

# Minutes of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting

## Dorset Area of the Ramblers' Association

Held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at the Broadmayne Village Hall

### 1 Introduction

The meeting was hosted by South Dorset Group and was opened by the Area President Laurie Fairhurst. He welcomed the members present, the guest speaker Alistair Chisholm (in his absence) and Ed Wilson, Ramblers Central Office.

### 2 Present

There were 15 persons present.

### 3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jim Scott, Graham and Madeleine Hemsley, Ian Mackenzie, Margaret Kettlewell, Colin Richardson, Pat White, Steve Ryder, Mike Heckford, Mike Fowler and Sheila Bulley.

### 4 Minutes of the 42<sup>nd</sup> AGM

These had been circulated to all present at the start of the meeting. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Rob White 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 43rd Annual Report for the Ramblers Association Dorset Area for 2016/17.

In the absence of the Secretary, the Chairman gave a brief summary of the report and asked if there were any comments or matters arising, which there were none.

#### Income and Expenditure Accounts

In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chairman read out a report from him which had been received by hand, prior to the start of the meeting. In this, Mike stated that the Area's finances are in a healthy state, he thanked the Group Treasurers for submitting their budgets and annual reports on time, particularly as there were three new Treasurers this year. Special thanks went to the independent examiner Martin Ford-Horne, who has been our auditor for some 17 years. The work of the Treasurers seems to be more complicated each year, due to additional details requested by Central Office.

The Treasurer made particular mention of the healthy state of the Area finances; a low budget had been set for 2016/17, despite which, it had not all been spent, resulting in Area reserves exceeding 100%, the highest acceptable level set by Central Office. This had resulted in a reduction of the requested budget of £6,840 to £4,237.26. This could be to do with taking over as Treasurer for Wessex Wanderers. Mike has appealed against the reduction, but after three weeks has heard nothing.

There were no questions arising.

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

#### Proposed Dorset National Park

Doug Pigg gave a brief background and update to the proposed Dorset National Park. It was currently the only National Park being considered by Natural England, and interestingly could be the only onshore and offshore. It will be 5-6 years before anything happens. A study has been commissioned from BU. Janet Davis asked if it also included East Devon? Although it had originally been intended, due to complications, Dorset were

proceeding alone. Maureen Panton queried Doug when he stated that visitors to the west by-passed Dorset – saying that this was probably because there was no motorway in Dorset, and was that the intention? No – the rail link is excellent, and this is the intended link. Visitors will hopefully stay longer.

## 7 Election of Members and Officers

In accordance with the Constitution all posts are open to nomination at the Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman advised that the process would be divided: those on Area Council, and those not required to be. The following had advised their willingness to continue in office, and for which there were no other nominations.

a) Position	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded
Treasurer	Mike Heckford	Bruce Marriott	Phil Robinson
Area Footpath Secretary	Jan Wardell	Brian Panton	Kate Gocher
Independent Member	Kate Gocher	Rob White	Peter Evans

the above were all elected unanimously.

There were no nominations or volunteers for the following:

Chairman, Secretary, Publicity Officer, Individual Members (3), and Affiliated Clubs Representative, so these positions remain unfilled.

b) Newsletter Editor	Douglas Pigg	Phil Robinson	Kate Gocher
Coastal Access Officer	Brian Panton	Kate Gocher	Peter Evans
Membership Secretary	Jim Scott	Bruce Marriott	Brian Panton

The above were all elected unanimously.

There were no nominations or volunteers for the Countryside Secretary or Publicity Officer and in the absence of notification from Derek Watkinson (webmaster) that he did not wish to stand, he was elected as webmaster.

## 8 Area Delegate for General Council 2018

Jan Wardell was proposed by Kate Gocher and seconded by Brian Panton

## 9 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

There was general discussion about the lack of volunteers to fill the various posts, and as had been agreed at AC in October, should the posts not be filled at this AGM, it would be placed on the agenda for the first AC meeting in 2018. Suggestions included paying a secretary from outside the Ramblers; change the times of the meetings, and investigate volunteer websites.

## 10 Talk by Alistair Chisholm – Town Crier and Ambassador for Dorchester

Following a full introduction, Alistair began by commiserating with our search for volunteers to fill roles, as the Thomas Hardy Society had had similar problems obtaining a Treasurer. There then followed a selection of anecdotes and readings from poetry and prose of Thomas Hardy, Frederick Treves, Llewelyn Powys, John Betjeman and Ogden Nash – all tailored to our walking activities, and beautifully delivered.

## 11 Votes of thanks

Laurie Fairhurst thanked Alistair for a very entertaining and pertinent talk.

## 12 Ed Wilson thanked Area for the invitation to attend, and explained that he would pass on our concerns to Richard Sharp, who has been appointed to support volunteers.

**13 Vote of thanks**

The Chairman thanked the South Dorset Group for the organisation of the AGM and the refreshments.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm

Signed ..... Date.....

DRAFT