

**Minutes of the Footpaths & Allotments Committee Meeting****Held on 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 2011 at 7.30 p.m. in the Bush Room**

**Present:** - Cllrs. Hannah Richmond (Chairman), Kitty Davies, John Cutland, Mrs Erika Booth  
Mr. Bob Phillips (Clerk)  
Mr Peter Bird (Chairman SG PROW Liaison Committee & Thornbury Ramblers)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Terry Hunt who joined the meeting in its latter stages.

**2. Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuation procedures were noted

**3. Public Participation**

None

**4. Declaration of interests**

Mrs Erika Booth is an allotment holder and member of the Alveston Allotments Association.

**5. Minutes of the previous meeting**

5.1. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed by the chairman.

5.2. Matters arising  
None

5.3. Outstanding Actions

**5.3.1. (5/10/09) Clerk to purchase “no smoking signs” and arrange fitting to all Bus Shelters.**

*Action to Clerk*

Cllr Terry Hunt agreed to carry out the task after the bus shelters had been cleaned.  
Ongoing (5/9/11)

**5.3.2. FP101206-2 Clerk to investigate and report back any support available from SG, the PROW Liaison Group or other resources to progress the validation of outstanding footpath reports.**

*Action to Clerk*

The Clerk reported that the SG PROW Liaison Group chairman, Peter Bird (who is also a member of Thornbury Ramblers had been suggested as a likely source of some help in updating our footpaths reports. (7/3/11)  
Mr Peter Bird was attending the meeting. Action Closed (5/9/11)

**5.3.3. FP 110307-2 to arrange a meeting with Peter Bird and some of the footpaths committee to discuss some of our outstanding footpath issues.**

*Action to Clerk*

As a matter of some urgency, it was agreed that the Clerk should invite Peter Bird to the next meeting of this committee scheduled for September 5<sup>th</sup>. (6/6/11)  
Mr Peter Bird was attending the meeting. Action Closed (5/9/11)

**5.3.4. FP 110606-1 to arrange for Bus Shelters 1, 4, 5, 7 and 9 to be cleaned by local handyman.**

*Action to Clerk*

Ongoing (5/9/11)

5.3.5. **FP 110606-2 to distribute to committee a list of all Parish Bus Shelters.****Action to Clerk**

Completed, Action Closed (5/9/11)

5.3.6. **FP 110606-3 to obtain estimates for the refurbishment of Bus Shelter 2 at A38 Southbound o/s 70 Gloucester Rd. Rudgeway.****Action to Clerk**

The Clerk recommended that in view of the recent expenditure from Council funds for play space and the future expenditure at the allotments, it may be prudent to consider the availability of funds to carry out this task. No figures were available for this meeting – decision deferred to next F&GP committee (7/11/11).

5.3.7. **FP 110606-4 to investigate with the local resident the requirement and possible position of a new litter bin at Rudgeway.****Action to Clerk**

Ongoing 5/9/11.

5.3.8. **FP 110606-5 to distribute to all committee members a copy of both the Tenancy Agreement and Allotments Roles & Responsibilities drafted in February 2010.****Action to Clerk**

Documents distributed. Action closed (5/9/11)

5.3.9. **FP 110606-6 to investigate the blockage on footpath OAN 14 Old Glos Rd to A38 and report back.****Action to Cllr Hannah Richmond.**

HR had investigated the footpath and established that it was completely blocked and reported this to the Clerk. The Clerk would report the matter to the SG PROW team. (5/9/11)

5.3.10. **FP 110606-7 to investigate the broken stile on footpath OAN 6 Old Glos Rd and report back.****Action to Cllr Hannah Richmond.**

Ongoing (5/9/11)

5.3.11. **FP 110606-8 to collate all past information re. the Footpaths project and share with members of the committee.****Action to Clerk.**

Some of the information had been distributed but further distribution would be dependent upon discussions under item 9.

**6. Bus Shelters**

## 6.1. Report

The action previously agreed to employ a local handyman to wash the metal bus shelters has not yet been started. It is hoped to arrange the work in late September.

There are no reported problems with the two stone-built shelters.

Due to recent excessive expenditure in other areas, it was felt prudent to hold back on the annual refurbishment plan until later in the year.

**7. Street Scene**

## Additional Litter Bin at Rudgeway

After short discussion it was proposed that initially SG would be asked to site a litter bin near the bus stop opposite Rudgeway Park. The excessive litter generated up the A38 from the Silverhill lay-by could be a powerful argument. The Clerk would action.

**FP 110905-1 to request from SG that an additional litter bin is provided at Rudgeway. Action to Clerk**

## 8. Allotments

### 8.1. Plot Holder Tenancy Agreements & Rents

The Clerk reported that all plot holders had been sent agreements to sign and invoices for the rent owed.

