



The Island's Premier Walking Group

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 4 TOMMY CLUCAS AVENUE, PEEL

10am Monday 13th January 2020

1. **Those present:** Ken Harding – KH, Lesley Parkington – LP, Jack Verity – JV, David Leiserach – DL, Diana Kouvel – DK, Peter Gunn – PG.
2. **Apologies:** Maree Harper, Fiona Vaz, Rose Cannell, Pat Mudie.
3. **The minutes of the previous meeting:** having been circulated beforehand, were approved and signed by the Chairman, Ken Harding.
4. **Matters Arising from the previous meeting:**
 - DL thanked KH for obtaining the Biosphere grant to pay for fifteen members to take part in the Hills Skills Course with Andrew Foxon. KH stated that he had had seventeen responses and had filled the places with people who more fitted the criteria required. Andrew Foxon is now in charge of the organising the course. JV asked if AF is receiving all of the £1500 grant. KH confirmed.
 - KH has been invited to meet with Visit IoM on 15th January 2020 with a view to MFCG being included in forth coming events.
 - KH thought that the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Fundraising event went well and a photograph of us handing over a cheque for £236.15 was included on their website for all to see. We should continue with our support.
 - Website: KH stated that we need a new website, but there will be a cost which we must accept as the website is a very important tool for the MFCG. Our current website cannot deliver our needs and KH is going forward with plans to replace it with a more modern site which we can administrate ourselves.
 - KH said that we have tried numerous times to support IoM govt by doing, or contributing to, capital projects i.e. foot bridges, fencing, stiles etc.. Each time our efforts are rejected so it is now time to draw a line under this.
 - Roles and Responsibilities: It had previously been suggested that we should reduce the number of committee members. KH thought that as several committee members will not be standing for re-election it, is best leave the number of committee members as it is. Fiona Vaz will be standing down from the committee but would like to remain as website administrator and take the new website forward with KH as she has been involved from the beginning. LP asked if we have any idea of cost for the new website. KH replied that it would possibly be a minimum of £500. DL said that we needed a cost figure to take to the members at the AGM.

- DL stated that there is still no resolution regarding a footpath in Ramsey where MFCG submitted our concerns about the layout. DoI have accepted our concerns but no decision has been made so far.

5. Correspondence:

Southern Signpost, an online directory for small business and organisations has asked if MFCG wish to be included. This will help get our name into the public arena and there is no cost.

ACTION: KH to return completed form to Southern Signpost for MFCG inclusion.

Laura McCoy, Manx Wildlife Week 2020 is inviting MFCG us to be involved in this. The deadline for accepting is 28th February 2020 and the event takes place 8th to 17th May 2020. This is another opportunity to raise our profile. We do not have to attend an event, we invite people to join us on walks with a Wildlife theme.

ACTION: LP to reply to Laura with details and confirming our participation.

Terry Daine, asked if we would like to be included in his Survivalist magazine. As there will be a cost and this publication is not compatible with MFCG, KH has replied to Mr. Daine and declined.

The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Fund thanked MFCG for our generous donation.

KH has received a request from Visit IoM for a weekend event called 'On your doorstep'. This is for small businesses and organisations connected to the outdoors etc, to offer their services at a cut rate to encourage the public to take part. This takes place 14th – 15th March island wide. Another opportunity to promote the group. LP asked if we are covered by our insurance. JV reminded her that we are covered for three taster sessions but we are required to get contact details for each person. LP stated that KH is building a good relationship with Visit IoM.

ACTION: KH to return the application form for our inclusion.

DL said that due to the previous Secretary not wishing to receive emails concerning MFCG, his email address appears in various places on the website and he is receiving correspondence which should go to the Secretary. He asked if the website can now be updated. All agreed.

6. Treasurer's Report: (see attachment)

JV stated that Lily publications are currently up to date with payments for MFCG walking books with a total of £540.16. As the bank balance is fairly healthy, JV said that the membership will not be in favour of an increase in subscriptions to £10. KH stated that all our running costs have increased and the subscriptions have remained at £6 for many years. We need to proceed with the purchase of a new website and First Aid Courses etc.. PG suggested that we need to present a compelling case for the increase to allay members concerns.

KH suggested asking members at the AGM for suggestions of how they would like to see our accumulated funds be spent. JV asked for it to be a separate item on the AGM agenda. Any increase will not come into force until 2021. DK said she would like to spend money on courses to enable members to do more conservation. DL said that DoI do not co-operate and will only authorise professional contractors to do this work. KH suggested that we write to the non-executive Chairman of Visit IoM as we may have a more positive response. JV asked if we can appoint a new Auditor. DL stated that it was agreed at the AGM 2019 that Julian Harper would Audit MFCG accounts for 2020. We will appoint a new Auditor for 2021 at the AGM in March. DL said that we need to have a new, independent auditor in place for the AGM in March 2020.

