

## MOURNE RAMBLING GROUP COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Time and Venue : 7.30pm at Fionnuala's apartment – 12 Cherrytree Walk, Belfast, BT5 6PG

Present : George Acheson, Fionnuala Carragher, Alex Curry, Laura Fawcett, Raymond Gray, Maggie Pridgen, Trevor Russell and Cecilia Sochor.

Fionnuala agreed to act as Chairperson. Those present also agreed that due to the extreme weather the meeting should finish at 9.30pm to allow people to get home safely.

1. **Apologies** : Peter Allister, Gary Browne, Irene Cauley, Harry Goodman and Vincent Trainor.
2. **Minutes of previous meeting** : agreed.
3. **Matters arising** : Stile – MHT are aware that our interest continues – no feed back to date  
Archive materials – being continued by Harry and Vincent  
Mourne Heritage Trust – Maggie is now the MRG representative  
MRG membership tag for rucksack – complete and issued  
Christmas Dinner – those present agreed that one Christmas Dinner for all would be preferable (ACTION – decide best way forward at next committee meeting)  
Less strenuous walks – Trevor reported that 6/7 people had expressed an interest. He suggested planning one walk – perhaps May – and see how things go (ACTION – Trevor to organise)
4. **Correspondence** : UFRC receipt – email forwarded to Gary  
Mourne Mountain Rescue Team – the team has been contacted and they are to get back to us if a meeting is possible  
Walking Events in Down District in 2014  
Praxis – Climb the highest Mountain in the UK
5. **Finance Matters** – Gary had sent an email stating that an up to date finance and membership report would be available for circulation soon
6. **Documents** – those present agreed that this item of business would be considered after the other agenda items were dealt with. In the end we were not able to consider the suggested updates/revisions in detail. Main points considered – inclusion of emergency contact numbers; a redesigned application form to be completed annually by each member – referring to risk and signed; putting more onus on each member to complete a personal tag, attaching this to the inside of the lid of their rucksack and informing the leader quietly of any relevant medical condition before a walk. Revisions of Guidelines for Leaders, Advice for walkers and Action in an Emergency (injury/illness) had been received. Thanks to everyone

involved (ACTION – these and other reviews/updates to be considered in depth at the next Committee Meeting with a view to making them operational as soon as possible; consider putting together a pack for all leaders and an equivalent pack for members)

7. **Adverse weather arrangements** – Trevor mentioned the actions taken before a recent walk which was due to start at Spelga Dam car park. Leaders had kept a close eye on the weather forecasts, had consulted and considered the extreme weather predicted, decided on a change of venue and a joint lower level walk. This information was then emailed to members on the day before the walk. These arrangements appeared to work well (ACTION – reaffirm these procedures so that all leaders are aware of them; new leaders should feel free to contact more experienced leaders should they require advice; inform membership of these arrangements).

Following up a safety/injury related matter – Harry had sent in a note outlining how a leader (Alan Parkinson) had dealt with a matter at a recent walk. Alan had followed up by making a note on his route card and informing the Chairman of the incidents. He had also made follow up calls of concern to the two people involved. This is excellent practice (ACTION – leaders to be asked to keep records for at least two years; reaffirm our insurance position)

8. **Membership issues** : 8 enquiries from possible new members this year. Positive feedback from new walkers out on the hills with us (ACTION – leaders need to keep an sensitive watchful eye on new walkers; new walkers need to be aware of their limitations)
9. **Forthcoming events** – Annual Slide Show 23<sup>rd</sup> February and Away Week End 2 -5<sup>th</sup> May ( ACTION – Vincent to email out information to members and include articles in the next Newsletter if possible)
10. **Training** – Laura had been in contact with Loretto and George. She outlined suggestions for a navigation/map reading course about April/May time starting at Meelmore Lodge and using some of our present leaders as instructors. All present agreed this was excellent (ACTION – Laura to work closely with Loretto and George; make appropriate arrangements and inform our members of the course; Maggie to consider organising a “casualty” event after one or more walk))
11. **UFRC update** : George mentioned two courses (mountain navigation and group management) which were being organised with Tollymore NOC. Alex will hopefully liaise with the UFRC to help if possible (ACTION – George to keep the committee informed)
12. **Mourne Heritage Matters** – nothing to report
13. **Web site matters** – Irene had sent in a report regarding updates and Useful Links – checking Magnetic Variation (ACTION – Irene’s reports should be included in our next Newsletter)

14. **Newsletter** – Vincent has asked that items for our next Newsletter be sent to him by the middle of next week. These include – What is too windy?/George; Web Report and Magnetic Variation/Irene; Slide Show and Away Weekend/Harry; Navigation Course/Laura; Personal Tag Template and a note that this should be completed and attached/hopefully Vincent; ICE app/Maggie (ACTION – Vincent to gather items and organise)
15. **AOB** – Raymond referred to matters connected with the environment eg collapses of walls and eroded paths – and our possible response. (ACTION – Raymond to keep an eye out when walking – any concerns/relevant issues should be brought to the committee members for their consideration and follow up if necessary)
16. **Agree date, time and venue of next meeting** (ACTION – Harry to consider this and arrange as necessary)

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Fionnuala was thanked for her hospitality.