

Minutes of the Committee Meeting Wed 16 October 2019

Welcome (and apologies)

There were no apologies. Present: Eric Evans (EE); Celia Broom (CB); Janet Evans (JE); Bob Ward (BW); Nicky Ward (NW); Dorothy Webley (DW); Paddy Jewry (PJ); Julian Fisher (JF); Val Rose (VR); Tessa Smith (TS).

1. Minutes of the last meeting

2. Matters arising

The minutes were reviewed, Action Points were all acknowledged as having been addressed and the minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Holidays

a. 2020 Lake District

BW circulated the *flyer* he has produced ready for distribution at the AGM. It was confirmed that the reminder to members to check the Refund and Cancellation policy (on the website) and to arrange their own insurance was stated on the flyer. It was agreed that deposits would be non-refundable after the cut-off date of the end of March and the date for the payment of balances was confirmed as the end of June. This allowed ample time for funds to come in so that the bill for coach and hotel from Grey Cars could be paid.

Some people had arranged to pay a deposit in advance of the AGM. There was some discussion about this as there had been a previous instance of a regular member having been unable to secure a single room early on in the booking. This concern had to be balanced with the overall pressure to get the numbers right. It was agreed that no cheques or payments would be paid in before the date of the AGM.

EE also expressed some concern about the *pricing* having checked with Grey Cars and discovered that there would be an increase in cost if numbers were fewer than 25. TS felt the price was 'about right' as there was sufficient contingency for extras eg fuel increase and recce expenses (as per the Recce and Expenses policy), so she felt the pricing was set sufficiently high. EE's concern was more that it might be too high. BW had done some cost comparisons with other groups and

organisations and his findings reassured the committee that the trip represented value for money. A similar trip by another walking group, admittedly less expensive, was destined to stay out of season and in a rather less pleasant area. BW was also keen to include the *pick up points* on the flyer. DW felt that the long coach journey north meant that too many pick up points would only lengthen time spent on the coach and recommended Avenue Road rather than Wellswood for this holiday. TS admitted it made sense but suggested the Wellswood pick up, so convenient for many members, be used for the shorter trips.

It was agreed to leave determination of the exact pick up points until the participants were listed.

Recce work: EE and JE had gone a long way to getting the walks defined but there was still work to be done. Chris W had suggested EE document the walks to cover the (remote) possibility of EE being indisposed. It was generally agreed there were two ways forward: either less recce work and trust to members being able to find the routes, as was done in Cornwall on the minibreak, or return with a small recce team to complete the recce work to be sure of the walks and have more leaders. TS favoured a return to the Lake District, arguing that SDR members were accustomed to the work being done in advance on such holidays. EE and JE proposed a spring visit. TS and DW offered to accompany. A final decision on this was to be taken at the January meeting.

b. Holiday 2021

There were a number of destinations and formats on the table. Following a visit to Val's family in summer, TS had asked Ecowise, the company run by Adam Rose and his partner Yenka Honig, to come up with a proposal for a trip to the Piedmont area of Italy.

BW and NW had researched the format whereby we approach a travel company, indicate what we want and let them do most of the organizing. BW felt that with a group the size of SDR we could expect a reasonable offer.

Both suggestions estimated a cost of over £1000 per person.

Various destinations were considered. Some were rejected as it was felt that several members would already have been, eg Madeira. In the discussion some preferences were crystallised: viz it need not be a flight from Bristol though that

was preferable; proximity to a town and railway station so that non walkers had options; obviously good walking! BW raised the matter of ATOL protection. It was pointed out that this came only in a package tour and that members were always advised to make their own insurance arrangements.

Finally it was agreed to flesh out two proposals to present to the AGM for a show of hands: the Ecowise trip to Turin, Piedmont and a trip to Malta arranged by a travel company. Ramblers Walking Holidays and HF trips were also to be investigated but NW cautioned against too many options to present to members. PJ aired her anxiety about those for whom vertigo is an issue and this was a reminder to take that into consideration.

VR voiced her concerns about her connections to Ecowise which is her son's company. It is recorded in these minutes, therefore, that VR declared an interest and will defer to another member of the committee to make that proposal at the AGM though she is happy to assist with defining the proposal.

