



SOUTH DEVON RAMBLERS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 17th JANUARY 2024
THE PAIGNTON CLUB, ESPLANADE, PAIGNTON TQ4 6ED

Present

Eric Evans
Karen Howes
Val Rose
Nicky Ward
Bob Ward
Dorothy Webley
Linda Lister
Kate McCormack

Apologies

Hilary Bick
Paddy Jewry

Signed as a true and accurate record:

.....
Eric Evans – Chairman

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Date

1. **Committee were welcomed by EE and thanks conveyed for Officers Reports.**

Apologies from PJ and HB.

2. **Matters Arising from October Meeting**

KH confirmed there were no action points outstanding that weren't scheduled for this meeting.

The Minutes were, therefore, considered read and approved, were signed off by EE.

3. **Reports** - Officers were asked if they had any queries or issues to raise at this point from the reports, to share with the Committee.

-VR mentioned an issue regarding Friday evening walks, and it was decided these will fall under 'Walks Co-ordinator role' rather than Social. The three Committee members take responsibility for the walks/meals they organise, other walks with meals are organised by the leaders. One leader has offered evening walks and NW agreed to support him in organisation. It was agreed the planned Friday walks would not be 'social events' as such but would end near a hostelry to allow for refreshment, which was something enjoyed in the past. It would not be obligatory and no need to book. The Paignton History Walk with Tapas has already been booked with Molly's (by Janet), numbers only required.

-LL was getting familiar with the accounts and confirmed that the basic allowance from Ramblers was £328, only £1.01 per member, not over-generous. She felt the surplus in self-financing could be better used and also that the cost of the website, £490 this year seemed very high.

Discussion took place on our IT and online footprint; it's necessity, cost and the alternatives. Other groups have a mixed arrangement, most dislike the RA National site as not being user friendly. FB is a great source for instant update and showcasing walks and social events, but



in tandem with a website rather than a replacement. KH is responsible for editing our RA National page, NW the walks page. EE, BW, NW and KH all have website access. BW/NW and KH are out of the country soon, and website updates during that time must be channelled via EE.

KH is administrator of the FB account. Our FB has 697 followers and has been positively commented on by Kate Ashbrook of the RA, as 'excellent promotion for the Ramblers aims and objectives', ie local interest, health, wellbeing and raising awareness of the association. KH tries to ensure galleries reflect this and can (and has) remove posts and pictures if necessary.

BW felt there would be a cheaper alternative to our website, but we need to be mindful of security and backup as well as hosting fees.

EE to contact MD (webmaster) to query the high annual cost, what is involved. **DONE** – MD has responded with a breakdown and will explore a cost reduction before renewal in 2024. BW to explore other options on his return from holiday and feedback to Committee.

4. AGM Review - All

It was agreed by all that the venue and format of the meeting were positive. Tessa's presentation offered some levity and was very well received by all. The idea of a speaker worked well, breaking up the evening and the break was appreciated too. Biscuits were not of the standard expected however (nb for next year!) BW said slideshow had a few hitches but barely noticeable and speakers coped regardless. KH to request same arrangement for Wednesday November 13th, 2024. **DONE** – Room is available but cost risen to £150 with £100 deposit required. Awaiting Committee approval.

5. English Riviera Walking Festival – KH

KH outlined the aims of the Festival, 2024 being its 3rd year. She had been involved via Paignton Heritage Society and led 'Steam, Seascapes & Shipwrecks' in April 2023, supported by HB. Attendees pay £10 and walks vary in length and area. The Co-ordinator, Graham Kerr has approached the SDRC, via KH, to ask if we would lead a walk along the JMHT for the festival. The programme is already taking shape, but the plan is to have our walk as a 'showcase', i.e. promoted later as a 'don't miss it' special event.

Discussion followed. Originally it had seemed a good idea to test the walk on LS's Club walk on 1st February and Graham had been invited to attend. However, with the Gold bus no longer running to Torquay, walkers returning to the start (Ocombe) would require two buses or do a 10 mile walk with a bus in the middle. It was agreed BW would approach LS and suggest the walk be a shorter circular to better suit Thursday group. – **DONE**.

