HF but had yet to receive a response. It was suggested that it ought to be the responsibility of the individual to have holiday insurance, especially when this was stated in the initial information. No further action to be taken, though Peter will pursue the current dispute.

#### **Permission for photographs**

Ken raised the issue of photos of people on walks being posted on the website without their tacit agreement. Discussion followed as to how best to ensure that walkers were happy to have their images on public display. One suggestion was that leaders raised the issue at the start of each walk, so that anyone objecting could be identified. However, it was agreed that wording could be added to the walks programme heading, alerting people of their right to anonymity if so desired.

*Action: Joy*

### 11. Date and venue of next meeting

Heather's home. Monday 12 January 7.30pm (subject to agreement of new committee).

Meeting closed at 9.50pm.