Minutes of the Brecon Beacons Park Society CIO held on 28th January 2025 in Cric and via zoom.

Attendees: Martin Buckle (Chair), Katherine Jordan, David Thomas, David Burden, Janet Callear, Elizabeth Gibbs, Iau Counsell, Sue Hoddell, Derek Thomas.

1. **Apologies.** Roy Manning, Kathryn Silk, Jim Wilson, Richard Chandler.
2. **Declaration of Interests.**
   There were none.
3. **Previous Minutes**

3.1 Martin drew attention to an inaccuracy in item 14.1. This should read 'Yesterday was the 75th anniversary of the National Parks and access to Countryside Act coming into force, which the CNP were celebrating'. With this correction the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2024 would be approved.

3.2 Matters arising

3.1 Katherine had contacted new members to find a new minutes secretary but had no success.

5.1 Sue had re-sent AGM agenda. Janet and David T. added that they were going to make a check list for the AGM. This would be added to the job description. David added that members needed to be notified of the date for the AGM which he would do if Sue sent him details. **Action Katherine to add it to March newsletter.**

Part A

4.1 Iau had liaised with Rebecca Ward about the role of walks librarian but due to her mother being ill she was not going to be able to do it. They would need to find someone else.

5. Members attended but not able to carry out test.
   Jim's action still outstanding.
6. Martin has arranged a meeting for Martin, Liz, David Davies and Neil Sumner.

7.1 Right to roam. Phil had a document to go out but as the committee did not approve it, he amended it so it could go out in the March newsletter. He has asked people to respond to him by 1st April so he will be able to report back at the April meeting of the exec.

12.1 The newsletter was recirculated, but it was not clear what had gone wrong the first time.

12.4 Jim had sent comments to Katherine on Dark Skies leaflet.

14.1 Katherine was not able to make this announcement due to the Christmas rush.

3.1 Minutes of the Walks Sub-committee 20th January 2025 The walks sub-committee has been having meetings in pubs which has not been satisfactory.

They would like to have a budget of £150 to pay for the hire of a room for meetings if they are unable to find one for free. David B. said that currently the sub-committee had a budget of £5000 and this could be included in that - the overall figure would not be a problem. They would need to indicate when the expenditure was taking place so that he could take it out of that section of the budget. When using Zoom, they found the time-restriction limiting. David T. to email all how to use the Society Zoom account which afforded free unlimited time (for Park Society business). The budget for room hire was approved. Derek added that he had a method for getting round the Zoom time restriction. He would email it to all. Iau reported that the walks library had been discussed; they have a price and are waiting for Janet to authorise it. The booking system needs a means for people to unbook themselves. **Action Janet will authorise the payment tonight** and Colin will receive the money tomorrow and will start work on it. Once done the 'Manage my booking' scheme will be launched.

Part A – Items for Discussion/Decision

4. **Exec. Vacancies.** Martin had advised at the last meeting that a new member had joined who had planning expertise. In the light of this Liz advised that she wished to step down from her planning role. Martin therefore asked if she would take on the role of minutes secretary, to which she agreed. Liz is not stepping down until the planned meeting in February has been held. Previously the need to have back-up for all roles had been discussed. Janet highlighted the need for support for Treasurer, Membership and possibly Events as David T. was helping with the IT for Events, the website and Zoom. Iau said that Linda Bowen had offered help and she had suggested her for the Library but that she might be back-up for Membership. David B. said backup for Treasurer would be more useful. Iau agreed to contact her and find out which role she would like and feel competent in helping. She would liaise with Janet as to what she would be asked to do. **Action Janet / Iau**

5. Communications - Katherine

5.1 Mail out to Members. Previously only three members could use mailer-lite. Derek pointed out that it had been agreed to upgrade the membership to have an unlimited number of user accounts. David T. thought that he had actioned this and would confirm by the end of the meeting and also show Katherine how to use it. **Action David T.**
Katherine also raised the production of the leaflets. 3 are ready to go but she needs to know how many to order. It was agreed that cost was not a limiting factor and Katherine should order the number needed. Roy has agreed to attend an online meeting of Brecon Beacons Tourism. Communications sub-committee have not had a meeting since the last Exec. Katherine will go to a drop-in session in Abergavenny to see Julie and she has asked her to promote the Taster Walks. **Action Katherine**
Martin drew attention to David T.'s email about the 'for your eyes only' section of the website and asked if any other documents or software should be kept in it. The details and password are in David T's email of 22nd Jan.

6. Alliance for Welsh Designated Landscapes

Martin and Janet attended meeting of the exec on 15th January. The Snowdonia Society put forward the proposal that the Alliance become a member of the Wales Environment Link: a network of environmental, countryside and heritage NGO's helping members engage with Welsh Government and Parliament to help them work together to develop effective environmental policy and practice. Martin and Janet felt that there was a resource issue for the Alliance and there was also the problem of one umbrella group becoming part of another umbrella group. Also, more needed to be known about what the WEL was doing as our logo or the Alliance logo would go on their website. WEL is mainly about biodiversity and although that is an issue for designated landscapes it is not the only one. The aims of the Alliance did not neccessarily accord with those of WEL. The meeting was not enthusiastic about joining. Eryri are now taking the turn of running the Alliance. The visitor levy was discussed and it was felt that the funding should be available to National Parks, not just Local Authorities which is the case at present. There was a discussion about the Right to Roam. There is some scepticism about the case for introducing the Right but NRW have an access forum that is looking at some enhancement of existing rights. The AGM in October is working on green financing, public and private.