ACTION POINTS: TS and VR to liaise with Ecowise to sharpen up the Italy proposal. BW and NW to research a trip to Malta via a travel company and/or RWH and HF. Both of these to be ready for the AGM meeting.

4. SWCP

Members of the committee considered the email sent from Arthur C in which he suggested the project continue with sections of the SWCP between Babbacombe and Seatown during the winter months. Once the daylight hours gave longer days, we would then revert to the North Devon sections as far as Bude if possible. This would mean by the end of next year over 25% of the SWCP could have been covered, putting the completion of the whole with 4-5 years within grasp!

Arthur C will present his ideas at the AGM, it was agreed. He could then test the water regarding overnight stays.

BW commented that he is keen to retain the original concept of the mini break - an affordable stay in an area not normally covered by SDR and committee acknowledged this, aiming to keep the term 'mini break' for those types of excursions.

ACTION POINT: EE to get back to Arthur about AGM and to confirm our agreement with him regarding the tactics for the winter months.

5. AGM 2019

Prior to this meeting, EE had met with JF and TS to draft out the agenda, running order and presentation for the AGM. EE ran through this with members looking on with tablets and iPads.

EE checked that those with input were happy to contribute, slides were re-ordered to allow for a sensible progression. BW wanted a time allowance to prevent the meeting dragging on too long. It was pointed out that last year had seen a stream-lined version but that was deemed to be a little too slick, so we had reverted this year to the longer style wherein members contributed. So, if it was a little longer, that was as expected.

ACTION POINTS: members to submit any outstanding slides with bulleted points to accompany their input.

TS to send photos of Evia; family ramble and RNIB walk to JF

Elections The call for nominations had gone out via the website and the AGM was to be mentioned at forthcoming walks. JF raised the issue of a closing date for nominations to allow for the Chairman to adjust the AGM to allow for new recruits. After some discussion, which covered the facts that very few nominations were submitted, the possibility of a closing date acting as a deterrent and the constitution not stipulating a closing date. However, if it was felt necessary, a closing date could be introduced for next year and a closing date of the day before the AGM to be highlighted in advance.

TS was reminded that the Independent Examiner also needed to be re-appointed.

EE checked that all members of the committee were willing to stand for election and as this was the case he questioned whether the elections could be done en bloc. After some discussion about the merit of this, it was agreed to deal with the appointment of a Chairman, Treasurer, Independent Examiner and a Secretary first and then with the rest of the committee. All found favour in this.

ACTION POINTS: EE to meet with BW and JF in advance of the AGM to check the equipment.

6 AOB

The Social Committee had been approached by Daniel R about the possibility of a trip to The Lost Gardens of Heligan next year, possibly as the John Musgrave annual outing.

While a wonderful destination, the Social Committee felt that they already had a full programme for next year under development and also underlined that fact that it was not the remit of the Social Committee to organize the JM outing each year.

A previous suggestion for the 2020 JM outing had been to tackle parts of the SWCP as there was scope there for long and short walks.

ACTION POINTS: EE to get back to Daniel.

PJ asked if members of the committee were comfortable with the idea of SDR opening the ceilidh planned for next summer to members of other groups with whom we have previously collaborated, Torbay and Totnes Ramblers. This was seen as desirable as we needed plenty of participants to make it a success.

VR referred to the other plans for events 2020 detailed in the report.

7 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 15 January 2020

ACTION POINTS

BW to finalise the flyer LDH2020 ready or the AGM

TS and VR to liaise with Ecowise to sharpen up the Italy proposal.

BW and NW to research a trip to Malta via a travel company and/or RWH and HF.

Both of these to be ready for the AGM meeting.

EE to get back to Arthur about AGM and to confirm our agreement with him regarding the tactics for the winter months.

Members to submit any outstanding slides with bulleted points to accompany their input.

TS to send photos of Evia; family ramble and RNIB walk to JF

EE to meet with BW and JF in advance of the AGM to check the equipment.

EE to get back to Daniel regarding his suggestion for the trip to Lost Gardens of Heligan.

NEXT MEETING

EE to decide on recce strategy LDH 2020