

Committee Meeting 8th April 2024 held at 16:00h on Zoom

Present: Val B (Chair), Gill L (Treasurer), Lynda K (Secretary), Joy W, Trevor C, Liz Hembrow, Brenda P (Footpath Officer), Barbara C.

1. **Apologies:** None

2. **Minutes of Meeting on 22nd January 2024**

These were agreed by the Committee.

3. **Matters arising:**

- **First Aid Training course**

Val had investigated and found that most courses are more work-based, lasting 3 days and costing £222 per person. Liz had sent details for a one day course but this was still expensive at £166 per person. Val had attended a Ramblers meeting where it was suggested that walk leaders have to use their common sense. Val was unable to find any free courses.

Trevor said that the British Red Cross offer free online First Aid training. The app is free to download to your phone and would then be available in an emergency. St John Ambulance have a similar app. There is also an app to list your nearest defibrillator. You may need to contact the emergency services before you are able to remove the defibrillator so would need to have your phone with you. Liz will look up details for the app and report back so it could be put on our website. This could be useful in all walks of life.

- **Training session for Walk Leaders:** see item 6 below

4. **Officers' reports:**

- **Treasurer's report:**

All payments are up to date.

We will have expenses for the Day Trip planning – mileage, etc.

The renewal of OS maps was expected to be £100, we paid £39.99. This was due to OS maps no longer having a group option. We now have a personal membership. As far as I know we have not had any problems with using it by members. The updated version has now gone live and there are quite a few changes including the removal of the Augmented Reality (AR) feature.

Gill Lee

- **Membership secretary report:**

1 January 2024 – 31 March 2024

TDR membership is now 264 members.

Since 1st January: 10 new members (all new to Ramblers); and 13 members have left (6 lapsed, 5 resigned, 1 moved Group and 1 deceased).

From 24th April the Ramblers are no longer supplying address labels to individual Groups for posting out paper copies of their Newsletters. We currently have 20 members with no email address. It was agreed that Lynda will send out a Newsletter to these members with a request for an email address or to contact her if a paper copy was still required.

- **Footpath officer report:**

There's not much to report other than previous matters already reported. R of W remains underfunded, even though different categories of people keep telling us how good it is for our mental health, to get out into the countryside!

I have been chasing Taunton Town Council to make an application to Rights of Way for the addition to the map of the path that ran beside the old Pound Stretches along the river. It's presently closed by the developers. If the path is added, then it must be opened again. I have been advocating for this since, I think it was last Sept. Footpaths in town are important too. The Town Council have agreed!! I have volunteered to look for witnesses who have used the path over the last 20 years and collect any other evidence I can find of the path being used. If anyone has any knowledge please let me know. Perhaps we could ask if any members have used the path? It eventually runs to French Weir Park and on....

I've also been asking about the footbridge at Bradford on Tone, it's been closed for 15 yrs. They (R of W) are now going to prepare a diversion order for the path as the present line crossed the river several times. Apparently, the river has changed course over the years. The bridge will not be repaired or renewed until the line of the path is established. More delays but at least some movement. I'm hoping for success while I am able to use it! I haven't been given a date for the paperwork.....due to pressures of work load of R of W...

I would like to ask the Council to fund R of W better but at the moment it may be futile... Perhaps an attendance at the committee meeting, of which ever committee R of W now sits under, might remind members how important R of W are to the community?

Also, after the bridge over the Tone to Goodlands Gardens was closed, I have been attending Taunton Town Council meetings..... and saying we want the bridge repaired.

Another long awaited report has at last been delivered to the Council and I will attend on Tuesday next, 6pm, to hear their debate on the report.

Brenda Prentice

Brenda clarified that if a Public Right of Way is on the Definitive map then it is a legal entity and cannot be closed by the landowner. There was a recent BBC report which showed that there are 32,000 blocked footpaths in England and Wales.

Lynda has now collected the box of TDR tools which were used for footpath maintenance in the past and will arrange to drop them to Ian D-T who has offered to store them in his garage for us. It was discussed whether it would be possible to restart footpath maintenance again and whether we would be covered by insurance for this. Before Covid we had to have a representative from Somerset County Council present. Liz suggested that it is always worth contacting the local Parish Council in the first instance if there is a problem with a footpath. They have replaced a lot of stiles with gates in recent years to improve access to footpaths.

5. Spring Walk Programme

The Wednesday afternoon walks have been running every week with thanks due to Liz and her team of walk leaders and these are well supported. Last Wednesday saw 33 walkers out. The all day Sunday walks keep trickling in but the wet weather has not helped. Hopefully there might be some Sunday afternoon or Friday evening walks soon but we are reliant on members offering to lead a walk.

6. Training session for Walk Leaders

Joy has a list of registered walk leaders for TDR but it does not reflect those who are currently leading walks for our group. Seven of those listed are not members of our group and also there are a few we do not have email addresses for.

Lynda explained that there are some Walk Leaders who lead all day Sunday walks who are actually members of other Ramblers group but have to be registered with us as well to lead a walk for TDR.

Joy will contact those who have not led walks in the past twelve months and ask if they are still interested in leading walks for our group or if they wish to be taken off the register.

Liz said that she has a list of twenty walk leaders who have led walks and she thought it would be a good idea to hold a training evening as a social event with food as she feels really grateful to our walk leaders for the time and effort they put in and this would be a way of saying thank you to them. Gill said that the cost of a training session could be paid for from funds.

Richard L has been approached by Trevor and asked if he would be happy about giving training on use of the OS app and he has agreed.

The venue for the training session was discussed and it was decided that it would be better to hold it in Taunton as it is more central and the Friends' Meeting House in Bath Place was chosen as it has good IT facilities and a large screen which we have used previously. It also has a kitchen and separate area for the food to be served.

The type of food was discussed and it was decided that a buffet with quiche, cold meats, sandwiches etc. was the best option. Liz was happy to sort the food.

It was decided to hold the event for existing walk leaders this time. Brenda suggested that we promote it more as a social event with some hints for walk leading to attract more people.

The training should include:

- Use of Assemble
- Risk assessments
- OS maps

Joy will contact Richard first to see what dates he is available and then Lynda will check availability at the Friends' Meeting House. Evenings in June or July were suggested. Liz is away for a week in June so we will avoid that week. Once the date is decided and the venue is booked the invite can be sent out to walk leaders.

7. Coach trip 2024

A large coach has been booked for the coach trip on Wednesday 3rd July to Corfe Castle and Swanage. Lynda will ask Andy to put a 'Save the Date' notice on the website.

Trevor has now agreed to lead the longer walk as Wendy and Daphne are no longer available. Val, Joy and Gill will recce the shorter walk and find a cafe for refreshments.

Length of around 6 miles for the short walk and 8-9 miles for the longer walk. The recce for both walks has been arranged for Wednesday 24th April and full details will be decided once the recce has been completed.

Sue Jones has kindly agreed to take the bookings again as she did last year and she has requested that a copy of the invitation be sent to her to check before it is sent out to members.

8. Correspondence

Email from the Ramblers informing us that address labels will no longer be supplied (dealt with in Membership Secretary report).

Enquiries from new or potential new members which have all been answered.

9. AOB

None

12. Date, time and place of next meeting :

Monday 8th July at 16:00h on Zoom.

Meeting closed at 17.27h