7. Treasurer's Report

7.1 Budget 23/24

David B. will be sending round the figures at the end of January. Members of the exec. are asked to look at their individual budgets and come back to him if they are not sure to what the budget is allocated. The value of a couple of budgets is not clear. There is over £50k in the bank which is a large amount and he is investigating the possibility of a higher interest account as the current interest rate has dropped to 2.15%. He will contact Michael Davis to see if he is prepared to inspect and approve the accounts again. Last year's gift aid, and even this year's gift aid will go into this year's accounts because of the difficulty he had in obtaining them. He will present the accounts in a similar way to previous years. Martin would like the accounts that are presented to the AGM to be similar in branding to the Annual Report. The management accounts that David B presents to the Exec. will be more detailed and differently set out. He has moved the categories to fit with Janet's strategy plan. He will present them to Martin before getting them printed. David T. offered to help with the formatting. David B. feels that the expenditure needs to be itemised a little more.

8. Membership Report

David B. reported that there has been a surge in new members in January (35 new members from 25 households). Nearing 1000 again. He is concerned that there are still people under-paying due to old standing orders. He will send a further email or letter to them and it will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Regarding new members offering to help, he is planning to alter the welcome letter to point out that we are more than a walking group and do get involved in other areas. He will circulate a copy of the letter for comment. **Action David B**

He notifies the relevant lead if a specific area of interest is mentioned and records the interests on file so it can be accessed again. An offer of help from a new member, Rebecca Wildman, was discussed. She has a campsite on the Beacon's Way, west of Llanddeusant. It was suggested that Iau might contact her and a walk and talk might be arranged. **Action Iau**

9. Secretarial Issues

AGM arrangements are progressing. Nicola Davis and Roisin Normaly from the NPA, will give a talk on the Curlew Restoration Project. Would like reports in by the first week in March. **Action All**

Honeycomb Print Services Abergavenny do the printing. Future meetings are booked for 11th March, 22nd April and 2nd June, AGM on 28th June. Meetings to be booked every 6 weeks to the end of the year, but can be cancelled if not needed. Some may clash with bookings for Hearing Aids but then the Monday is booked instead. Ade would be able to come to any Monday meetings.

10. Ongoing Business

10.1 Walks Programme

Things progressing as normal though some walks had to be cancelled because of the storms. Some new leaders are doing a course in a few weeks' time and there is a First Aid course in March. The History walks are progressing and a press release has been put out about the Taster walks. The same taster walk is being held twice followed by an easy walk to the Chartist's Cave. Leaders have been asked to put on an easy walk every 2 weeks.

10.2 Events Programme

Report circulated. Next talk, 26th Feb, 'Swimming in the Usk' Angela Jones, but she has been difficult to contact. James Hawkins of the Wye and Usk Foundation was suggested as an alternative if there was a problem. Exec. Members need to help test the hybrid transmission of the talk on 26th. **Action All**

David T. was asked about putting the talk about Gemini? on the website. He can put it on the website in the News Letter so it can be accessed online. He will liaise with Katherine. **Action David T**

10.3 Rights of Way

Report had been circulated. Phil has put a link on the Newsletter to the RSPCA website which has a good item on how to deal with aggressive dogs.

10.4 Planning

Report had been circulated. Martin noted that most of the applications on the list had been unresolved for a long time.

10.4.1 Towy Usk Connection. Martin suggested that the Renewable energy group should keep an eye on this. **Action David T**

10.5 Geopark. Dilys reported that the consultants appointed by Neath Port Talbot Council had reported back positively about the Geopark extension and the management would now make a decision. However, there were 4 other local authorities to persuade.
10.6 Strategy and Action Plan. The Financial assessments have been updated with David T. and he will put them on the website. **Action David T**
10.7 Dark Skies. Jim to circulate a report when he has time.

11. Projects/Initiatives
11.1 Tramroads Roy had done a report for the Historic Environment Partnership which has been circulated. A part time archaeologist has been appointed for 2 years. The funding is in place. Roy has been asked to give a talk to the Brecknock Society. **Action David T.** will suggest to Ade to ask him to speak to BBPS.
11.2 Trig Points. Nothing to report.
11.3 Beacons Way. Another meeting with the Authority is due and Martin will raise it. A young woman recently walked the BW solo and posted an account on Facebook. Clive has copied it onto our Facebook. Sue to contact Beacons Tourism to see if they are interested but the young woman needs to be contacted to get her permission to put the account on our website and there needs to be a proviso included that land owner's permission is required for wild camping. **Action Sue**

12. Wider Engagement
12.1 BBPS/BBNPA relations. Next meeting on 14th February, much delayed. BBPS has completed most of our actions from last meeting but many NPA actions are outstanding. They have not yet committed resources to the new LDP.
12.1.1. BB Historic Environment Partnership. Met on 15th January. Now chaired by Anna Irwin of Cadw. It is possible that a Heritage Day this year may result from the expansion of an archaeology day to be organised by Heneb. CNP awards; Penpont won Young Change-maker of the year award.
12.2 CNP. Martin will be attending the CNP AGM tomorrow in London. Mary Creagh, Under Minister for Nature is one of the speakers and discussions will include wilder NPs and renewing the social contracts between NPs and the Nation.
12.3 CPRW/CMS Jim will send a note round. **Action Jim**

13. Any Other Business
None.

14. Date of next meeting – Tues March 11th at 2pm.