

Hi IVW member,

Here is a summary of the minutes of the IVW Committee meeting held on Tuesday 16th January 2024. If you have any questions, please contact me or any other Committee member.

Regards

Bob Wallace

Chair of Ivel Valley Walkers

Email robertwallace@ntlworld.com

Present: Bob Wallace (Chair), Roger McLeod (Vice Chair and Programme Secretary), Tom Collier (Publicity Officer), Jan Wolfarth (Walks Coordinator), Fran Stedman (General Secretary), Mandy Wisson, Derek Turner (Footpath Officer) and Brian Roe (Treasurer)

Apologies: Roy Carter (Membership Secretary)

1. Minutes of IVW AGM held on 5th November 2023

The Draft minutes were noted.

Matters arising from the meeting were-

a) Barry raised a point about Signage for the North Beds Heritage Trail. He said that signage was deficient, and more discs were needed. He reported that a few years ago it was agreed at Area level that IVW would be responsible for replacement of signs. The Route had been devised by Gordon Edwards – a long time active member of IVW.

Bob pointed out that no money had been budgeted for this work in the current year. It was agreed that the size of the task – how many discs were needed and where – should be assessed. With this information, a figure could be allocated in the IVW or Area's 2024-25 budget. Barry would be asked how this budget could be assessed.

b) Rachel asked if the 40-mile Greensand Ridge Challenge that takes place over two days during the Bedfordshire Walking Festival could be also split over four days as part of our 40th Birthday celebrations in 2024. This item will be discussed later under Agenda Item 4.

c) Bob, as Chair, said that there is a great need to plan succession for Committee members. Roger would be standing down as Programme Secretary at the 2024 AGM. It was hoped that someone would volunteer during the current year to work with Roger so that there would be a smooth takeover in November 2024.

2. Chair's Report

Happy New Year to all Committee Members.

Since the last meeting IVW have enjoyed many walks and special events -

a) The Barn Dance with Joan and the Ivel Valley band was excellent as usual. Thanks to Val and Tina for the organisation and to attendees who brought the delicious food. Unfortunately, this may be the last Barn Dance for a while since it is understood that Joan is retiring – she will be missed.

b) In early December, Marcus took 25 members on his annual winter walk in London. We walked down interesting back streets and through Hyde Park to Belgravia and Sloane Square. Some places where I, and others, had never been before. Excellent, Marcus. Thank you very much.

c) 70 members attended the IVW Christmas lunch which was held at the Bedfordshire Golf Club. Very good as usual – we will be back in December 2024. Bernard Morse was presented with Santa's 'Christmas Gift' to mark his outstanding contribution to club walks and events over many years. Long may it continue Bernard. The Christmas mood continued after the meal with singing of traditional carols.

d) 38 members walked the annual Mulled Wine Ramble led by Roy from Old Warden Village Hall. Having

got permission from the Shuttleworth Estate, we were able to walk on some paths rarely walked by the general public. After a coffee stop at the Shuttleworth café, it was back to the Village Hall where Tina had prepared the Mulled Wine, which accompanied food brought by members. Thank you, Tina.

e) The final IVW Christmas event was the Sherry Amble. Over 30 members strolled from Silsoe to the Jack Crawley Memorial Barn on Flitton Moor. Sherry was served, together with left over Christmas snacks. A great way to end IVW's Christmas festivities. Thank you for organising this event, Roy.

3. **40th Anniversary Events**

The following events were agreed -

a) BADGES

Roy has received a quotation of £259.20 (including VAT) for 200 badges for the design chosen by the Committee. It was agreed to purchase 200 badges. This would be paid out of the Special Events Fund in the IVW Social Account. How and when to distribute the badges to members (at no charge) would be discussed at the April Committee meeting. **Action RC**

b) The MAIN 40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATORY EVENT

It is planned to hold a 'Yomp, Chomp and Roll Up' event on **Wednesday 17 July** at Langford. Additional food and celebratory materials etc will be provided by the Committee/members. Drinks, coffees etc will be available. The actual date is subject to availability of the facility. There will be up to three different length walks (starting at different times) in the morning, with all the walks returning to Langford for a 1.00pm start of the celebrations. **Action BM/BW**

c) 40 Mile GREENSAND WALK CHALLENGE 14th and 15th September

19 miles Saturday and 21 miles Sunday, busing it from Ampthill to the start location.

