

**MINUTES OF**  
**BRISTOL RAMBLERS GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**31<sup>st</sup> MAY 2023, BRADBURY HALL, HENLEAZE**

**0 ATTENDEES**

Heather Toyne (Chair), Peter Budden, Tony Parsons, Geoff Daniels, Keith Budd, Ceiswyn Blake, Carew Reynell, Sarah Marshall, Roger Britton.

**1 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME**

HT welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular guest Roger Britton. Apologies had been received from Sue Fox.

**2 APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes (Draft 3) of the last meeting, held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023, were accepted as an accurate record of that meeting.

**3. ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING**

The action to review and discuss the status of the track log library in 5 months from the date of the last Committee meeting is ongoing. The other two actions from the last meeting have been completed.

**4. UPDATE ON DLYW AND PROW**

RB summarised the position on his DLYW and PROW activities and had provided a written report prior to this meeting; see Attachment 1. The Committee approved RB's requests regarding DMMOs (see bold text in Attachment 1).

CR suggested that the DLYW Working Group, consisting of TP, KB, CR and RB be reconvened in September and this was agreed.

HT agreed to send a 'thank-you' email to RB on behalf of the Committee to thank him for his efforts.

**ACTION** CR to reconvene the DLYW Working Group to meet again in September

**ACTION** HT to send a 'thank-you' email to RB for his work on DLYW and PROW.

**5 NATIONAL WALK MANAGER WEBSITE CHANGES**

TP reported that he has now added all currently scheduled walks to Walk Manager, which went live today. Exact starting point and start/finish times were required for each walk but the times have been set to automatic values by TP. Walk leaders need to give permission for their phone number and email address to be visible. The default is for queries to go to the Group's representative if permission for the walk leader's email address is not given.

HT noted that time was needed for the changes to 'bed in' but there will be a time when this is the default approach and will then replace the need for separate spreadsheets, except perhaps for special purposes such as Walk Fest. The situation will be reviewed at the next Committee meeting.

**ACTION** Committee to review status of Walk Manager at its next meeting with a view to Walk Manager replacing spreadsheets on the Bristol Ramblers Website.

## **6 WEBSITE SUPPORT**

SM described the status of her and TP's ongoing work on the Group website, following the decision at the last meeting that SM would work with TP to update the website. The appearance differs depending on whether it is accessed via a laptop or a smartphone, and there may be some difficulties if certain browsers are used. TP and SM had tried to improve the appearance on a smartphone, but there were limitations as adjustments could have a detrimental impact on the appearance on a laptop.

HT suggested that possibilities for simplifying the home page were the first priority as feedback from some members indicated that it was not always to find information about walks, as this appears at the bottom of the page on a mobile phone view. Possibilities for simplifying the home page were discussed. SM would continue to work with TP on simplifying the website, and HT asked to be involved in this work as it progresses, meeting with TP and SM to agree changes. HT advised the Committee that there would be changes made before the next meeting to improve the appearance of the website.

HT also asked if it would be possible to check with appropriate persons at Ramblers HQ to see if there were any imminent plans to upgrade the local website format, and in particular if there were any plans to improve the mobile phone view as this was now how most people access websites.

**ACTION** HT to provide input to the re-design of the Group website and arrange to meet with TP and SM.

**ACTION** TP to discuss the issue of the device used to access the Group website and any forthcoming changes to the National site with appropriate persons at Ramblers' HQ.

## **7 WALK FEST UPDATE**

HT noted that there had been a total of 278 participants in the 2023 Walk Fest on walks organised by the Group. Of these, 149 were not members of the Ramblers. This attendance compares favourably with the 2022 numbers of 216 and 106, respectively.

HT thanked all those who had led walks for Walk Fest, in particular KB who had himself led 7 walks.

CR suggested that a 'thank-you' message be sent to leaders in recognition of their contributions. CR also indicated that he is collating feedback from leaders. CR suggested that HT's letter should include a request for such feedback.

**ACTION** HT to send a 'thank-you' message to members who had led walks for Walk Fest 2023.

There was negative feedback regarding some of the intrusive questions on the evaluation forms distributed to walkers and on the lack of space on the forms for feedback on the particular walk.

HT summarised that the event went well. Overall, lessons learned included that the preparation for 2024 should start early and that coordinators should get together beforehand.

**ACTION** CR and KB will undertake a review of the Bristol Ramblers input for the 2023 Walk Fest and report back to the next Committee meeting.

