

**Draft Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Brecon Beacons Park Society CIO,
held by video conference on 6th September 2021**

Attendees- Martin Buckle (Chair), Phil O'Shea, Clive Counsell, Iau Counsell, Richard Chandler, Jim Wilson, David Thomas, Ben Sladen, Sue Hoddell

1 Apologies- Elizabeth Gibbs, Jenny Cann

2 Previous Minutes-

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th July were approved. Signature is awaited.
AGM minutes to be circulated.

2.1 Matters arising-

5.1 Done

7.3 Richard to send to David to add to website

3. **vacancies-** expressions of interest requested. The job description for the walks secretary should say 'to construct a programme of walks, approximately 4 per week, that covers all grades of walks and spreads over the full range of the Park area.

4. **safeguarding** - done. The individual has been contacted.

7.5 **website** - David is exploring putting the WiP and the walks programme on a different application so that the website can remain as it is. This is ongoing.

8.1.1. **HEP** - done.

11 **AOB** - Janet has agreed to sit on the Standards Committee appointments panel.

3. Safeguarding Policy-

3.1 The sub committee meeting on 19th July was held.

The sub committee could see no reason or justification for stopping the individual discussed from being a walk leader. Accepting this recommendation was proposed by Sue and seconded by Clive and so accepted. It was generally felt that if this person could continue as a walk leader then they should continue as a member of the BBPS. the individual should be made aware of this.

Action; David to email the individual to communicate the decision.

There was some discussion around whether the constitution is clear enough around continuing or excluding membership for general members as it mainly covers people within the society who hold positions of authority and the safeguarding sub committee will normally review this. It was agreed to defer a discussion around this issue until the next meeting.

Action; David and Jim to discuss how to progress this and present at the next meeting

4. Executive Committee Vacancies and Structure.

There are two vacancies at present.

Walks Secretary - Jenny Cann has stepped into the role

Events Secretary - vacant. 2 individuals have expressed interest in vacancies but have not progressed this.

Clive has circulated a paper on the existing vacancies and the potential to develop and recruit to other roles. This might include work on developing the walks library with a few people taking on this role and a small team expanding our social media into other areas such as instagram. It would be positive to increase our membership of people from ethnic backgrounds and of younger persons. This may require an extra 4-5 people, not necessarily on the executive committee. This may need to be on hold as the current priority is to recruit to the existing vacancies. To increase the likelihood of recruiting to the vacant posts and to raise our profile a post can go on 'Walking the Beacons' group and contact made with PAVO.

Action; David to put a post on the 'Walking the Beacons' group, facebook and contact PAVO, concentrating on the communications position. Martin to contact the Park Authority to see if there are any suggestions from their publicity person.

5 Strategy and Action Plan- see Janet's report

Nothing new to report

6 Guided Walks Programme- see lau's report

6.1 Walking sub committee. Meeting held on 4th August. The booking system for walks has worked well and there is good support for continuing with the booking system. How this can be achieved is under consideration. There will need to be a mechanism for non members being able to book. The suggested maximum is 16 but walk leaders can show a little flexibility to decide on lower walk numbers Both the festival and the anniversary walk were a success. The next suggestion for the 30th anniversary is 30 days in September, with a walk every day of this month. Stuart has organised a walking holiday in Newquay, along the lines of the previous Wednesday wander holidays. The uptake has been good.

The previous publishing of a quarterly programme of walks in advance is a little difficult so a suggested rolling programme month on month may work better. It might be better if this were no longer printed as a programme. Jenny can consider this when she takes up the post. For people who do not use email, it would be suggested that they buddy with someone who can book for them.

6.2 Leader Support and Training. Some leaders still seem to be reluctant to sign the registration form. New walk leaders are coming on board. There are 2 induction courses in October with 13 people due to attend in total. There is also one 1st aid course with 13

due to attend. There will also be a HML training course in October and a night navigation course planned for November and a leaders day in December.

6.3 Walks library. The proposal is for the following; Details of a walk can be taken from the WiP and will allow the walk description, a route card and risk assessment to be put on the library as a self guided walk. This can include points of interest with a brief description using the original welsh place names. These will need to come with caveats including asking people to be clear that they are capable of completing the walk and navigating well enough.

Action; Clive to discuss this suggestion again with the walks sub committee to find out if someone might be interested in progressing this

7. Ongoing Business

7.1 Finance & Membership- See Ben's report.

There are 68 NHS members at this time.

Action, Clive to re advertise

7.2 Secretarial

Nothing new to report. David will contact the Bear to enquire about booking the meeting for 29th November.