This year the Challenge will be organised by IVW to coincide with the last weekend of the Ramblers Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks. Invitations will be sent to LDWA as well as other Bedfordshire Rambling Groups. **Action RC/TC/BW**

d) 40 Mile GREENSAND WALK for mere mortals – over 5 days - 5 walks of approx 8 miles

Possibly sections will be-

- Gamlingay – Northhill
- Northhill – Clophill
- Clophill – Lidlington
- Lidlington – Woburn
- Woburn - Leighton Buzzard

Logistics need to be worked out. Car sharing will be used.

Dates to be decide but will probably be Fridays in June/July/August. **Action RC/BW/TC**

4. **Treasurer's Report**

Brian presented the latest state of both the IVW Admin and Social Accounts. The Social Account had a healthy balance (swelled by bookings for the Lymington and Okehampton holidays). The Admin account was depleted because of the lack of income from Area caused by delays in changing signatures after the Area Treasurer change. It was agreed that Brian should, as a temporary measure, transfer funds from the Social Account to the Admin Account while this 'signature' problem is resolved.

5. Programme and Social Secretary's Report

a) Walks Programmes

The 2024 Spring Programme became available in mid-December when it was sent out to members in 'Roy's Fortnightly Bulletins' and was accessible from the Ivel Valley website www.ivelvalleywalkers.co.uk. The printed programme is currently being distributed to members and local information centres. Many favourable comments have been received on this excellent brochure.

Bob expressed great thanks to Ligia who designed and produced the brochure when, at the last minute, Michele was unable to do this edition. IVW is very much indebted to Ligia. A 'Thank You' card and gift was sent to Ligia to show the Committee's appreciation.

Planning work on the Summer Programme has started and will feature the 40th anniversary events. The Programme will run from 1st May until 15th September so it will cover the IVW's contribution to the Bedfordshire Ramblers Festival of Autumn Walks. It was noted that the Autumn Programme will still run from September 1st until 31st December.

b) Upcoming Social Events and Trips

Social events in 2024 will include: -

- i) **A Brewery Tour has been booked for Thursday 29th February. Details** and 'How to Book' are now on the IVW website.
- ii) Tobogganing at Milton Keynes Snowdome on a Saturday or Sunday, probably in March/April
- iii) Ten Pin Bowling at St Neots, probably in March/April
- iv) A Gliding experience, probably in late July
- v) A Kayak trip on the River Ouse, probably in August
- vi) A possible Go-Kart evening.

All details will be announced in 'Roy's Fortnightly Bulletins' and on the IVW website when available. If members have ideas on other possible Social Events, please contact Roger.

c) 2024 Club Holidays

- i) **6-day holiday based in Lymington, Hampshire; Sunday April 28th to Friday May 3rd 2024.**

Leaders Bob and Celia

Holiday Fully booked with 36 walkers.

- ii) **5-day holiday based in Okehampton Thursday 6th June to Monday 10th June 2024.**

Leaders Antony and Kevin

Bookings being taken (35 maximum). Only a few places left. This holiday is now open to both IVW members and IVW affiliate members. Please book soon. See IVW website for booking details.

- iii) **A 6-day (Sunday to Friday) holiday based in Swanage at the end of September (or early October 2024) – Leaders Roy plus friend(s)**

Holiday in the planning stage – more details later

£20 minimum booking fee

d) 2025 Possible Club Holiday

Roger, Mark and Carolyn are investigating a holiday in Northern France in 2025 – probably in May. Feedback from members on this idea would be welcome. Would you be interested in this holiday?

e) **Bedford River Festival – 20th and 21st July 2024**

The Bedfordshire Area has agreed to pay for a stand at the bi-annual Bedford River Festival. IVW have agreed to organise and man the stand with possibly help from North Beds. **Roger will lead on this project.** Some copies of the IVW Summer Programme will be held back to distribute at the Festival.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

No report since Roy is on holiday in Spain for a well-deserved rest in the sunshine.

