

Mendip Association Mendip Group

Minutes of the Annual General meeting

Held at The George, Gurney Slade, on 3rd November 2018 at 7.00 pm.

- 1 30 members were present
- 2 Apologies were received from Mary Perry, Mary and Tony Parsons, Paula Ruddock and Roger Yeoman.
- 3 The minutes of the 2017 AGM were accepted.
- 4 Mike Plaskitt gave the Chairman's address.
- 5 Tony Dyson gave the Treasurer's report which was adopted.
- 6 The appointment of Mrs Simpson for 2019 was approved by Tony Dyson and seconded by Jane Dyson.
- 7 Mary Dadley gave the Publicity Officer's report.
- 8 Mary had sent the membership report. In the past year membership had varied between 320 and 330 members. West Mendip walkers had boosted the numbers. She has now resigned and we thank her for her work.
- 9 Les Stather gave his report for East Mendip footpaths, 2 footpaths diversions had been added since the report in October. He said it takes a lot of persistence to get the work done.
- 10 Brian Underwood gave the report for West Mendip footpaths. He reported 11 footpath diversions and 6 blocked paths. Jake Taylor the Somerset pathway coordinator is offering some training. Ken Masters will help Brian with his work.
- 11 Jane Dyson gave her report on social events. In addition Mary Dadley had organised a trip to Wincanton Races.
- 12 Les Stather gave the web master's report.
- 13 Peggy Fortunati gave her programme coordinator's report. There are a number of gaps in the programme and now she is only entering walks that have been offered in the programme. She reminded us that she needs permission to use email addresses. More leaders are needed, particularly on Sundays.
- 14 Martyn Hart gave his last festival report, he has organised 4 of them and we thank him for all his hard work. Luckily Kevin Moynihan worked with him for the last festival and is willing to take on the role.
- 15 Tony Dyson proposed and Peter Gatenby seconded the re-appointment of Mike Plaskitt as chairman.
- 16 Nancy Moynihan proposed and Brian Underwood seconded Tony Dyson as treasurer.
- 17 All the rest of the committee were proposed by Peter Gatenby and seconded by Martyn Hart.
- 18 The meeting ended with refreshments and skittles.

Committee Members from 3rd November 2018

Chairman Mike Plaskitt, Treasurer Tony Dyson, Secretary Janet Morland, Walk Programme Coordinator Peggy Fortunati, Footpath Officer East Mendip Les Stather, Footpath Officers West Mendip Brian Underwood and Ken Masters, Festival Organiser Kevin Moynihan, Publicity and Membership Secretary Mary Birchall, Social Secretary Jane Dyson and committee members Catherine Fitzgerald, Mo Bennet and Nancy Moynihan.

Footpath Officer AGM 2018 Report Mendip East

WN4/6. North Brewham

- January I asked Carl Ear, Area Footpath Officer to chase up this as an urgent matter. We have threatened them with a section 130 order. He responded as follows
Hi Les – the problem with a Section 130, for which we need Head Office consent, is that the County can claim that they are actively dealing with the problems, especially as it has been obstructed by buildings, which requires a diversion to resolve. The latest I heard is that agreement had been reached with one landowner for a reasonable diversion, but they are still trying for agreement with the other. I will give Pete Hobley one last opportunity to satisfy us that resolution is near before we go for a Section 130, but I must check with Head Office if they would agree in the circumstances. Head Office needs to be involved as we could risk a claim for charges if we go to Court.
- June - Clare Haskins, Rights of Way Officer, has passed the problem onto the enforcement officer.
- October - I have chased this up but not heard anything.

Colliers Way in Frome from Cheese and Grain to Welshmill Weir

- June -Neither this path nor the path on the opposite side of the river is dedicated rights of way. I have been informed by Frome Town Council that they own the path on the allotments side of the river and sustrans manage the path from the Cheese and Grain. Carl Earl is checking with the ramblers if this is sufficient to protect these paths.
- October- The ramblers view is we have to rely on Frome Town Council to keep their path open

FR 4/50 Newbury Farm Highbury

- A report from path watch has been received regarding numerous problems around Newbury farm Highbury. I have written to Clare to see if she is aware of this and has spoken to the land owner. She has reported back that all issues have been addressed

SM 7/53 The locked gate issue at Doultong

- June- I chased up the locked gate with Clare. Her response to this was
No, I have taken no action on this one as it is very low priority. I don't particularly want to spend money opening this route as it goes through very wet woodland – not exactly easy walking. The landowner is welcome to apply for a diversion if he/she wishes but it would not be instigated by us as there is a viable well used alternative available at the moment.
- October - It was agreed at the last Mendip Ramblers committee meeting that we would not pursue this any further.