## **8 TREASURER'S REPORT**

GD<sup>1</sup> reported that there was a total of £3872 in the Group's account, comprising £2457 as 'Restricted', £739 as 'General' and £676 as 'Self-Funded'. GD considered that the reserves were adequate to meet expected commitments. Bristol Ramblers is a large Group and the turnover to resources ratio varies

---

<sup>1</sup> Following the meeting, GD indicated that he will be stepping down from his role as Treasurer at the 2023 AGM. The Chair has emailed the Committee for any interest in taking on the position.

hugely across other Groups. There was nothing to report to the Area Treasurer (CR) on the Group's finances. GD indicated that it might be necessary to prepare a budget for the next financial year.<sup>2</sup>

## **9 WALK NUMBERS AND ISSUES**

HT summarised the position on walk numbers since the last Committee meeting based on the inputs of the walk coordinators.

The average attendance on Wednesday walks had been 11-12 with a range of 4-18. The numbers on Saturday walks had been between 1 and 34, with an average of 12-13.

The B walk average was 14 but the last 2 weeks' walks had had 20 participants. There was a trip to Elan Valley the weekend following this meeting.

The average on A walks had been 12 with a range of 9 to 17. The use of Meetup had led to 12 non-Ramblers taking part, with 4 repeats and 1 person joining the Ramblers.

It was noted that the contract for use of the Meetup app expires in early September. HT proposed that the timing of the next meeting be amended to accommodate a review at the end of August at the next Committee meeting. HT agreed to invite Bob Gibson to join the Committee meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> August so he could participate in the discussion.

**ACTION** HT to invite Bob Gibson to the next Committee meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, to discuss the future use of Meetup<sup>3</sup>.

## **10 AREA COUNCIL UPDATE**

There was nothing to note.

## **11 NATIONAL RA UPDATE**

TP noted an email describing a special offer on Ordnance Survey maps and would send the details to CB for inclusion in eBoot. TP will also put details of the offer on the Group's website.

It was also mentioned that there will again be walks for the YHA in September, following similar walks held in 2022. HT requested that Committee members ask their contacts if they are willing to lead walks for the YHA. HT agreed to contact Jeff Rowlands again to see if he would be willing to lead a YHA walk again this year.

**ACTION** HT to contact Jeff Rowlands again to see if he would be willing to lead a YHA walk again this year<sup>4</sup>.

## **12 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The date of the next meeting will be 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 at Bradbury Hall. The 2023 AGM will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> October at the Redland Green Bowls Club, where CR and KB will provide the presentation this year.

## **13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The location of flyers for Bristol Ramblers was raised. CR noted that he has some.

---

<sup>2</sup> Subsequent to the meeting, it was decided that the Group's financial contribution to Walk Fest in 2024 will come from the 'Restricted' element of the Group's account and hence that a budget submission would not need to be prepared for 2024.

<sup>3</sup> This Action has since been completed.

<sup>4</sup> This Action has since been completed and Jeff Rowlands has agreed to lead a walk.

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their contributions.

**Peter Budden**

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (Draft 2.1, *for review by Committee*)**

## **LIST OF ACTIONS**

- |               |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ACTION</b> | HT/BG to review and discuss the status of the track log library in 5 months ( <i>i.e.</i> , August 2023).                                                         |
| <b>ACTION</b> | CR to reconvene the DLYW Working Group to meet again in September                                                                                                 |
| <b>ACTION</b> | HT to send a ‘thank-you’ email to RB for his work on DLYW and PROW.                                                                                               |
| <b>ACTION</b> | Committee to review status of Walk Manager at its next meeting with a view to Walk Manager replacing spreadsheets on the Bristol Ramblers Website.                |
| <b>ACTION</b> | HT to provide input to the re-design of the Group website and arrange to meet with TP and SM.                                                                     |
| <b>ACTION</b> | TP to discuss the issue of the device used to access the Group website and any forthcoming changes to the National site with appropriate persons at Ramblers’ HQ. |
| <b>ACTION</b> | HT to send a ‘thank-you’ message to members who had led walks for Walk Fest 2023.                                                                                 |
| <b>ACTION</b> | CR and KB will undertake a review of the Bristol Ramblers input for the 2023 Walk Fest and report back to the next Committee meeting.                             |
| <b>ACTION</b> | HT to invite Bob Gibson to the next Committee meeting on 23 <sup>rd</sup> August, to discuss the future use of Meetup <sup>5</sup> .                              |
| <b>ACTION</b> | HT to contact Jeff Rowlands again to see if he would be willing to lead a YHA walk again this year <sup>6</sup> .                                                 |

## **ATTACHMENT 1 REPORT FROM R BRITTON**

### **Footpath Secretary**

Nothing important to report.

### **General update**

BCC notify me of any planning applications that may involve footpaths, which I screen. I contact you if I see the potential for a problem.