7.3 Events - see Janet's report.

The programme continues.

7.4 The Beacon

Chris has a few items for the next edition but will welcome more. The inside cover needs updating.

Action; David to liaise with Chris to update the inside cover

7.5 Website

It has been suggested that the walks programme is to be taken off the website and presented as a separate item. Walks will be moved to the front of the drop down menu as this is often what people are looking for.

Action; David to organise this and add tramroads to the menu also

7.6 Beacons Way

In spite of promoting this to the members and walk leaders, there have been no expressions of interest in this work. We may need to approach walk leaders in the areas of the Beacons way to encourage them to help with the project.

Action; Sue, Clive and Iau to liaise

7.7 Planning and Development Control – see Liz’s report

7.7.1 Current Issues. There is a proposal for wind farms just outside the National Park area but they may be visible from within the park.

Action; Martin and Liz to discuss

7.8 Rights of Way – see Phil’s report

There has been another dog attack which resulted in a member in hospital for several hours. The dog belonged to a member of the public so little can be done.

Parts of the river Monnow show it to be in poor condition and this has come to the attention of the local warden, probably due to the Monnow Way.

The next Local Access Forum meeting is on 9th September.

7.9 Geopark Management Group

Nothing new to report.

8 Wider Engagement

8.1 BBPS/BBNPA

Martin and Jim met with the new chief executive Catherine Mealing Jones on 4th August. It was a positive meeting. Catherine seems to recognise the BBPS as one of the authorities key working partners. She provided an update on the restructuring exercise and stated that 2 new directors are to be advertised in early September - Natural Environment and Climate Change and also Planning and Place Change to address these agendas.

Jody Bond is head of communications and has agreed to a programme of quarterly meetings. Partnership working was discussed and there appears to be a willingness to regain good working partnership practises. The change programme is to be abandoned

8.1.1 Historic Environment Partnership

The minutes of the last core group meeting have been circulated.

Action; Jim and Martin to discuss this with regard to Dark Skies Status.

8.1.2 National Park Management Plan

There are no minutes of the first meeting as yet but Martin will circulate them when they become available.

8.2 Alliance for Welsh Designated Landscapes

There have been no new meetings.

Action; Ben to check that our annual contribution has been made.

8.3 CNP

There is a new CEO, Dr Rose O'Neill who comes from Natural England and had a role in Social and Behavioural Science. There will be a webinar on the Area Statements on the 7th September and it is hoped that Janet will attend. The CNP are reinstating the annual NPS conferences and this year it will be from the 12th - 14th October at the North York Moors. Usually the chair and one other attend but Martin is not available. Others may be interested in attending as it would be good to support it.

Action; Martin to send the link to the website for all to consider

8.4 BBPS/CPRW - see Jim's report

The river crisis is still of great concern and continues to be a major focus in spite of the fact that WelshWater topped the environmental performance table for water companies. Industrial Poultry units also continue to get a lot of focus.

The Slate landscapes of North West Wales have achieved World Heritage Site status

9 Projects/Initiatives

9.1 Dark Skies - see Jim's report

The BBC Sky at Night magazine picked up on the planned festival and featured it in the magazine.

The annual Dark Sky report is to go to the Chair of the BBNP.

9.2 Gunpowder Works - see Jim's report

The tree felling at Stove House and on the top ridge is work in progress. Signage in the area is a longer term project. There will be a push to ensure a commitment to long term environmental monitoring.

9.3 Tramroads - see Richard's report

At this time 566 records are in place, 126 of these are named. CPAT has provided useful involvement along with CADW and the archaeologist in the Park Authority. As this

represents a number of projects, a priority list will be required. The plan will be to pick a small number to begin with and pilot the process on these. After this, finding volunteers and training them up will be important.

CPAT has produced 2 reports on our behalf, 1- evaluation of the data currently found 2- the methodology for recruiting volunteers and ensuring their work is adequate for the purpose. Making a start on the Brinore, LLangattock and Brecon Forest tramroads seems logical. Brinore has a significant landslip but this is currently being further explored.

10 Communications -

Nothing new to report

11 Any Other Business

Friends of the South Downs had written to seek support to prevent the use of plastic tree guards.

Action; David to draft a letter of support and a letter to the NPA expressing our concern and asking for their actions in this area, suggesting guidelines to minimise the use of plastic tree guards and a mechanism for collecting them after their use.

David has suggested that Jenny Cann become a trustee. She is considering this.

Clive hoped that by leading walks with younger people we might gain a few members and possibly walk leaders. (Sorry Clive- who were you going to contact??)

12. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 18th October at 1.30pm via Zoom.