KH to contact Graham Kerr to reorganise the Festival Walk recce – **DONE** – It has been left with Graham/BW and EE to set a day, provisionally 9th February, on Bob's return, to walk Cockington / Ocombe/Marlton/Beacon Hill/Berry Pomeroy/Afton/Marlton back to Cockington, 9m. KH to be kept in the loop in order to write promo and facilitate bookings via the ERWF online system. There is also a requirement to attend a feedback event one evening in the Summer. The Club would receive around £75 for hosting. The date of the actual walk yet to be decided, but the Festival runs 4th – 19th May, just after our return from Dorset. More information at our April meeting.



6. **Holiday Updates – BW**

Dorset - Around 33 already booked. BW is sorting leaders and wants to actively encourage involvement of others in these trips. There will be a short and long walk each day, to start from the same point, when BW can take evening meal orders.

BW plans to find a suitable venue with a reasonable, varied menu. The Parkdean special offer giving considerable discounts on caravans and lodges has ended, but they still remain good value. Currently TS, TW, RB, CB and JW are interested in leading.

Yorkshire Dales – 31 deposits paid. After March the Hotel will release the remaining rooms and any further requests will depend on availability. At present BW feels there will be a small excess which will be refunded to those who go. Some discussion on tipping the driver and whether we take from the surplus, but it was generally felt people would be asked to make a cash contribution on the coach, suggested £5 pp.

Recces were queried. In the Lakes, EE had reccied some original walks, pre-Covid cancellation and RB had reccied some of the Keswick based walks. In the Dales BW plans to use established walks, supported by Outdoor Active and OS app mapping. There are plenty available online and in various publications, i.e. Malham Cove, that are safe and well known. BW did not plan to visit Yorkshire and would not be claiming any recce expenses. Leaders who do travel to recce tend to treat it as a 'holiday' and are willing to give their time. LL confirmed Ramblers do not support recce expenses generally and the Club could not afford this. KH queried insurance if we were walking 'unreccied' walks. BW confirmed it made little difference, only the leaders are covered, and others walk at their own risk. We are awaiting further information from the RA regarding recce requirements generally.

7. **Social Committee Plans – VR /KM**

Defending the Dart - 23rd Feb, Berry Head Hotel – 20 booked, a package event with talk and meal for £20 -fully subscribed, due to limited space. Organised by PJ.

'Paignton History' KH – Friday social walk, May 10th - followed by Tapas at Molly's, details to be in the Spring/Summer Programme.

RHS Rosemoor, Torrington - 13th September. KMc has obtained quotes for the package; coach and entry, currently £34 if 30 people go, £28 if 40, on a 53- seater coach. A smaller coach was no cheaper. A walk, as well as visit was discussed, to encourage attendance, but felt to be impractical in that area and a two-stop day wouldn't work.

Other ideas for coach and day trips, were mooted and KMc offered to explore if there was insufficient interest in Rosemoor.

KH suggested a Mailchimp in the Summer and assess viability after that. Flyers could be made available in Dorset too.

The Social Committee, including HB, planned to meet before the end of January and feedback at next meeting.



8. **AOB**

BW – Advised that the former ‘AONB’s’ – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’ - land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, has been rebranded to ‘National Landscapes’, to better reflect their national significance.

BW – DLYW – Bob is still involved, little moving, but the deadline has been pushed to 2031.

LL – Linda felt that the Club was holding too much money and it could be used creatively for the benefit of members, i.e. supporting social events, speakers etc. All were in agreement and social committee would explore, perhaps even reducing the cost of coach trips etc.

KH – Reminded all of her 6 week absence from 23rd Jan and confirmed that should the need arise for a Mailchimp, she had asked MW to be ‘Chimpmaster’, and he had agreed. She would be able to access emails and FB.

9. **Date of next meeting** – Weds 17th April, 2024 6.30 for 7pm, at the Paignton Club. KH has requested the room and confirmation awaited.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

KH/20/1/2024