ACTION: JV to check with Mr. Harper if he wishes to do it for this year.

ACTION: KH to discuss the possibility of members doing conservation work with non-executive Chairman of Visit IoM.

7. Membership Secretary's Report:

The membership is fluid at this time of year. Subscriptions have remained at £6 since 2003. JV suggested that we thank Maree for the very hard work she does as membership secretary. All unanimously agreed that Maree has put in an extraordinary amount of time and effort over the years, for which we are very grateful.

8. Data Protection Report:

There have been no breaches.

9. Footpath's Officer's Report: (see attachments)

DL advised that the Heritage Trail, which should have been completed by November 2019 has been delayed until April 2020. There are two highways orders, 1 - Castle Rushen High School – re-routing a footpath through playing fields, 2 - Three footpaths will be designated as joint cycle/footpaths. MFCG will not object to these proposals.

10. Safety Officer's Report:

Risk assessments are being received and all is going well. KH mentioned an incident when a member had to be escorted back to his car with a painful leg. DL commented that some members are having difficulty forwarding Risk Assessments. KH said that these problems can be rectified with a new website. DL asked if we can incorporate an 'Auto reply' on the Safety Officer email account which says 'Thank You'. Again, this is for the new website.

11. AGM:

JV has the draft accounts ready to be audited.

LP stated that those up for re-election are Jack Verity, Lesley Parkington, Rose Cannell, Pat Mudie and Diana Kouvel. Rose Cannell and Diana Kouvel are not standing for re-election. Fiona Vaz is also standing down from the committee but wishes to continue as website administrator. Jack Verity, Pat Mudie and Lesley Parkington would like to stand for re-election. LP has the AGM paperwork in place ready for MH once she returns to the island.

12. Manx Wildlife Week:

KH/LP will look into this and inform committee of outcome.

13. Heritage Open Days:

LP asked if the committee would like to continue with this event. All agreed it was a good event to be involved in.

ACTION: LP to contact Manx National Heritage to confirm.

14. Beach Buddies Environmental Festival:

KH will contact Bill Dale with regard to MFCG attending the festival if it is going ahead in 2020.

ACTION: KH to contact Mr. Dale for details.

15. Annual Beach Clean:

This event can be easily arranged and hopefully Bob Garrett will continue to arrange it with Bill Dale. This event proved popular and helps fill our conservation role.

ACTION: BG to arrange details with Bill Dale.

16. New First Aid Courses:

DL said that we need more members to be First Aid trained and that the certificates are valid for three years so the members who did the course in 2018 will need a refresher course in 2021. JV said the St. John website and book are excellent sources of information. DL asked if we could have a date in mind in time for the AGM.

ACTION: LP to contact St. John for details

17. Annual Club Walk:

KH suggested having the Annual Walk during the summer when we could possibly end it with a picnic etc.. There will be a short and a long walk. A date of Saturday 16th May 2020.

DL suggested inviting Tony Archibald to do the short walk.

18. Winter Talks:

Committee members were asked for suggestions for speakers for 2020/2021. JV suggested Hedgehog Conservation and John 'Dog' Collister, KH - Manx Wildlife Trust, DL - Angela Little, LP - Tony Quirk and Mr. Bryan(Edward Bryan's Removals), PG – Stan Basnett.

ACTION: LP to contact possible speakers in due course.

19. 50th Anniversary Celebrations:

KH has had a few suggestions of how to celebrate this event. The suggestions of a short break to the UK, as has a Ceilidh to include all members have been well received. Members should be asked for suggestion at the AGM.

ACTION: KH to look into short break holidays that can accommodate large groups.

ACTION: LP to search for a suitable venue and band

20. AOB:

JV asked if Dougie Newton and Bob Garrett will be sharing the Presidency of the club. Dougie was President for two years, Bob Garret, one, so Bob should be asked for a further year then share the Presidency.

ACTION: LP to write to Bob asking if he would like to stand for President during 2020/2021.

DL asked for information on the landowner of a footpath on the Ayres which has been closed with a padlocked gate. "Public Right of Way goes north from the bend in the Point of Ayre road at Cranstal towards the Sand and Gravel pits. Some years ago MFCG marked out an alternative route. That route has now been closed by a padlocked gate. Please could everyone let David know anything they know about the history?"

21. Date of next Meeting: 10am Monday 23rd March at Mylchreest Court.

22. Meeting Closed at: 11.40am.

