



Coleford Welcomes Walkers
Minutes
12th May 2022
Coleford Town Council Chambers
18:30 – 20:30

Chair: Debbie Sturgess **Note taker:** Chair

Attendees: Steering Committee: Debbie Sturgess (Chair), Stuart Cox, Jane Baird, Simon Jones
Volunteers: Martin Green
Members of the Public: One member of the public was present

Apologies: Kathy and Geoff Sandles (Volunteers) and one member of the public

1. To confirm the minutes of the last meeting, held on 21st March 2022

Resolution:

The minutes of the last minute were unanimously accepted as being a true record of the meeting held on 21st March 2022

2. CWW committee membership - To co-op the position of Treasurer

As per our Constitution the meeting could not proceed unless the quorum of three officer roles was fulfilled. The Chair currently covers the role of Chair and Secretary; therefore, a new Treasurer was required as the candidate originally earmarked to take over the role had withdrawn.

Resolution:

Simon Jones volunteered to hold the position. Accepted unanimously. All accounting records to be passed to Simon Jones.

3. Actions from the last meeting

i) CWW Action Plan

The Chair advised that this was underway and would be made available prior to the next meeting.

ii) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) adherence

The proposed policy document circulated prior to the meeting had been viewed by the committee members prior to the meeting.

Resolution:

It was unanimously agreed to accept the proposal.

iii) Website revamp

The revamped website had been well received for its simplicity and user friendliness. Jane Baird, Tourist Information Volunteer confirmed that the TIC was actively using the site when visitors asked about walking in the area, in particular the document detailing walks and bus routes. The TIC had ensured that the referenced books highlighted in the document were available for purchase. This was met with much enthusiasm. It was agreed that over time the website would evolve. The work undertaken by Debbie

Jones and the Chair was again acknowledged. Updates to the site would continue to be passed via the Chair to Debbie Jones.

Resolution:

When CWW was financially able, it was unanimously agreed that CWW would financially contribute to the time taken in updating the website. The Chair to be added to the Facebook Admin Group, with Geoff Sandles being removed. To post to our social media accounts on a regular basis to generate traction with the public and raise CWW's profile.

iv) Partnerships with other organisations / businesses

The Chair ran through the organisations that had previously been highlighted as being a partner / business opportunity, advising that the uptake rate for advertising on our website had been very successful with all but two businesses currently asked sighting the economic decline as a reason not to advertise.

It was noted that the Forest of Dean and Wye Tourist Board had agreed to create a page for CWW and were promoting Walkers are Welcome on the Coleford Home page. Gloucester County Council Highways had confirmed the utilization of their logo and hyperlink on the CWW website.

Resolution:

The advertising flyer was unanimously agreed upon with more businesses in and around Coleford being approached.

v) Coleford Area Walking Festival (CAWF)

A discussion took place with Stuart Cox as one of the main organisers of CAWF on the relationship between CWW and CAWF as the Chair sited that despite emailing CAWF since March 2022 no communication had been established to move the relationship forward. Stuart Cox sternly confirmed to the committee that CAWF would remain a separate body and that there was no intention of amalgamating the two. It was highlighted to the meeting that it was normal for the Steering Group in a WaW Town to put on a Walking Festival as it was potentially a way to generate an income as well as raising the profile of the Town. Stuart Cox confirmed that CAWF had yet to make a profit and currently only ran as it was funded by grants from Coleford Town Council, The Coleford Area Partnership with income from the chargeable walks put on.

Resolution:

It was agreed to park this item for the time being.

vi) PROW and walking routes in and around Coleford

- a) **PROW** – all of the PROW issues noted during the audit had now been logged with GCCHW. The PROW officer had confirmed that Coleford and Staunton were to share a £5K grant from the Build Back Better Grant Scheme to improve the PROW. This was met with much enthusiasm. The Chair and the PROW officer are meeting once a month to progress works.
- b) **Buchanan Park** – The all-weather PROW maps were to be sited on the notice board, having received permission from the Buchanan Trust. It was noted that the Town Councils site map of Coleford would be a good addition; permission from the Town Council to be sought to use the map.
- c) **Milkwall to Coleford Cycle Track** – The audit carried out by CWW was with the District Council waiting upon a response.

Communications with the District Council were being met with a positive way in our endeavors to make Coleford Welcoming to visitors. The Car Parking Bays are currently being cleared of vegetation, albeit slowly. A contract has been agreed for the signs in the carpark to be cleaned and we are to be kept in the "loop" with regards to the district wide project currently in play to review all public conveniences. The latter being noted as needing urgent attention.

Stuart Cox highlighted the issue of the pavement and access around Lidl's it was agreed that we would contact them to highlight our concerns about the rubbish and graffiti, with the volunteers potentially doing a litter pick here.

vii) WaW – Wall Hanging Panel

Jane Baird demonstrated the makeup of the proposed CWW wall hanging panel. A discussion took place around the use of the wild boar to the sheep image. Jane had included an image to depict the mining history.

Resolved:

It was agreed that the images of the Clock Tower, Wild Boar, Peregrine Falcon and mining history would be placed upon the background fabric of trees, with embroidery work being included too. Many thanks to Jane for her work on progressing this project.

It was noted at this point that the Waw Bunting was being displayed at The Dog House and Bicky's with the WaW Banner having prime position on the railings by the District Council office. It was agreed to obtain a quotation to have our own Banner and Bunting and to look at designing our own CWW logo. The Chair to liaise with the Town Clerk regarding the cost of the banners on the lamp posts on the main thoroughfares into Town that had previously been used to promote the area. Plus find out how much WaW signage would cost to be placed on the Welcome to Coleford road signs, which it is believed there are 6.

Simon Jones left the meeting due to a prior engagement.

4. Treasure Report

- i) Update on finances – in lieu of a Treasure the Chair updated the committee on the finances.
- ii) Grant applications – Build Back Better Application – the Chair confirmed that in principle our grant application of £1,200.00 had been approved. This was met with much jubilation!

5. PR & Marketing Program

The Chair advised that an interview with Dean Radio was due to take place within the next two weeks. Stuart Cox advised that the local market had a provision to provide a stall for a local group and that we could look to utilize this facility in the future.

Resolution:

To actively promote CWW through its social media platforms. To contact Gloucester Radio, the local press and the Hub to promote CWW. To look at having CWW Way Markers or discs, the Chair to liaise with the PROW officer.

6. Walking routes / guides

The draft copy of walking route 1 was well received, Jane Baird offered to walk the route to check the detail. Other popular walks were discussed with Jane offering to write up the route from Bracelands into Town. Martin Green referenced that you used to be able to access the cycle track from Ellwood Football ground. Providing walking routes from the various campsites / holiday sites into town was mooted and to be investigated with Greenacres campsite a prime example.

It was noted from talking to the TIC and local holiday locations that visitors preferred to have a written routes to follow rather than just wander in the woods or footpaths.

The balance between providing historical information & directions was also discussed.

Resolution:

To post to social media asking local residents to write up their favorite walks in and around Coleford, including snippets of information / unknown facts with photographs. To gradually build up a walking bank of routes on our website free of charge for people to download or to use on their digital devices. It was agreed to map the routes on the Ordinance survey app linking the digital route to the paper route name/number. Stuart Cox offered to donate a couple of the walking routes he has written.

7. Any other business – to be advised in advance

No other business was raised.

8. To agree the date of the next meeting

As a substantial amount of work had been achieved it was felt that the group could now tick over until the end of the summer as people were away on holiday and had other commitments. The Chair to communicate any relevant information as it arises by email, calling a meeting earlier if required. The next meeting was planned for the 1st September 2022.