

Committee Meeting 22nd January 2024 held at 16:00h on Zoom

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

1. **Apologies:** Liz H
2. **Minutes of Meeting on 23rd October 2023**
These were agreed by the Committee.
3. **Matters arising:**
 - The Christmas meal went well and there was a good atmosphere.
 - TDR AGM 2023 was attended by 17 members, usually approx 30 members attend. It was decided to use the same venue again this year but to promote it more.

4. **Officers' reports:**

- **Treasurer's report:**

All payments are up to date. Income from Area is up to date. We have received £120 from the holidays which members have booked. The End of Year figure is more than for last year and the accounts look healthy at the moment. As most Newsletters are now sent by email the printing costs for paper copies are very low.

The recce costs for the coach trip will go in the Main account in future. We have received minimum funding from The Ramblers since Covid. The renewal for the Ordnance Survey group subscription is due soon. At the AGM there seemed to be more interest in First Aid training than in the purchase of kits suggestion.

As Phil B, a signatory for the bank account, has now left the Committee Joy has volunteered to do this instead as well as inputting on the online account. Gill is in the process of setting this up. She also asked if anyone else on the Committee would be willing to be a signatory online and Trevor volunteered and was accepted. Gill will get Joy set up first and then will liaise with Trevor to arrange.

- **Membership secretary report:**

1 November 2023 – 31 December 2023

TDR membership has decreased by one to 267 members since the last meeting. Since 1st November: 3 new members (1 new to Ramblers, 1 new to the group, 1 new to the Area); 3 members have been reinstated and 4 members have left (2 lapsed, 2 resigned).

- **Footpath officer report:**

Brenda Prentice has now taken over from Philip Bisatt as Footpath Officer.

There have been no reported problems yet. Brenda has been chasing Footpath Officers in Somerset Council to see who actually goes out and maintains the footpaths. There are sixteen members of staff but basically none to do the maintenance which is done by contractors.

There is a path at Bradford on Tone which has been closed for years due to a dispute over who is responsible for replacing a bridge. The current bridge is large enough for a tractor to allow the farmer to access his fields but the Council only wants to put a footpath bridge. It is a statutory duty to put it back after 14 years. Brenda has requested a Freedom of Information (FOI) to find out more.

In Taunton town centre there is a stretch of path along the river to French Weir which used to be in Lidl's car park which is currently fenced off but it is not a designated footpath. FOI reply said that the River Authority are the owners. Proof of usage for over twenty years is required to get it added to the Definitive map. The developers have acknowledged that there is a path. A modification order to submit an application from Taunton Town Council has led to procrastination so far. The site is now being used as a holding site while the nearby bridge is being repaired.

5. Winter Walk Programme

The website has been amended so it does not mention Friday walks any more. We are doing well with both Wednesday afternoon and Sunday all day walks but there have been no Sunday afternoon walks recently. Gill said that it is difficult to find people willing to lead walks on Sunday afternoons but felt that there is a need to keep these going particularly for people who may be working on Wednesdays. Wednesday walks are now listed into March and Sunday all day walks keep trickling in. There are usually 20+ members on Wednesday afternoons and numbers are around 10 on Sunday all day walks.

6. Zoom subscription

Barbara C has kindly offered to set up the Zoom meetings for us using a subscription in the name of Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society which she already shares with another group. Gill suggested we pay a third of the annual cost of this but Barbara suggested that £30 would be a satisfactory amount and this was agreed by the Committee. Barbara will give Gill the bank details to pay when the subscription renewal is due. This allows for the meeting to be recorded to help with the writing up of the minutes.

7. First Aid training course

Val has been in touch with the Ramblers and been given a list of First Aid organisations who provide training courses:

St John Ambulance

Red Cross

Adventure First Aid

The course would have to be paid for but Gill could claim for this in her next funding budget. First aid training relevant to our group's needs would be required and the course should be held in Taunton. The cost of the course and how many would be able to attend would need to be determined. Val will investigate further.

8. Training session for Walk Leaders

There is a lot of training for walk leaders on the Ramblers Assemble website and walk leaders could be sent an email to encourage them to log onto the site to look at this. Trevor also mentioned that there was an article about leading walks in the Winter issue of Walk magazine. Everyone on the Committee was asked to log onto Assemble and have a look at the training available there.

Joy talked about the Risk Assessment form which has to be completed by each Walk leader prior to leading a walk and this should be included in a training session. There was mention of a generic RA form in the Safety on Group Walks Project draft document which was sent out in November but this has yet to be approved so the RA form still needs to be completed for each walk.

A face to face training session was suggested at the AGM and there was a discussion about whether this was necessary. Brenda said that she would prefer this and felt that more experienced walk leaders should help new walk leaders to recce walks. This is something we already have in place. Gill felt that this helps to build confidence and has herself been out to recce walks with new walk leaders.

Several of the Committee use the Group Ordnance Survey app successfully to plot and record walks and there are currently 12 members who have access to it. Training to use this was discussed and it was decided to send out an email to walk leaders to find out if there was a need and then arrange a session. Richard L was suggested as a possible trainer as he uses the app very confidently. How to approach the training was also discussed as it is possible to use a laptop to show how to plot a route and save it but following the route would have to be done out on a walk. Gill offered to bring a printer to a session so routes could be printed out.

We need to update the current list of walk leaders as there are several that have not led a walk for some years. Val will ask Val and Andy Norris if it is possible to print off a list of current TDR walk leaders. (There are 68 walk leaders for TDR listed on Assemble)

9. Coach trip 2024

A large coach has been booked for Wednesday 3rd July to Corfe Castle and Swanage. Daphne and Wendy C are willing to lead the longer walk. Val, Joy and Gill will recce the shorter walk and find a cafe for refreshments. Around 6 miles for the short walk and 8-9 miles for the longer walk. Trevor suggested the car park at Corfe Castle as a suitable drop off point for the long walkers.

10. Correspondence

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

11. AOB

None

12. Date, time and place of next meeting :

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

Meeting closed at 17.36h