

SEVERNSIDE RAMBLERS GROUP

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 23 November 2008 at Easter Compton Village Hall

Present:

Jill Fysh (Chairman) Sylvi Garratt (Treasurer) Jean Aellen (Secretary) Jill Field (Publicity Officer) Jenny Aspinall (Footpath Secretary) John Lewis (Footpath Secretary) Andy Pearson (Walks Co-ordinator) Gill King (Committee Member) Gareth Rees Ken Mill Irene Skeates Sue Bowerman Joyce Powell Moira Trenchard Chris Roberts John Carter Stephen McNeill Chris Everett Pauline Smith Sarah Taylor Michael Brook Lyn Holding Jane Davies David Jefferies Glenda Hewerson Bob Hall Sylvia Popham

Copies of the agenda, Minutes of 2007 AGM, copies of reports and the draft constitution were circulated to those present.

1. Jill Fysh, Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

2. Apologies:

Don and Rae Ford, Joy Harrison, Paula Warburton

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

were read and accepted as an accurate record. Sylvia Popham proposed and Gill King seconded that the Minutes be accepted and signed. Jill Fysh signed the Minutes.

4. Officers' Reports

Chairman: Report as circulated. Jill also referred to an email received from a walker who with his 9 year old daughter had joined a Severnside Saturday walk led by John Godwin. The walker wished to thank all those who welcomed them. He had been concerned that his daughter would become bored and he would need to carry her part of the way, but she had enjoyed the whole adventure including muddy puddles and puddles of mud. He had thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience: the company, the walk and the parental satisfaction. Jill commented that it was feedback like this was very satisfying for the Group.

Secretary: Report as circulated. In addition another reply had been received from a member who had resigned from the Ramblers' Association (RA). The reason given was that he enjoyed four to five mile walks on a Sunday in his local area and the RA did not provide this. (See Minute 7.(iii)).

Treasurer: Report and accounts as circulated. Sylvi explained that the Social Account was included under the heading 'Social Events' on the accounts. The Christmas Lunch was self-financing, and there had been a small profit from the skittles evening. The Group had two accounts with Unity Bank – a Group Account used for all income and expenditure associated with promoting walking and running the Group, and a separate Social Account used for social events such as the Christmas Lunch, skittle evenings etc. If there was a surplus in the Social Account a donation may be made to the RA. Up until 2007 only the Group Account had been declared to the RA but in 2007 both accounts had to be declared. The accounts were approved and signed.

Footpath Secretaries: Report as circulated. Bob Hall suggested that it was worth keeping an eye on the quality of 'furniture' used by the Council as it may not be of sufficient quality to last for 10 years. Bob asked if Jenny and John thought the improvement in South Gloucestershire Council's response to footpath problems had resulted from their appointment of a full time Ranger. Jenny and John were unable to comment as their appointment coincided with the Ranger's appointment.

Publicity: Report as circulated. Jill Field advised the meeting that since submitting her report information on Severnside Group had been agreed for entry into four Standbrook Guides.

Jill had produced posters advertising the Group which were for display in GP surgeries / health centres. She asked those present to let her know if they would be able to deliver the posters to some of the surgeries. In response to a question about the southern boundary for the Group Jill replied that it was vague and she was happy to promote Severnside Group over the boundary from Patchway into Horfield.

Walks Programme: Andy Pearson thanked the dedicated band of Walk Leaders for the time and effort they put into arranging walks for us all to enjoy. Without this small group of people Severnside would not have such a varied programme throughout the year. A special thanks was given to Jenny and John for arranging a trip to Bideford in May 2008 during which the weather had been excellent. Another trip had been arranged for June 2009 and was already oversubscribed.

The walk attendance over the past 12 months had remained high despite some appalling weather which had washed out several walks. Some brave souls had risen to the challenge of the direst conditions on several occasions which Andy was sure had pleased the walk leaders in question! Friday Ambles continued to be popular and an excellent introduction to walking.

Andy stated he would be standing down as Walks Co-ordinator. He had undertaken the role for three years and had enjoyed it. He thanked the Walk Leaders for 'coming up with the goods' time

and time again. He hoped that the existing Walk Leaders and any new comers to their ranks would continue to support the Group and that the Group in turn would appreciate the valuable contribution that they made.