FR 21/33 Marston Park

- January- I was informed, by a member of the public, recently that this footpath has been re-routed. I have checked with Clare and she is aware of a plan to re-route this path but this has not been approved as yet. I will be checking to ensure the official route is still open.
- June- I surveyed this path and confirmed that the waymarked route on the ground does not correspond with the definitive right of way. Clare has spoken to the landowner and had the waymarks changed to permissive path

Lost Path In from The Retreat to Aderwell

- June- Simon Keyes, of Frome is claiming this path as he has evidence that it has been walked for twenty years. I have checked with Carl Earl and Carl has provided Simon with a proforma used to claim the path at Blue Anchor. I have also written to Simon stating that he has the support of Somerset Ramblers.
- October- This path has been claimed, The Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) is visible on the interactive map and its status is under investigation. We have been told that this status could remain for around 20 years due to the back log. I have advised Simon Keyes of Frome, who submitted the DMMO that it would be better to get witnessed statements from the people who have regularly walked the path as witnessed statements are admissible in law even when the person making the statement and the witness becomes deceased.

Frome Gets Walkers Welcome Status

- June - Frome has been awarded Walkers Welcome status. A steering group has been set up . I am the secretary of the committee.
- October -There will be a walking day in Frome on the 18th of November at 11 am from the Cheese and Grain

Footpath Improvements in Bruton

- June- Bruton Town Council have kindly given BCP, - Bruton Community Partnership - a grant of £2,000 towards: "mapping, inspecting, cleaning, clearing and promoting footpaths around the town".

They are establishing a "working group" to be co-ordinated by Katherine Grugeon of Bruton Walkers.

I have been informed and advised the group that any improvements they come up with will need to be approved the Somerset Rights of Way warden Clare Haskins. I have copied her in on this so she is aware of what this group is doing.

I have also informed them that Bruton do not have a PPLO and perhaps this group could find a volunteer for this role.

- October- This group has identified at least 7 walks from Bruton. They have reced them and produced a list of issues that need to be addressed. I have checked to see if they are getting appropriate assistance from Somerset Rights of Way but have not heard back yet,

CL 19/3 Farrington Gurney Golf Course

- January- I have received a planning application from MDC which would require the diversion of CL 19/3. Although I have no objection to the proposed route I consulted with Gus and he advised that the paths across the golf course need to be waymarked. I have informed Clare

Haskins of this and asked to be kept informed of developments as waymarking should take place at the time of the diversion

- October- Modification 249 to re route this path is now closed. I am checking to see if the path has been diverted and way marked,

FR 14/65 Cottle's Oak Frome

- June- I received a phone call that access to this path from Egford Hill was blocked due to building work being carried out on the house. After a site visit with Clare Haskins, we agreed that although access to this path was blocked, the access was not in the correct place and should be on the land to the left of the blockage. Clare was of the view that we should be able to open the path and will come back when she has done the paperwork.
- October – Mendip Ramblers opened this path with permission from SCC and Mendip Council

FR 18/ 17 Whatley

- October- A diversion has been received for this path to follow the field boundary rather than go diagonally across the field. I have expressed concern that this path will become corralled and therefore become overgrown.

WS 2/36

- October- I received a phone call that someone has moved this path to accommodate a new build. Maggie Seaward has offered to take a look and take some photos. This links back to a survey that Brian Underwood did. Brian is finding out from Chris East what the current status is.

Lamyat SM 13/9

- October- This path has been closed since 2010. I have been approached by the chairman of the parish council to help them, open this path. I have written to Clare Haskins asking her to explain what the issues are.

Frome Missing Link Route 24 Cycle Route

- October- An application is being made to divert FR 20/12 and FR 20/8 as part of creating the cycle path from Frome to Great Elm. We are looking at this.

