

Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting

Dorset Area of the Ramblers' Association

Held on 21st November 2015 at the D'Urberville Centre, Wool

1 Introduction

The meeting was hosted by East Dorset Group and was opened by the Area President Laurie Fairhurst. He welcomed the members present and the guest speaker Des Garrahan, Chair of The Board of Trustees

2 Present

There were 23 persons present.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Keith Seymour, Graham and Madeleine Hemsley, Sue Blake, Kate Gocher and Jan Wardell

4 Minutes of the 40th AGM

These had been circulated to all present at the start of the meeting. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Mike Heckford and seconded by Peter Evans They were accepted as a true record of the meeting with no objections and were duly signed by the Chairman.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising

6 Annual Report and Statement of Accounts

Laurie Fairhurst introduced the 41st Annual Report for the Ramblers Association Dorset Area for 2014/15

The Secretary referred to the Area Council changes and thanked Keith Seymour for his period as Chairman and Cheryl Whittle for her work as Publicity Officer. Also the changes in website management over the last year.

He also summarised the changes in membership and the reasons for non renewal as advised by Central Office.

Comments and Matters Arising

There was an extended discussion in relation to the membership levels and the reasons for failure to renew.

Bruce Marriott thanked the Chairman and Secretary for their efforts over the past year in producing a new and welcoming website layout

Income and Expenditure Accounts

Mike thanked the Group Treasurers for submitting their budgets and annual reports on time and the independent examiner Martin Ford-Horne.

He also thanked Rosemary Bramah and Susan Blake for their continued support in relation to the Jubilee Trail.

The budgets for next year have already been approved by Central Office

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Bruce Marriott and seconded by Cheryl Whittle. They were approved with no objections.

7 Election of Members and Officers

In accordance with the Constitution all posts are open to nomination at the Annual General Meeting and as no valid nominations had been received in advance the following persons were proposed and seconded from the floor.

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Chairman	No nomination		
Secretary	Jim Scott	Peter Evans	Margaret Kettlewell

Treasurer	Mike Heckford	Bruce Marriott	Rosemary Bramah
Area Footpath Secretary	Jan Wardell	Brian Panton	Rosemary Bramah
Newsletter Editor	Douglas Pigg	Maureen Panton	Mike Heckford
Publicity Officer	No nomination		
Countryside Secretary	No nomination		
Coastal Access Officer	Brian Panton	Bruce Marriott	Peter Evans
Web Master	Derek Watkinson	Mike Heckford	Bruce Marriott
Individual Member	No nominations for the three available places		

As there were no contested positions the above were duly elected

8 **Representative of Affiliated Clubs**

Ian MacKenzie a member of the Swanage Walking Group volunteered and in the absence of any other nominations was duly appointed

9 **Area Delegate for General Council 2016**

Jan Wardell was proposed by Mike Heckford and seconded by Rosemary Bramah

The secretary explained that the second representative would be nominated by the Group hosting the 2016 Area AGM which will be the North Dorset Group

The Treasurer advised that there were facilities for members to attend as guests and anyone interested should contact the Secretary. It will take place at the University of York on the weekend of 2nd/3rd April 2016.

10 **Appointments**

Martin Forde-Horne has agreed to continue as Independent Examiner and as there were no objections or alternative proposals he was appointed.

Laurie Fairhurst agreed to continue as President and this was agreed unanimously

11 **Comments**

AGM Turnout

There was an extended discussion as to the possible reasons for the very low turnout at the Area AGM as compared to the Group AGM's and possible ways to improve it.

The recommendations were

An article in the next edition of Dorset Footnotes explaining the problem and asking for suggestions

Area Council to consider different formats and timing including whether a full day (morning walk followed by AGM) on a Saturday is a disincentive.

It was noted, by a show of hands, that approximately half those attending were from the hosting group

Ramblers Image

There was a short discussion as to whether the image of a "rambler" is an incentive or disincentive to join the Ramblers and whether the historic name is a net positive or negative for recruitment.

Path Clearing

It was noted that the work of path clearing in Dorset has been hampered by the frequent changes in the frequent changes in the Rights of Way support staff and systems at Dorset County Council

12 **Talk by Des Garrahan, Chair of The Board of Trustees**

Des opened by thanking Cynthia for the morning walk

In relation to the turnout at the AGM he made the following comments

He has attended about 80 Area and Group AGM's and likes attending them because it allows him to listen to the ordinary members.

Some Areas don't have a walk before the meeting

He noted that the turnout was very high at the Surrey Area (120) and Croydon Group (150) AGM's and that this was possibly due to them providing free food beforehand

He has only attended two AGM's where there was a contested election for a post and at least one of those was for the General Council Representative.
He noted that in general there was a higher proportion of ladies on Group Committees than on Area Council
He gave a brief summary of the aims of the Governance Review

13 Comments

As Des's talk took up all available time there was no time for questions or comments however he invited questions and comment by email.

Note – to keep a degree of control can any comments or questions be relayed via the Secretary

14 Votes of thanks

The President thanked Des for his talk and for attending as guest speaker

Signed Date.....