



MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING AT MYLCHREEST COURT, PEEL

2pm MONDAY 23rd MAY 2022

Those present: Alistair Lothian – AL, Paul de Weerd – PdW, David Leiserach – DL, Gill Smith – GS, Jack Verity – JV, Lesley Parkington – LP.

1. **Apologies:** Peter Corkish. Peter Gunn.

2. **Minutes of the Previous meeting:** having been circulated beforehand, were approved and signed by the Chairman, Alistair Lothian.

3. **Matters arising from the previous meeting:**

- AL asked for information on the proposal to 'Adopt a Trig Point' on Peel Hill. LP had contacted several departments of government and the landowners and no-one knows who is responsible for the trig points. After some discussion it was decided not to proceed with this as there would be little benefit for the group.
- AL asked about walks to encompass traditional Manx ceremonies. Culture Vannin had supplied LP with a list of occasions which could be combined with walks. Ray Beattie's walk on 23rd April had encompassed the site of the 1945 Air Crash on North Barrule where a ceremony was held and an American flag raised. Most of the dates for this year do not fall on walk days but can be built into the walk schedule for other years. Culture Vannin thought this was a good idea and would like to be updated if possible. Hunt the Wren on 26th December is one suggestion we could link with a walk this year. Gef the Dalby Spook's birthday is 7th June 1852 and Peter Gunn's walk could possibly be extended a little to visit Doarlish Cashen to celebrate the occasion.
- AL asked about insurance for free membership for children under 16. JV replied that we are covered provided that the children are accompanied by a parent and a membership form has been submitted. GS said that we should advertise this on the website.

ACTION: AL to contact Callum Staley regarding amendments to the website.

- AL suggested that we should not contact the lottery trust until we have a project in place requiring funds.
- AL asked about Mental Health Awareness week. LP stated that there had been no uptake for this event.
- AL suggested that the group should not fund maintenance or projects that are the responsibility of Dol or DEFA unless they are of significant value to MFCG.

- AL asked for suggestions for Special Interest Talks for the winter schedule. AL's suggestions were Adrian Cowin the senior island meteorologist and the Pipe Band who could do a talk on the history of the band. LP suggested Charles Guard who gives talks on numerous subjects, Peter Cannell - Manx Civil War, Nigel Wood – Voyage of Odin's Raven, Tony Quirk – Living above the Shop, James Franklin of Culture Vannin – Sofia Morrison. DL said that Alison Fox of the Manx Museum gives talks on various objects in the museum. It was also agreed that forty members for each talk is a comfortable number.

4. Correspondence: Lesley Parkington

- LP had sent a letter of thanks to Pat Mudie, the previous Safety Officer.
- LP advised the committee of a letter from Visit IoM explaining their strategy for encouraging 500,000 visitors per year to come to the island.
- DL stated that he had received a letter from DEFA asking if we would like to contribute to the cost of replacing the boardwalk on North Barrule. It was agreed that we should not be involved as it is the duty of government to fund such projects.
- LP has written to John Taylor of Strix via Geoff Gelling to ask if we could have a tour of the clocks at Aragon Mooar. As yet there has been no reply. PdW said that there might be someone who maintains the clock collection who may be able to give a talk on the subject.
- LP has received an email from Fiona Vaz, the web manager, detailing the reason for problems with putting the new walks schedules onto the website. It was due to the fact that the spreadsheet designed by Callum Staley, the web designer, had not been adhered to. The schedules need to follow a precise format.
- LP advised the committee that the bill for the MFCG leaflets was £37.50 and the bill for the badges was £187.50. LP had had the cost of postage removed to save us £27.50.

5. Treasurer's Report: Jack Verity

Treasurer's Report Committee Meeting 23/05/2022
Savings account balance. £14,427:89
Current Account balance. £4,532:80
Significant expenditure since the last meeting;
Hire of Peel Golf Club House AGM £200:00
Cooper's Club Badges. £187:20

GS suggested that LP could forward details of the weekly transactions and monthly statements.

JV said that we had also received £480.76 from Lily Publications in February for book sales.

- PdW stated that there should be a resolution to increase the signatories for the bank account to 5 to include AL & GS. The resolution was passed by those present.

ACTION: LP to forward bank details to JV each week.

6. Membership Secretary's Report: Gill, Smith

GS advised that up to 31st December we had 244 members plus 32 from then to date making 276 members in all. Several names were removed from the membership list after the AGM due to non-payment leaving the membership list completely up to date.

GS has designed a gift voucher for membership and LP felt that this should be promoted on the website. All agreed.

ACTION: AL to contact Callum Staley regarding this.

7. Date Protection Report: Gill Smith

There have been no breaches since the last committee meeting.

