



Coleford Welcomes Walkers Steering Group

Minutes

25th July 2023

Coleford Fire Station

18:30 – 20:00

Attendees: Debbie Sturgess (Chair), Libby Sharpe (Treasurer), Jack Sturgess (Secretary), Eleanor Jones, Chris Sullivan, Matt Beard, Melanie Getgood, Nick Penny, Paula Massey, Shaun Freeman

Apologies: Andrew Embling

1. To confirm the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes concerning the meeting held on the 27th of April 2023 were agreed to be an accurate portrayal.

2. Matters arising from the previous minutes

The chair gave an update on the matters detailed in the previous minutes.

i) Partnerships with other organisations / businesses

A) Buchanan Park – Direction sign to town

The Chair was delighted to inform the group that the PRoW officer had purchased 5 brown directional signs to town from the local highways fund. It was noted that three of these signs would be installed at Buchanan Park with the remaining two to be positioned at other suitable areas once identified.

ii) PR & Marketing

A) Quiz Trail

The quiz trail remains a work in progress due to limited volunteer capacity. Nick Penny advised that a walk was available from the Tourist Information Centre which could possibly be utilised.

iii) The viability of CWW going forwards

The chair noted the conversation that took place at the last meeting on this matter and reminded the group of the continued need for active Steering Group members moving forward. This would allow the group to grow and ensure the accreditation could be maintained in the future.

iv) The writing up of local walks

The Chair noted that three additional walks were nearing completion and that the history society had offered their support in incorporating historical information into them. This was positively received, and the Chair expressed her gratitude.

v) Local photographers / gallery section for CWW website

The chair showcased the photos which had been uploaded to date and encouraged members to send in photos and encourage members of the public to do as well.

3. To confirm proposed amendments to the Constitution

The chair proposed the amendment to the Steering Group for consideration. However, it was noted that any amendment of the constitution required 14 days notice and as such a vote could not take place on the amendment at this meeting. As this was the last meeting before the AGM (with any amendments requiring approval at a previous meeting), it was

agreed that a special virtual meeting would take place as a venue to discuss this agenda item further. The date for this meeting is TBC.

4. To confirm the appointment of new Steering Group Members

Shaun Freeman (as a representative of Coleford Grows), Nick Penny, Matt Beard, and Melanie Getgood (as representatives of CTC), Chris Sullivan (as a representative of the Forest of Dean Local History Society) and Andrew Embling (as a representative of Wilde Earth Journeys) were welcomed onto the Steering Group. The collective experience of the group will aid to progress the aims of CWW forward.

5. Webmaster and website updates

The Chair updated the group on the proposed additions and removals to the CWW website.

6. Walk leaders

The chair restated the need for more walk leaders to increase the number of walks delivered by CWW. The group was asked to refer anyone who would be interested or capable of leading walks to CWW.

7. Angus Buchannan centenary event (12th August)

A discussion took place regarding the Angus Buchannan Centenary event and Coleford Welcomes Walkers involvement. It was suggested that CWW could hold a stand at the event, which was positively received by the group. A discussion also took place regarding the placement of the Angus Buchannan walk leaflet in the Tourist Information Centre and other local businesses in Town, which was agreed and would be done following the Centenary's conclusion. The leaflet was also displayed to the group in its entirety to positive feedback.

8. Finance

I) Income and expenditure

The treasurer delivered a financial report on the group's income and expenditure. During this time, it was noted that Coleford Welcomes Walkers had found a suitable auditor for its finances when this was required. During this time, a brief discussion took place regarding the classification of the groups structure and whether it may wish to reclassify itself as something like a CIC. The Chair noted this was a complicated matter which has seen limited discussion and one to explore later down the line as CWW grows.

II) Update on banking and PayPal accounts

The treasurer and chair informed the group that a PayPal account had been created in order to increase security in situations where online payments were necessary. Clarification as to how online payments would function with PayPal were sought and the measure was positively received. It was also suggested that the group could look to use PayPal as a vessel for online donations, and that the website could perhaps include a button to donate to CWW. The chair noted these suggestions.

