

Minutes of Severnside Ramblers AGM held at Mafeking Hall, Redwick Road , Pilning BS35 4LL on Sunday 24th November 2024

Attendees

Christine Turner	Chair
Christine Pankhurst	Group/ Membership Secretary
Bob Smyth	Treasurer
Mark Hill	Web Editor
Gill King	Social Secretary
Cathy Hunsley	Footpath Secretary
Sylvia Popham	Avon Area Rep
Jean Williams	Committee
Susan Bowerman	Peter Spring
Joy Harrison	Ken Mill
Les Davison	Carolyn Muston
Peter Randall	Jill Parkinson
Brenda Smyth	Nick Rostern
Wendy Spooner	Caroline Lake
Allan Davies	Jean Aellen
Colin Hunsley	Steve Goodenough
Gill Rodger	Heather Rickards

1) Welcome-Christine Turner welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them all for coming on such a miserable day weather wise. She went on to say that all in all it had been a very successful year with all the walks, but particularly the Friday Ambles, being very well attended.

2) Apologies for absence were received from- Sue Lancaster, Chris Everett, Emma Smith, Joyce Powell, Elaine Coulthard, Kathy Strawbridge, Terri Arman, Caroline & David Jefferies, Pauline Hart& George Whyte, Sue Budge, Anne Carpenter, Carol Dinham, Don Ford, Sylvia Seneschall, Val Johnson.

3) Minutes of AGM 2023- Copies of the Minutes had been circulated to the Members prior to the meeting and were accepted as a true record by Jean Williams and seconded by Peter Randall.

4) Matters arising- There were no matters arising.

5) Officers' Reports-

a) Chair-

As Chair, Chris T had attended a number of meetings where the recommendation from HO was that Members and in particular Walk Leaders were qualified First Aiders. A qualification needs to be renewed after 3 years and there is no funding available from Ramblers. Research had found that the majority of suitable courses were very expensive however Bob Smyth had recently completed a course run by U3A where we would have to provide and pay for a venue and give a donation. The

course would be completed in one session and Bob confirmed that it included CPR as recommended by St Johns Ambulance. A minimum number of 12- 15 people would be needed and after a show of hands it was agreed that Chris will go ahead with this.

Chris then went on to mention S.Glos. Council's ambitious plans for building of new homes which will create a significant growth in housing in our area and may impact on local footpaths. This will need to be watched.

Regarding the position of Severnside Chair, Chris said that she had decided to stand down as she felt that she wasn't the best person for the role as she increasingly felt that she no longer held the same views as Ramblers UK. Joy Harrison agreed that she is not alone in feeling the way that she does as she too feels the same frustration that they seem to be moving away from the ideals of their core membership.

b) Membership Secretary- report attached

c) Walks Programme Co-ordinator-report attached

As Sue Lancaster had been unable to attend the meeting due to Covid Christine P read out her report.

Jean A stated that in fact 2 Friday Ambles had been cancelled due to flooding. One was on the day as Jean, as leader, was unable to get out of her village.

D)Footpath Secretary- report attached

Chris T thanked Cathy for all her hard work in this role.

E)Publicity

In the absence of anyone in this role Mark and Ken said that our greatest publicity is the photos taken on our walks which they will continue to publish via Facebook and Flickr on our website.

F)Web Editor- report attached

g) Social Secretary-report attached

Following the last of the reports Ken stood up and read a very moving tribute (attached) to Andy Pearson our Publicity Secretary who sadly died in August.

6) Treasurer's Report- Copies of the past year's accounts were circulated prior to the meeting and Bob explained them more fully to everyone. Jean Aellen queried the entry regarding Friday Amble prizes as she wasn't aware that there had been any. Nick said that he was under the impression that an award was given to the person who had attended the most walks. Jean confirmed that this wasn't anything of monetary value but a toy which was passed on each year. Nick apologised for the misunderstanding and will amend the account. As at 30/09/24 the Group A/c holds £688.41 and the Social A/c holds £1,073.05. A full copy of the Accounts is attached.

7) Avon Area Representative-Sylvia said that she had very little to report as she had very little information filtered to her. She tried to attend meetings but as these are held over Zoom sometimes

problems occur with internet connection. She also said that after many years of membership that she too had become increasingly disenchanted with the way that Ramblers UK were currently being managed. Nick made the point that with the number of new members we had that they were receiving quite a good amount through subscriptions.

8) Christmas Meal 2024- Gill confirmed that it had been booked at The Dog Inn, Old Sodbury on Sunday 15th September at 13.30. At present 18 people had paid. Chris T will lead a 5 mile walk beforehand. Anyone taking part in the walk will be allowed to park at the pub provided that they are staying on for lunch.

9) Summer Coach Trip- These trips are always well received and supported. Jean announced that this year's outing will be to Swanage. The coach hasn't been booked yet so no prices were available but it is expected to be on 13th July.

10) Forthcoming Events for 2025- Gill said that we had been invited to join with Clevedon Ramblers on a trip to Elan Valley. It will be between 23rd-26th September and the cost is £360 with a deposit of £30.00 required. Anyone interested should contact Gill or Sue Ferguson at Clevedon.

Gill would like to arrange a HF break for us and asked for suggestions for a destination. She suggested either Bourton on Water or Selworthy and will look into these.