Roy's fortnightly bulletins continue to be well received. Thanks Roy!!

8. Footpath Secretary's Report

Derek suggested that IVW circulate members to ask if any were willing to keep a watch on their local RoW. He proposed sending a note to members saying -

In an ideal world, we would always use the public rights of way without any problems. Sadly, the weather, vegetation growth, wear and tear, and occasionally the actions of others can make paths difficult or impossible to walk along.

That's why we're relaunching our Local Footpaths Inspection scheme. We are asking members to become Local Footpath Officers and check the condition of paths in a particular area from time-to-time. Anyone who likes walking outdoors can do the job and no training is required.

The first thing to do is select an area, which will probably be near where you live. This area might be a parish or, if it has a lot of paths, part of a parish. If you walk a lot or the area has few public rights of way, you could consider taking on more than one parish. After that, you undertake to walk the paths at least twice a year, check for any problems that hamper your progress and report them to Central Bedfordshire Council or whichever one is relevant.

Please contact me if you'd like to take part or have any questions.

Derek Turner, Footpath Officer, Ivel Valley Walkers footpathsivw@gmail.com

This suggestion was welcomed and agreed by the Committee. This 'note' will be sent out as soon as practically possible.

9. Communication to Members and the General Public

a) Facebook.

The Facebook pages were being appreciated by members. Thank you, Tom and Sandra.

b) SE Rambler. Tom had recently submitted an 'IVW document' for the next SE Rambler.

c) Website. The IVW website www.ivelvalleywalkers.co.uk has been upgraded and is now almost fully functional. Comments, suggestions, and items to put on the website should be sent to Bob.

d) Press Releases. There is a need to publicise IVW walks in local newspapers and bulletins. Publicity for the 40th Anniversary Events would be good. This would be considered at the next meeting.

10. Area Matters

a) 2023 AGM.

The minutes of the 2023 Bedfordshire Ramblers AGM had been circulated.

i) The Area Chair's position continues to be vacant

ii) Kevin has resigned as Treasurer and Julian Chritchlow (LB) has kindly agreed to be Treasurer to ensure that the Area can operate financially.

iii) Group Chairs agreed to meet quarterly to monitor Area matters.

b) Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks, 2024

The Festival will take place between 7th – 15th September 2024. The organisation will be based on the plan used for the 2023 Festival i.e. run by a small committee with most of the publicity being digitally based to keep costs down. A Facebook page has already been set up, Julian Chritchlow and Paul Goss (NBR Webmaster) are currently working on the webpage which will be hosted on the Bedfordshire Area site. In 2024, external groups will be approached to ask if they would like to offer walks for the Festival programme.

It was agreed that the minimum IVW contribution to the 2024 BFAW would be-

i) Sunday 8th September - Two walks consisting of a 7 mile morning walk at 10.00 and a 5 mile afternoon walk at 1.30pm

ii) Tuesday 10th September – a 12 mile walk starting at 10.00am

iii) Wednesday 11th September – a 6 or 7 mile walk starting at 10.00am

iv) Thursday 12th September – a 5 mile amble (possibly an interest walk) starting at 10.00am

v) Friday 13th September – a 4 or 5 mile historical walk (probably around Ampthill)

vi) The 40 Mile GREENSAND WALK CHALLENGE Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th September

11. Any Other Business

Bernard had indicated that he was stepping down as the Wednesday walks coordinator role to allow a more regular walker to be more directly involved. He was more than happy to continue organising both the Yomp, Chomp and Roll-Up plus the Christmas Luncheon.

It was agreed that Bob, as Chair, would contact Bernard to thank him for his contribution to IVW in organising the Wednesday walks over many, many years.

12. Date of Next Committee Meeting

Tuesday 16th April 2024 - 7.00pm to 9.00pm. at Goldington Reading & Recreation Rooms.