III) Update on grants and funding

The Treasurer and Chair summarised to the group the grants for which CWW had applied, including the items for which they would be / were being used and the principal aims of each grant.

A) Forest of Dean Community Grants

The Forest of Dean Community Grant Scheme aims to aid groups in the community with their projects. CWW applied to this grant to purchase a selection of GOPRO camera equipment. This will enable the group to capture walks virtually around Coleford, highlighting the PRoW and simulating the experience of walking to demographics who would normally be unable to do so. This could include memory cafes, those with dementia nursing and care homes – although it is noted that having virtual walks like this opens up new opportunities for working with groups and has a multitude of further applications. This will also allow us to raise the profile of Coleford as we will upload these videos social media websites such as YouTube.

B) Coleford Town Council Grant

The Coleford Town Council provided CWW with a grant to purchase a variety of marketing material to raise the profile of the town. CWW used this grant to purchase buttons, thunder banners and stickers for PRoW way markers. The thunder banners were showcased to the Steering Group to positive feedback. It was suggested that a term such as 'industrialist' be added to thunder banners to highlight the heritage of the Mushet family in Coleford. It was noted that the Chair had received the buttons from the Coleford Town Council grant and that these could be stuck onto the way marker posts.

C) Safer Streets Fund

The Safer Streets Fund aims to make public spaces safer for all, focussing specifically upon creating safe spaces for women and young girls. CWW applied to this with the aim of enhancing the earlier project undertaken in the big help out through defensive planting along the Coleford end of the cycle track and an extension to the existing fencing. It was hoped that this work would prevent anti-social behaviour on this section of the cycle track and make it safer for the public to use. CWW was awarded the funds to carry out this project and following a site visit was given further funding to install additional fencing. It is also hoped that work to clear some of the canopy separating the adjacent path from the view of the main road could be stripped back to provide clearer lines of sight. This would make the Coleford end of the cycle track much safer and more welcoming to people.

A wider discussion took place regarding the defensive planting to be used in the Safer Streets Fund, where several suggestions were made by members of suitable planting in addition to those already identified. This was noted by the Chair. It was also noted that in being awarded the funding from the Safer Streets Fund, CWW raised the idea of further lighting being added to the Milkwall-Coleford cycle track. This has prompted a discussion with the council and relevant parties about the possibility of this action being carried out. It was noted that, while involved in the initial conversation regarding the lighting, CWW would not manage this project.

D) Movement for Good

CWW applied for a Movement for Good grant of £1000, made available by the benefact group.

IV) Update and feedback on yearly web subscriptions

Eleanor delivered an update on the current progress of web subscriptions. It was noted that excellent progress had been made for new subscriptions and renewals and that a group of businesses had been identified by Eleanor as her next priority.

Nick Penny left at this point in the meeting due to a prior commitment.

9. Any other business – to be advised in advance

I) Considerations for AGM this year

The Chair informed the group that consideration had been given to holding a public event for the CWW AGM, this would be in the hope to bring in interest from members of the public. The idea was positively received and agreed to be pursued further with the fire station.

II) Walkers Are Welcome AGT

The Chair advised the Steering Group that the Walkers Are Welcome annual get together would be taking place on the weekend of the 3rd of November at Whitchurch Shropshire. The Chair expressed a desire to see Coleford Welcomes Walkers suitably involved at this event and for those interested to volunteer. The Chair also passed on that the costs for this event would be made available soon and that CWW could explore the possibility of a grant covering the cost of the trip.

III) Current method of updating group between meetings

A member of the Steering group pointed out a need to inform the group of the total consensus of the group in decisions made via email in-between meetings. While group members were given a chance to raise their views, the Steering Group was not informed as to the overall result. This was noted by the chair and was an action agreed to be carried out in the future.

IV) CWW welcome pack

The Steering Group Welcome Pack was positively received by new Steering Group members. An issue was noted wherein the link to the group's constitution was not functional, which was noted and would be changed to the correct link.

10. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on the 30th of November

END