I also attend the quarterly PROW Liaison Group meetings, and of which I am now Chair. Keith also attends when they are in person (as opposed to Zoom). Jeff Rowland takes over my Chair role if I am away. Next meeting is on 6 June. These meetings are hosted by Eddie Procter and Theo Brumhead, the Council PROW team, and frequently attended by their leader, Duncan Venison. Tessa Fitzjohn (Chair of Public Rights of Way and Greens (PROWG)) also usually attends, although I have yet to meet her. I send you reports of those meetings.

---

<sup>5</sup> This Action has since been completed.

<sup>6</sup> This Action has since been completed and Jeff Rowlands has agreed to lead a walk.

Theo and Eddie are leading a WalkFest 5 mile walk on 26 May, starting 1:30 at Shirehampton. Wendy will go in my stead (I am away). They have also put a lot of energy into establishing and rerouting footpaths in the Avonmouth area, trying to preserve PROWs as industrial development races through the area.

### **Don't Lose Your Way**

I fear your DLYW Co-ordinator is losing his way, or at least his heart, for this project.

To recap, Jack Cornish' Ramblers HQteam identified 50,000 miles of footpaths that existed in 1900 but are not now recorded on the various Definitive Maps. Because the government has withdrawn its previous pledge to repeal the January 2026 deadline, applications for Orders to restore any paths (DMMOs - Definitive Map Modification Orders) must be lodged by end 2025. However, half of the County Councils still did not have a Coordinator at the last DLYW Zoom meeting I attended.

Over a series of meetings, our subcommittee team (Tony P, Carew and Keith) assessed about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the potential routes that HQ DLYW had identified within Bristol City jurisdiction. We marked 11 as suitable for DMMO applications (half of which are over land in BCC ownership). I attach a spreadsheet of the results of our enquiry on these routes. **I need your formal permission to apply for DMMOs on these.**

I need to then visit each site, take photos, and then research the maps to identify the landowners and old routes, and other historical evidence. Sometimes witness evidence of use will be needed. Procedurally, I then request an Application Pack from the Council for that route, and lodge the Applications and serve Notice on the landowner, then confirming with the Council that all the paperwork is complete.

The amount of evidence that is needed is a matter of debate. For my part, I have no cases which require proof of 20 years use, and I believe that the DLYW campaign is too fussy, and that the British Horse Society, with its more demanding land intrusion, has dominated thinking. The Ramblers' DLYW forum is dominated by document archaeologists who talk of little else but Tithe Maps, Enclosure Orders, Quarter Session Records etc, all being of Victorian or earlier origin, in handwriting and stored at various locations all over the country. I am not one of them and have taken the view that these documents are of last resort and that, in a city area, the old maps are usually all we need, especially if the landowner is the Council. For sites such as Sheepwood and Brentry Wood, perhaps more is needed.

Nonetheless I have badly let down the subcommittee and you, because I have advanced only one of these 11 sites. My travels and my life have got in the way.

In October 2022, I inspected **another** footpath (Airport Road, Hengrove/Parsons Paddock) that Tony P and I had considered on maps, and found it was being built over at that very moment. You gave permission to apply for a DMMO. Over the space of a few weeks, I completed the whole procedure and, in the process, developed a Statement that included all the evidence that I thought was needed, and provides a useful template for the future. That Application was lodged in November, acknowledged in January and thereafter vanished into the ether.

Ramblers HQ DLYW team have been running advertisements for researchers to help in this project and four came forward in our area. I met them all by Zoom and one, retired Professor Robin Jarvis, has been outstanding. He expressed an interest in the Oldbury Court route (80227), came on site with me, and subsequently prepared a masterpiece of a

statement, that I attach. It largely follows my Airport Road template but his research has gone far deeper. **Please approve my filing this DMMO application.** He has expressed interest in Brentry Wood!

Long ago I marked Princes Lane as suitable for a DMMO (and been given your permission and a budget to apply). This has dragged. The documentary evidence is not quite enough and, most of all, I need evidence from people who have walked from one end to the other - such people will be 70+ and not easy to find. I have (only just) lodged a flyer in Clifton Library, and have made contact with the local history society. I have found two people who have walked it but neither will respond to my request for a statement. In January this year, to my dismay, a 20 metre stretch was washed irretrievably away by landslip. It will not exist in my lifetime.

#### Council Delay

There was a recent 'storm' in the B24/7 press about delays in the processing of DMMOs by the Council so I have asked Eddie and Theo to allocate part of the 6 June PROW Liaison Group meeting to discuss their DMMO procedures.

There are 16 DMMOs shown outstanding on the council website, dating back to 1992. Ours (Airport Road) is not even recorded. The focus of the delay 'storm' was a footpath in Clifton Wood, where the application was filed in 1998, council agreed delegated authority in 2010, and, I gather, it has still not been recorded. Once the statutory year to deal with the Application has elapsed, a DMMO applicant can seek an order from the Secretary of State to direct that the Council do something; that has proved useful for Susan Flint and 'Friends of South Purdown'.