Christmas Lunch – Speech House: Gill King reported that the 2007 Christmas Lunch at Speech House had been a great success and that it had been for 24 people. The same venue had been chosen for the 2008 lunch and 28 were to be accommodated in the same room. Gill had a reserve list of three and asked that if anyone who had booked was unable to attend that they let her know as soon as possible.

5. Changes to Group Constitution

The proposed changes to the Constitution highlighted in red were read out to the meeting. The majority related to meeting legal requirements for diversity. Sylvia Popham explained that the 'Board of Trustees' had replaced 'Executive Committee' of the RA.

The following typing errors were noted:

page 1 Management para (vii) capital C required for Committee

page 3 Finance para (iii) final line 'an advance....' to replace 'and advance....'

Subject to these corrections the revised constitution was adopted by the meeting.

6 Retirement of current Committee Members

Under the terms of the constitution the current Committee members stood down and Ken Mill took the chair.

As a member of the Group and a Walk Leader, Ken thanked the Committee on behalf of the Group. A new year was starting and he asked for volunteers to help run the Group.

Some nominations had been received and were proposed and seconded as follows:

Chairman Jill Fysh Proposed Chris Roberts Seconded Pauline Smith

Treasurer Sylvi Garratt Proposed Jill Fysh Seconded Moira Trenchard

Secretary Jean Aellen Proposed Gill King Seconded John Lewis

Footpath Secretary Jenny Aspinall & John Lewis Proposed Sylvi Garratt Seconded Moira Trenchard

Publicity Officer Jill Field Proposed Gareth Rees Seconded Pauline Smith

Walks Co-ordinator Vacant

Countryside Officer Vacant

Committee Member Gill King Proposed Jill Fysh Seconded Jenny Aspinall

Committee Member Andy Pearson Proposed Jill Fysh Seconded Jenny Aspinall

Committee Member Chris Roberts Proposed Jill Fysh Seconded Jenny Aspinall

Group Webmaster – Jill Fysh explained that Geoff Mullett who had designed the website was standing down. Severnside's website was one of the most comprehensive and was above average. Geoff had been very co-operative in putting things on the website for us and taking them off. One problem was that Geoff had used AppleMac. Ken Mill was prepared to take on the role of Webmaster provided it was possible to change over to Microsoft. This was under investigation. The meeting was in agreement to this.

7 Any Other Business

(i) Suggested donation for mileage

Jill Fysh referred to the arrangement within the Group whereby passengers travelling in a car to and from a walk may make a donation towards fuel costs. Jill emphasized this was a 'donation' and not a 'charge'. If someone was not in a position to make a donation they did not have to. Jill did not want anyone not to attend a walk because they were unable to make a donation towards travel costs.

The Committee had decided in July 2008, when fuel costs were rising, to increase the amount of suggested donation from 7p per mile to 10p per mile from November 2008. Since then fuel prices had come down. Jill wanted to make the system more flexible and review it quarterly. She proposed that if petrol was under £1.00 per litre the suggested donation rate would be 8p per mile. If it was over £1.00 per litre the suggested donation rate would be 10p per mile.

The proposal was agreed.

(ii) Start Time of Sunday Walks

Jill Fysh explained that when Severnside Group was first set up, Sunday walks mostly met at 10.00 am in the Aldi car park because some people came by bus which arrived at 9.40 am. After a while there were no walkers arriving by bus and the meeting time changed to 9.30 am.

There are now again some people who travel to the meeting point by bus. Jill proposed that if someone had to come by bus they should contact the Walk Leader and tell them that they would be joining the walk and would be arriving at Aldi by bus. The Walk Leader would either wait for

the bus or designate another driver to wait for the bus. The onus would be on the bus traveller to contact the Walk Leader in advance. Walk Leaders would not be expected to wait if there had been no prior contact.

The meeting agreed to this arrangement.

(iii) Length of Sunday Walks

Gill King had been asked by Paula Warburton to explain to the Committee that she worked on Saturdays and was unable to attend the shorter walks. She had therefore asked if shorter walks on a Sunday could be arranged. Andy Pearson replied that there was no problem in having several walks on one day. It was acceptable for a Walk Leader to put on a long walk and for another Walk Leader to offer a shorter walk in the morning or the afternoon of the same Sunday.

8 Date, time and place of next AGM

It was agreed that the next AGM would be held at about the same time of year next year and would be on a Sunday preceded by a short walk. Notice of the AGM would be given to all Severnside Members.

The meeting closed at 2.50 pm.