8. Footpaths Officer's Report: David Leiserach

DL has reported 51 footpath defects so far this year. He also advised that the Walking Champion, Kate Berquist, has trained and organised 4 small footpaths signpost maintenance teams to replace signage on the Raad ny Foillan. DL has taken part in one of the training courses. DL feels that it is a good initiative.

9. Safety Officer's Report: Paul de Weerd.

- Risk Assessment: PdW said that Pat Mudie had continued to receive Risk Assessments until the end of the previous schedule. PdW has now taken over fully and all R.A's are being received.
- Incident Reports: There have been no incidents since the last meeting.

10. Lily Publications:

AL has corresponded with Lily Publication with regard to the future of the MFCG walking books. Miles Cowhill does not see a future for them as they need to be totally updated and there are several new walking books due to come onto the market. Therefore AL suggested that we should explore the possibility of putting walks online, possibly using Outdoor Active, that we could charge a nominal amount to the public to access.

PdW suggested that we could ask for a donation for each walk.

DL asked what amount we have been receiving from Lily Publications p.a.. JV replied that it is approx. £600. LP said that in future, should we revamp the books, we will only receive 7% of sales and not the 20% as in the past.

LP said that we should inform the membership of the options before making a decision.

PdW said it is important to find out about the MFCG liability.

AL felt that we should get advice from a solicitor regarding liability.

After a very in depth conversation it was decided that AL should discuss the possibilities fully with the web designer before the committee can make a decision.

11. AOB:

- AL asked what progress has been with arrangements for the Henley & Goring Ramblers group walks. LP read out the suggested walks and said that leaders need to be decided for each walk (we have 13 volunteers) before they can be finalised. DL said the Henley visitors should be asked to become members to be covered by insurance.
LP has made it clear they walk at their own risk and we take no responsibility. She has also suggested that we will be happy to forward any donations received to a local charity of our choice.
- AL said that PC has commented on the lack of walk leaders and how can we encourage more members to lead walks. This can be put forward as an agenda item at the next meeting.
- AL asked if we should be encouraging younger walkers.
GS said that the island's walking champion, Kate Berquist, has created a 'Young Ramblers' group and that younger people do not want to commit to a whole day at the weekend. LP said that younger, fitter people usually want to organise their own walks. AL asked if we should liaise with Ms Berquist. It was decided not to.

- AL said that Debbie Broom has asked if we should consider belatedly doing some of the events for the 50th Anniversary of the group which were cancelled in 2021 due to Covid. The committee felt that the moment has passed for celebrations. She also felt that the group should be paying to replace broken stiles and bridges etc. It was agreed that this is the responsibility of government.
- AL asked if the word 'Conservation' should be dropped from the name of the group as it confuses potential new members. DL suggested that this should be left for the future. AL said that when researching walking groups online the MFCG comes at the top of the list but the home page does not immediately show that we are a walking group. LP said the in the past the words 'The Island's Premier Walking Group' was shown below the title. GS suggested that the home page of the website should read 'Welcome to the Island's Premier Walking Group'
'The Manx Footpaths Conservation Group'.

ACTION: AL to contact Callum Staley re: website homepage

- AL asked if we should encourage more committee members. LP said that almost everyone presently on the committee has a specific role and this works very well. There are two vacant seats on the committee should anyone wish to put themselves forward.
- AL asked if we should continue with bi-monthly meetings. It was agreed that this time frame works well.
- AL asked what the committee is trying to achieve. LP said to promote the group, JV felt it was to ensure the smooth and safe running of the group. DL said that we are now much more organised with regards to compliance of Health & Safety regulation for the purposes of Insurance cover etc. than in previous years. We now follow the same guidelines as the Ramblers Association.
- LP suggested that we introduce Leadership Skills Courses to help prospective leaders feel more comfortable about leading. This might also re-enforce the rules regarding leading walks i.e. a pace that suits everyone and being aware of what is happening behind you etc.
- LP feels that Tuesday walks are becoming too long. Leaders should be reminded that they should be approx. 8 miles at a leisurely pace. It was agreed that the Chairman should email the membership to remind them of what is required.

ACTION: AL to email membership regarding guidelines for leaders.

- AL asked what we expected of the Chairman. LP said that she thinks he is doing well and is bringing forward new ideas and is not afraid to lead from the front. DL said that AL listens to the views of others. JV suggested that AL should do all walks periodically.
- PdW stated that there should be resolution to increase the signatories for the bank account to 5 to include AL & GS. The resolution was passed by those present.

12. Date and time of next meeting:

2pm Monday 11th July 2022 Mylchreest Court, Peel.

Meeting Closed at 4.15pm