To date, 16 of the 35 plot holders had returned the signed agreement and paid the rent due and 8 had been given permission to erect a shed after applying in writing.

### 8.2. Water Supply

The Clerk reported that the Council had been awarded a £2,600 grant from the Area Forum for which he received the Committees congratulations and thanks.

The committee agreed that we should now move ahead with the provision of the water supply and to recommend this to the full council.

**Resolved:** To recommend that the Council approves the commencement of the contract to provide the water supply to the allotments.

### 8.3. Allotment Opening Ceremony

An opening ceremony with a formal opportunity to thank Mrs Hawkins was planned as the final task in the Allotment project and the committee discussed how and when this should be held. It was agreed that providing the completion of the water supply was not delayed, the connection of water could be a good occasion to celebrate the allotments. The Clerk would determine the dates when the contractors could complete the work and advise the committee to then agree an appropriate date for the ceremony.

***FP 110905-21 to determine when the allotment water connection would be completed.***

***Action to Clerk***

## 9. Footpaths

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Peter Bird, the Chairman of the SG PROW Liaison Group & a member Thornbury Ramblers.

Peter Bird explained the purpose of the Liaison Group which, whilst not a statutory committee was a representative group who aimed to influence and assist the opportunities and management of all the public rights of way across South Glos. Membership includes representatives of walkers, runners, landowners, cyclists, horse riders, Parish & Town Councils and members of the SG PROW team. The remit was to promote the use of the PROW's, encourage good maintenance, promote access and ensure those who used the PROW's had a good experience.

With the power to harness the activities of all the interested parties, the liaison group should be able to influence and assist the work of the SG PROW team. In reality, the group had not been able to influence a great deal in the past few years although they were persevering and counted the occasional success.

Peter went on to explain that the SG PROW team was quite small, consisting a manager, three full time PROW officers, some clerical support and one full time ranger. This team were required to manage many hundreds of miles of paths, bridle ways, tracks and trails. Clearly their main focus was on those facilities most often used but he believed there was a lack of clarity of purpose, confusion in their use of the technological facilities and limited relationships with others who could help with their activities.

Peter was particularly concerned that the liaison group is not given enough input from the SG PROW group.

### 9.1. Footpaths Report

Before reporting on the footpath reports made since the last meeting, the Clerk explained the process the Parish Council operated for dealing with reports and the difficulties he had experienced in the past months.

When a report is received in the Parish office, it is first recorded on an in-house spreadsheet and the detailed location and type of report determined. On some occasions the Clerk will visit the site of the report to verify the detail and ensure the location is accurate.

The report is then emailed to the SG PROW team who will enter it on their CAMMS system. We assume some sort of prioritisation takes place and where possible, action is taken by the PROW team. Previously local walking groups and others including Parish and Town Councils were sometimes asked to help resolve problems but this no longer seem to be happening.

In the past Parish & Town Councils were sent a quarterly update of all those CAMMS reports that had been completed but this had not been received since 2010. Because of the focus on the allotments, the Clerk had been unable to chase up the outstanding reports and now felt that the whole process was in disarray.

- 9.1.1. OAN 6 in Old Gloucester Rd. Alveston - Stile into field broken. HR was still intending to examine this stile but had not yet done so.
- 9.1.2. OAN 14 from Old Gloucester Rd to A38 adjacent to entrance to the Ship Inn. - The path is blocked with no exit on to the A38. HR had confirmed that the path was totally blocked. The Clerk should report to SGPROW team.

***FP 110905-2 to report valid footpath reports to SG PROW team.***

***Action to Clerk***

- 9.1.3. Resolution of Footpath problems

Peter Bird commented that if there was an urgent footpath problem that was not being actioned, the Council could send the report to SG using the I-130 process where the District Council are obliged to clear the problem within 28 days.

JC suggested that we could use the I130 process more widely and at least get some of the outstanding issues in our Parish resolved. It was generally felt that if the I130 process was overused; as South Glos had limited resources the tool would become meaningless.

The Clerk pointed out that as many of the reports were now quite dated, we were in a position of not knowing what was still a problem and what wasn't. Reports of overgrown vegetation for instance, may well now be clear. What was required was a complete review of all previous reports and that would mean many of the parish footpaths would need to be walked.

The existence of the Alveston Footpaths Preservation Group was discussed and it was agreed that although our last contact with them was a considerable time ago with no follow up. The members of that group may well now not have a very good opinion of the Council and may not be willing for the group to be re-activated.

