



MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING at St. PATRICKS COURT, PEEL

2pm Monday 17TH July 2023

Those present: Lesley Parkington – LP, Peter Gunn – PG, Peter Corkish – PC, Paul Castle – PAC, Paul de Weerd – PdW, Gill Smith – GS, Geoff Clague – GC.

1. Apologies: Alistair Lothian, Angela Weston, David Leiserach

2. Minutes of previous Meeting: having been circulated beforehand were approved by the committee and signed by Lesley Parkington, Secretary.

3. Matters Arising from previous meeting:

- PdW stated that he has read through the MFCG insurance documents and is reassured that we are complying with all the necessary requirements as detailed in the policy.
- GC has enquired about the plaques on the Happy Hiker carving where the lettering has faded due to being in the sun over the years. One solution is that we try a stronger paint and varnish. The committee agreed that he should proceed with this.

ACTION: GC to repair Happy Hiker plaques.

4. Correspondence: L.Parkington

- Andrew Foxon, Go-Mann Adventures, has very kindly offered to give a 25% discount on the cost of a Hills Skills course for up to 5 members bringing the cost from £120 to £90 p.p. LP said that this skill might encourage new leaders to come forward and the committee agreed that club would pay half the cost i.e., £45. The dates offered were 25th and 26th July and the committee felt that there is not enough time to organise it at this time but would like to go ahead in the near future. (new dates: 7th September or 17th October).

ACTION: LP to reply to Andrew requesting a new date if possible.

- LP read out a letter of thanks to Jane Lothian for her contribution to the Annual Walk and her reply.
- LP read out the letter of apology to Mylchreest Court regarding an incident which happened on the Annual Walk.
- A member of the public has asked MFCG to chase DoI as to why the PRoW from Port Mooar to Maughold is still closed. PAC has already asked this question and advised the lady to contact DoI personally. This is part of the Raad ny Foillan and is in no worse state than many of the Island's footpaths.

- A club member has written to his MHK asking why the MFCG isn't encouraged to undertake work on the PROW's. A reply from DoI explains what measures must be taken in order to comply with Health and Safety and insurance requirements. Ffinlo Williams is a proactive member of the DoI and PC and AL will arrange a meeting with him at a later to discuss footpath matters.

ACTION: PC to arrange a meeting with Mr. Williams.

5. Treasurer's Report: None received.

6. Membership Secretary's Report: Gill Smith

Members pre 1/1/23 who renewed their membership:	226 (e)
Oct – Dec 2022 new joiners, counted as new members for 2023:	5
January 2023:	4
February 2023:	5
March 2023:	2
April 2023:	6 (a)
May 2023:	2
June 2023:	4 (b),(c)
July 2023 to date:	2 (d)
Total number of members at 17 July 2023	256

Notes:

(a) One new membership application remains unpaid. I now consider that this person is not joining and have removed them from the membership list

(b) Subs outstanding from 1 new member

(c) A membership application was received from prospective new member in June. She has not yet moved to the island and has said she will be 'checking out' the group when she gets here. She has not paid membership subs. I have not included her yet in the membership numbers.

(d) Subs outstanding from 1 new member

(e) Differs from the figure reported in May 2023 of 225. This is because a member had asked to be removed from the membership list at that point, but has since been reinstated.

New member who joined in June paid £30 subs: for himself, his brother, who had already paid, and for their uncle, who is a life member and so does not pay subs. He has asked for the additional £20 paid to the MFCG to be accepted as a donation.

7. Data Protection Officer's Report: Gill Smith

To my knowledge there have not been any data breaches since my last report.

8. Safety Officer's Report: Paul de Weerd

- **Risk Assessment:** Overall the compliance for submitting risk assessments is very good. There are a couple of members who have not submitted forms and I will speak to them regarding this. LP is happy to forward a gentle reminder for future walks on behalf of the Safety Officer.
- **Incident Report:** One minor incident has been reported since the last meeting. Details were forwarded to our insurers which will be held on file for a period of time. No further action need be taken.

9. Footpaths Officer's Report: Paul Castle

56 defects have been logged with DoI/Defa so far this year. When reporting defects PC prioritises them with regards to urgency. MFCG receive no feedback from either department.

MFCG ways of supporting PRowS – David Leiserach

BOARDWALK

I am in discussion with Sean Gelling of DEFA about the installation of a new boardwalk on the section of PRow 103 that goes west from the U92 Mountain Track (at grid ref SC420878 approx) goes across a small boggy area. I have suggested that if he needs funding he should make a proposal which we could take to the next AGM.