Lost Paths in Frome

- October- I have identified two paths that are not on the definitive map. One goes from Egford Lane to join FR 14/59. The other is from Packsaddle Way to FR 20/2. I am sure both of these paths have been worked over a 20 years period and will be collecting evidence for a DMMO.

Cropping Issues

- There was a discussion on cropping problems at the area footpath officers' meeting. I stressed that cropping problems should be reported early so that action, which SCC claim they would act on, can be taken before the crop grows and blocks the path. This is especially important with crops such as rape and maize which become impenetrable. It was suggested that walk leaders be encouraged to report cropping problems they find on their walks and report them immediately to their local FPS or, in Somerset, report them on-line. As well as reporting cropping problems to SCC or NSC, as appropriate, such obstructions should be reported to the Rural Payments Agency. If the landowner is in receipt of RPA payments, pressure can be brought by the RPA to clear cropping obstructions on penalty of losing some of the payment

the landowner receives. However following the Brexit vote, this scheme will lapse, when we leave the EU. However it is hoped that a similar system may operate post-Brexit and Ramblers is involved in discussions on this nationally.

2026 Cut-off for RoW Claims

- Carl reported that he was a member of a Ramblers advisory group working with Jack Cornish, who has been appointed to advise Area on making claims prior to the cut-off. It was intended to produce clear guidance and short courses to enable Area to make claims. Group FPSs were reminded that any routes regularly used that are not recorded on the definitive map will cease to be used legally if not claimed before 2026. Any such routes can be referred to Carl for advice. It is possible to see if a route has already been claimed in Somerset by using the new Explore Somerset web-site and clicking on “Open Modifications” in the main menu (Closed Mods. will show if a previous application has been made and failed). North Somerset does not have this facility and will need to check with their RoW section. Carl confirmed that claims based on 20 years unobstructed usage could continue after 2026, as could dedications by landowners.

Guidelines for Walk Leaders Route planning.

- At the area footpath officers' meeting it was felt that some guidance to walk leaders on planning walks would be helpful. The OS map does not necessarily contain up-to date information on path diversions and planned routes should be checked against highway authorities on-line RoW maps. All our surrounding authorities have such maps and Somerset and Dorset also show any reported faults. Such guidance can also include the request to report any cropping found. Carl will write an article for the Somerset Rambler.

Mendip Ramblers Statement of Accounts as at 30/09/2018

Opening balance 01/10/2017

Restricted Funds	£1,285.76	Workparty Donation	£840.76
		Ramblers Holidays	£27.00
		Book Sales	£418.00
Self-Funded	£4,803.89	Holiday pre-payments	£1,010.00
		Holiday Residuals	£3,759.85
		Social Residuals	£34.04
General Funds	£518.18		
Total	£6,607.83		

Income

Area Funding	£414.00	4 of 4 quarter payments
Ramblers Hols	£110.00	
Deposit Interest	£0.00	
Fundraising	£302.31	Walk festival donations
Holidays	£12,860.00	
Socials	£859.02	
Work Party Donation	£2,378.00	
Book Sales	£50.00	
Total Receipts	£16,973.33	

Expenditure

Courses	£233.00	First Aid course
Walking Festival	£230.00	Hall Hire etc
Festival Prog/Publicity	£0.00	
Programmes	£429.56	
Tools	£998.29	
Work party costs	£16.08	
Trailer Insurance etc	£105.79	
Meeting/AGM Costs	£0.00	
Admin	£13.44	
Holidays	£12,474.00	
Gates donation	£0.00	£0.00 From Ramblers Holidays
Socials	£937.00	£77.98 From Social Residuals
Total Expenditure	£15,437.16	£1,353.16 From workparty donations

Funds as at 30/09/2018

Restricted Funds	£2,360.60	Workparty Donations	£1,865.60
		Ramblers Hols	£27.00
		Book Sales	£468.00
Self Funded	£5,111.91	Holiday pre-payments	£1,280.00
		Holiday Residuals	£3,875.85
		Social pre-payments	£0.00
		Social Residuals	-£43.94
General Funds	£671.49		
Total Funds	£8,144.00		

At bank	£8,104.00
To bank	£40.00
Awaiting presentation	£0.00
Total	£8,144.00

£0.00

£0.00