

Minutes of the Committee Meeting Wed 23 January 2019

Present: Eric Evans (EE); Celia Broom (CB); Dorothy Webley (DW); Nicky Ward (NW); Bob Ward (BW); Paddy Jewry (PJ); Val Rose (VR); Janet Evans (JE); Tessa Smith (TS).

1. Welcome (and apologies)

The Chairman welcomed Nicky Ward to the committee as the new Walks Coordinator. He also welcomed Janet Evans who joins the Social Committee.

Apologies: Julian F

2. The Dartmoor Way Project (TW and MO)

EE introduced Michael Owen, Project Manager for the Dartmoor Way Project and Trevor Walker from Totnes Ramblers. They briefly outlined the evolution of the Dartmoor Way Walking Route to date as well as the next steps and the types of volunteering required. A map was provided and it was pointed out that this route represented a country lanes type of walking, rather than the rugged moor, though there were also sections for getting onto the moor as well.

BW volunteered to be the main point of contact for SDR and committee agreed to raise awareness on our rambles.

Interest was shown by committee on 'adopting' a section of the route at an appropriate time.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were reviewed. All action points had been addressed.

The Clapper Bridge had happened quickly and EE briefly explained the reason for this.

Recent media coverage was applauded.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Bank charges

CB referred to an earlier mention of bank charges to be levied by Unity Bank, notably 30p on each cheque presented. The first quarterly charge had added up to £23. A discussion ensued in which the following points were made:

- We would continue to encourage payments by bank transfer even though this made organising events less straightforward in keeping track of payments.
- There was no desire at this point to charge our members if they used cheques.
- Those members organizing events should bear in mind the small increase in costs and plan accordingly.
- DW felt the charges should be passed on to Central as it was they who insisted we use Unity Bank
- CB assured committee the extra costs were manageable with the balance in hand but she intends to charge such costs as main expenses.

6. Update on Deer Park and the John Musgrave Heritage Trail

BW updated committee on the need to reroute the Deer Park section of the JMHT and presented visually a number of options. He detailed the safety aspects of these options, having spent time assessing these. He expressed a need now for a sub group to consider these options both on the map and on the ground before coming to a decision.

ACTION POINT: EE, VR, BW and TS agreed to meet on Monday 28 at 10.00am to begin this next stage.

Committee empowered them to reach what they feel to be the best decision.

EE is keen to get the new route approved by Devon County Council in the spring.

BW was thanked for all the work he has put in on this matter which has been tortuous!

TS expressed concern about the sale of the JMHT booklets. It was felt that the booklets could be amended with an insert but TS felt it was not right to promote the trail now we have been advised to reroute this section and a holding position was required.

ACTION POINTS: TS to mail those people who have purchased a booklet within the last few months to highlight the closure of one section of the route.

TS to post on the website and on Facebook to underline this message.

In her report, TS had drawn attention to the abrupt slowdown/cessation of sales of the booklet via the website. It was suggested this was due in no small way to the fact that the trail is now detailed on the website and people are presumably downloading the notes.

7. Holidays and walking events

a. 2019 Greece

CB reported two cancellations but happily these places had been taken by new members. These substitutions were facilitated successfully as the names of

participants had not yet been itemized to EasyJet so no transaction charges have been incurred. Thus, there are still 33 participants.

CB has provisionally booked a return coach to Bristol and the cost of this is likely to be £30 per person.

A request for final payment has been sent out by Evia Tours.

b. Short break to Cornwall

Further to the Survey 2018, BW has worked on a low-cost, DIY style trip and he presented an outline of this to committee. The proposal worked on a basis of the minibreak costing no more than £200 for a 3 or 4day trip. He gave an example of St Ives Holiday Village where caravans would be available. The way this would work is that dates would be set aside, mid week being preferred at this point, and members would be invited to book their own accommodation (eg in a caravan, or B and B), make their own travel arrangements and turn up at the meeting point for walks and evening social events. The emphasis is on flexibility with members being able to attend as many days and walks as they wish. It is proposed to make September 2019 the first of these minibreaks, to test the water.

TS applauded the initiative which sits well as an alternative, or addition, to the overseas or longer holidays organised by SDR.

c. Lake District 2020

EE expressed his concern about this holiday, bearing in mind the fact that the 2018 Isle of Man holiday failed to attract sufficient support. He detailed some of the offers he had worked up and these were discussed. It was felt that a proposal from Grey Cars which involved a hotel with only 5 single rooms to offer was not likely to work and as this accommodation was not well situated for our purposes this was not felt to be attractive enough.

Keith P had recommended the Windermere Hotel and the 2020 prices will be announced in August. EE is on advance notification for these.

Other possibilities were raised -HF deemed to be too expensive. VR suggested we consider Ramblers at Hassness House; Blakes was mentioned as well as Majestic.

ACTION POINTS: EE to explore some of these options.

In order to allay fears of numbers being less than anticipated, TS suggested costings be plotted against a smaller take up, say 25 instead of 30 with a likely

price being quoted at that number. In the past this has worked with refunds or lower prices given when higher numbers signed up.

d. Abbots Way

There has been interest in this October event and we had discussed briefly whether we could put this on as a two day event rather than send a team for the one day 24 mile walk.

It was felt that we were organizing rather a lot for 2019 and in particular, BW had taken on more than enough. Members were, of course, free and welcome to support the event organized by the Dartmoor Rescue Group every year.

8. Social events 2019

JE, VR and PJ outlined the programme of events for 2019 as listed in the report from the Social Committee. Past events were also discussed – all highly successful. The Christmas dinner dance had been arranged to chime with members' wishes. The Social Committee were going to recce the Dartington Glass outing to Torrington. EE had been in touch with Mike Long and a walk is being organized for that day. The trip is being promoted as the John Musgrave Memorial outing. The Coleridge Way trip, also termed a John Musgrave trip, was a legacy of last year's April trip being labelled as such.

BW commented on his enjoyment of a ceilidh, something that has been suggested from time to time but the social programme is rather full for this year already.

9. AOB

CB raised two matters:

- I. Central Office had queried the lower level of income and expenditure for 2018 compared with 2017 as they felt it might be questioned in their own audit. CB had explained the cancellation of the Annual Walking Holiday (Isle of Man) as the main reason for this.
- II. George Coles had suggested we adopt a more professional system for expenses claims and CB distributed forms for this.

VR also raised two matters:

- I. It was suggested that we should purchase our own microphone, to be used at AGMs as well as other gatherings. She reasoned, many of our members have

impaired hearing. PJ had done some research as another group she attends use one which she felt was very good. It was agreed to acquire a microphone.

ACTION POINT: EE and BW to look into devices to assess portability, range, cost.

- II. VR highlighted the fact that she had passed to TS a letter and receipt from Children in Need acknowledging our donation of £141.50. Although in VR's name this was a donation from our members. TS set this letter aside with one from SWCP also acknowledging a gift from SDR as part of the SWCP Challenge. The amount raised was £205. Both of these letters will be displayed at the 2019 AGM.

EE wished to clarify the position of the Tea Shop walks and the One Stop Jaunts. The OSJ walks in the winter were proving popular but the plan had always been to revert back to Tea Shop walks in the summer months.

NW reminded committee that there had been interest in summer evening walks. She offered to lead short evening walks in July and August of about 4-5 miles, meeting about 6pm.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 17 April 2019 at the Redcliffe Hotel, 6.30 for 7pm start.

TS27/01/19