PROWS IN GENERAL - I had an informal meeting with Ffinlo Williams. He is in a very different place to previous DoI managers and is very interested in any support that he can obtain. He has suggested that if we make a financial contribution towards a PRow improvement, the funds would have to be paid in to central IoM government Treasury and would not necessarily end up as "extra" funding to the PRow network. He suggests that the way forward would be for MFCG / Ramblers to make payments directly to Contractors or suppliers.

I have suggested the following network improvements and he thinks they all warrant checking out!

MISSING BRIDGE - PRow 159 used to cross over Glen Roy with a bridge that carried walkers at 42771 84237. This was so damaged on 5 December 2015 that it had to be removed probably as it would have been a hazard during another flood. It has not been replaced. A pedestrian bridge needs reinstating at this location.

STEPPING STONES - On PRow 214 there are huge concrete stepping stones across the Santon Burn at Santon at 30924 73019. The tops of the stones can be very slippery. The gap between the edge stone and the bank (on each side of the Burn) is getting larger and making it even more difficult to get across the stones.

FORDS - In Glen Dhoo there used to be a slate slab "bridge" taking the U187 across the Glen Dhoo stream at 35058 90789. A pedestrian bridge needs reinstating at this location.

At Little London U92 crosses the Rhenass River on a Ford. This is always very greasy. The Ford is not particularly safe for pedestrians. A pedestrian bridge needs implementing at this location.

MFCG working on PRow

Ffinlo has advised that for legal and insurance reasons if MFCG are to do "work" on DoI owned highways, including PRowS we MUST be trained and certificated to the same level as DoI staff. (This does not include snipping back overgrown vegetation).

New PRow

Paul de W has suggested that we should seek cooperation from Govt and landowners to put in place new routes in areas where there are no links between existing paths. He has suggested:

- 1 There are no "official" routes down from North Barrule marked on the OS map; I agree.
- 2 There are no "official" links from Black Hut up to Snaefell / Millenium Way. There is no need for this, it is all open ramblage and DEFA prefer walkers to spread out rather than "make tracks"
- 3 On Slieau Whallian, there are good paths in the plantation. Reinstating an old forestry stile, and opening a 30-metre right of way over the field would give a more attractive route onto the greenway than slogging up the road. There is no need for this there is a permissive path.

ACTION: PAC to arrange a meeting with Ffinlo Williams and AL to discuss possibilities.

10. Winter Talks 2023/2024: Lesley Parkington

LP has confirmed the following Wednesday evening winter talks:

15th November - Harry Owens - Bees in Burundi

24th January - Pete Geddes - The work of the Mines Research Group

21st February – Will Heap – Search and Rescue Dog Association

GC suggested John Kermode re: Diving on Shipwrecks. Dates suggested were 10th or 17th April 2024.

ACTION: GC to forward Mr. Kermode's contact details to LP.

11. Any Other Business:

GC asked if a meeting had been arranged for the sub committee regarding 'missing links' as suggested by PdW. If no date had yet been set he will be unavailable until late September.

The option of putting our walks on the website was discussed and it was agreed to ask AL to contact Callum Staley in order to proceed.

ACTION: LP to ask AL to proceed with this.

PG is finding it difficult to persuade members to lead walks as our regular leaders get older. LP said that we struggle for leaders on all the days, particularly Saturdays when a very small number of leaders cover all the walks. We will need to appeal to members for members to lead walks in time for the winter schedules.

ACTION: LP to email members appealing for leaders.

PC is creating a list of assembly points with the addition of what3words references and possibly a hyper-link to a map. He asked if this can be added to the website for use by members. LP said this shouldn't be a problem once the list is completed.

GC asked where to find what3words. PdW said that it was easy to use the w3w app. Others suggested UK Grid Reference Finder which is in app form or a web page and is very easy to use.

LP advised that the 2020 First Aid Courses are due for renewal. In the first instance she will contact those who were on the course previously to ask if they wish to renew and then put it out to the membership.

ACTION: LP to contact St. John Ambulance for cost and availability.

GS advised the committee that she will be standing down as membership secretary at the next AGM and we should start looking for a replacement asap. LP said that she had done a brilliant job as membership secretary and would be leaving the records in impeccable order.

12. Date & time of next meeting: 2pm Monday 2nd October 2023

13. Meeting closed: 3.55pm

ALISTAIR LOTHIAN

CHAIRMAN