HR suggested that as the recently appointed chairman of the FP&A committee she could write to each member of the Preservation Group and explain that now the allotments project was near completion, the committee were re-focussing on footpaths and ask for their help. This suggestion was unanimously agreed.

***FP 110905-3 to draft a letter to be sent to each past member of the Preservation Group for Cllr Hannah Richmond to send.***

***Action to Clerk***

In response to a suggestion that volunteers could be enlisted to help resolve some of the problems, Peter Bird explained that the problem we had just been discussing was happening all over South Glos and although there were a number of volunteer groups willing to help clear paths, erect signs and carry out other work, there were issues with Health & Safety. Apparently, if volunteers are working on a job on behalf of South Glos, all H&S rules apply and a qualified first aider must be part of the team and risk assessments must be carried out.

Members of Severnside Walkers and Thornbury Ramblers had previously enlisted working parties and it was hoped that with some training in first aid and risk assessment, they could once again be operating. But all their activities would be directed by the SG PROW team and so it was essential that all footpath problems in the Parish were ratified and re-reported to South Glos.

HR summarised the way forward with the following actions:

- The committee to seek local volunteers to check the existing reports and walk as many local routes as possible.
- Clerk & HR to write to ex-members of the Footpaths Preservation Group.
- Article in Helmet seeking volunteers.
- Clerk to attempt to obtain list of any reports recently actioned by South Glos.
- Any new or re-established footpath problems to be processed without delay and introduce a diarised check of the progress reports with South Glos.
- Consider holding a "special" footpaths meeting for the Parish.

## 9.2. Footpaths Walks Revision Project

*The project, first established in early 2009 was explained as follows:*

*The two existing Yellow and Green Parish Walk Books were published at least 20 years ago and it had been proposed that a project would be run to completely revise them. Key points about the project were agreed at that time as:*

- *One not two books.*
- *If possible books should be in colour.*
- *Work through the walks in a logical order.*
- *The books to be published by the Council and the project should remain its responsibility and be managed by them.*
- *The information should be gathered and collated within a defined timescale.*
- *The "Warden" of each walk should augment and revise the description with as much detail as possible including some history or "interesting fact" where appropriate.*
- *South Glos Council should be approached for any help they could give with mapping and possible publication.*
- *£300 had been set aside to help pay for this project.*
- *As an aid to promoting the books, members of the Footpaths Preservation Group had agreed to organise "Parish Walks."*

*The named "warden" of each walk was confirmed and it was agreed that the Parish Council would manage the Project and through the Clerk, issue a requirement to each "warden" with as much detail as possible. "Wardens" would be encouraged to complete their revision as soon as they could. (2 Feb 2009)*

*Additionally it had been agreed that the walks would also be published on the Web site and this would be the main medium in the future.*

*The current position was that several, but not all walks had been "walked" and revisions sent to the Clerk. The £300 had been carried forward but no further action had been taken.*

Peter Bird explained that because of budget constraints and the changing technologies, SG Council had taken the decision not to publish any further hard-copy walk books. All publications would now be made on a Web Site to be established. This would be called "Outdoor West." This was a collaboration between SG Council, Bristol City and NE Somerset Councils (the old Avon) and would serve walkers, runners, riders and cyclists, in fact anyone wanting to get outdoors. This may be a medium the Parish Council could consider.

The Clerk pointed out that we should also establish a walking presence on our own Web site.

It was generally agreed to initially make contact with the Footpaths Preservation Group and others in the Parish and seek to re-launch the project alongside the review of the footpath reports.

Peter Bird was thanked for joining the meeting and hope was expressed that the Parish Council was able to have closer links with both the Liaison Group and Thornbury Ramblers in the future.

## 10. Correspondence

None.

## 11. Any other business

- 11.1. Additional lighting on Footpath across Alveston Down. – This issue raised at the Parish Council meeting in May has been discussed with the South Glos department responsible for street lighting. The current budget is very tight and providing additional lighting in existing pathways has to be judged largely by demand. The Council referred back to the original request to try to justify the need?

JC had been actioned to consult with local residents about the need for additional street lighting on Alveston Down. The action would now be dealt with in this committee.

JC suggested that it would be extremely difficult to canvass all the local residents in the streets adjoining the footpath and it was agreed that, in the first instance an article should be placed in the next issue of Helmet.

***FP 110905-4 to seek opinion about the provision of additional street lighting on Alveston Down in the next Helmet article.*** ***Action to Clerk***

- 11.2. Seat on Alveston Down - The request for a public seat to be installed on Alveston Down has been rejected by SG Council on Budgetary grounds. The matter was referred back to the Footpaths & Allotments Committee.

This item was discussed with no firm conclusion and would be referred to the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.