Following the disappointing support for the Beetle Drive held in March, Gill will organise a Quiz Night for this year most probably at Filton Golf Course as before. She asked for two people to come forward to help with the question setting. Previous attempts to arrange a Skittles Night had proved unsuccessful due to the lack of a suitable alley. Jean W mentioned that St Teresa's in Filton might be a possibility.

11) Avon Area AGM – Sylvia advised that it will be held 22nd February and once again the venue will be Somerdale Pavilion, Keynsham. There will be a short walk beforehand. The guest speaker this year will be Ross Maloney, the CEO of Ramblers so Sylvia said that this was a very good opportunity to let HO know our views.

12) Retirement of Committee Members – Having already stated her reasons for stepping down, Chris T then said that she would be prepared to continue provided our Members were happy for her to do so on that basis. Also, although Bob was prepared to continue as Treasurer he had asked that Chris T take on this role temporarily whilst he addresses health issues in the New Year. Chris P said that she wished for the Group and Membership Secretary roles to be split as the workload was becoming too great but she was happy to continue with one of them. Emma Smith has announced her resignation.

13) Election of Committee members for 2024/2025

Post	Name	Proposed	Seconded
Chair	Christine Turner	Jean Williams	Mark Hill
Group Secretary	Christine Pankhurst	Mark Hill	Jill Parkinson
Membership Secretary	Wendy Spooner	Mark Hill	Jill Parkinson
Treasurer	Bob Smyth/Christine	Christine Pankhurst	Gill King

	Turner		
Walk Co-ordinator	Sue Lancaster	Peter Randall	Gill King
Social Secretary	Gill King	Christine P	Jean Williams
Footpath Secretary	Cathy Hunsley	Ken Mill	Peter Spring
Web Editor	Mark Hill	Gill King	Christine Turner
Avon Area Rep	Sylvia Popham	Joy Harrison	Jean Williams
Publicity	-	-	-
Committee Members	Jean Williams Elaine Coulthard Gill Rodger	Heather Rickards	Ken Mill

14) Appointment of Auditor- Nick Rostern confirmed that he was happy to continue in this role.

15) Highway Code 2022: Rules for Pedestrians organised walks (Rule 5)/Routes shared with cyclists (Rules 13 and 62)- Jean A had brought this topic to the meeting and gave a presentation, a copy of which is attached. A lengthy discussion of the points raised then followed including;

- Despite how clearly the Leader gives instructions the group often takes no notice.
- As well as a matter of safety it is politeness to make way for other road users.
- The prime rules are concentration, observation and anticipation but sadly these can be overlooked whilst we are chatting in a group.
- What is meant by a large group? Should we pre-book before joining a walk?
- Should we be taking the main focus away from Leaders and encouraging a Buddie system?
- Where walks are undertaken by a novice leader there is usually someone experienced within the group to be able to turn to for help if need be.

Chris T agreed that the committee will look into this further and report back.

16) Any Other Business – Heather asked what specific matters had led to some Members becoming disenchanted with Ramblers HO? Chris T said that for her they seemed to more and more be deviating from their core principles by offering free membership to Asylum Seekers rather than waiting until it was sought. She also referred to their attempts to break down barriers by mentioning the Out There initiative which is aimed at young people during working hours but they are unable to support us in arranging First Aid classes. Ken had heard that volunteers were being recruited to lead walks that were not members of Ramblers. Joy felt that staff were being recruited with no experience or expertise and were telling others what to do. Sylvia went on to add that in her view the membership had become very sponsorship led.

Joy then stood up to talk about Wessex Wanderer Railway Walks. Firstly, for those unaware of this group they are made up from 4 different Ramblers Groups covering the Heart of Wessex and destinations on the Bristol to Weymouth train line with all walks starting and finishing at a station. She has been a co-ordinator for the Group for 10 years along with help from Sylvia. Advertising their walks on our programme has helped enormously with their success and Joy gave thanks to Ken for all the work he does in maintaining the website. Joy then went on to say that in 2020 a vast

amount of work went into producing a programme to celebrate the 20th anniversary of WWR but sadly due to Covid it all had to be cancelled. However a similar event is being planned for next year to celebrate their 30 years using much of the previous material and she hopes that it will be well supported. Mention was made that anyone offering to lead or co-lead a walk qualifies for a free rail pass.

Christine P read out an email that she had been sent from Tracey Howe who is currently undertaking a trek around the coast of Britain in order to raise funds for several charities in memory of her late wife. She will be passing through our area in February and has asked that any practical help and support we can offer whilst doing so would be very much appreciated. Christine will pass the information on to anyone feeling that they can offer help.

Christine P then read an email request from Chris Everett suggesting that Meet & Greet Buddies can be set up at Aztec West for Sunday walks where the leader is going directly to the start of the walk rather than to the meeting point. Chris E is happy to fulfil this role as she intends to walk most Sundays. Everyone seemed to be in favour of this idea as there had been an unfortunate incident in September when only Chris had gone to Aztec and in fact only the walk leader and one other person went to the start. The walk was then called off.

Christine P thanked Gill, Jean and the rest of the helpers for their hard work in providing the excellent buffet lunch for us all.

17) Date of next AGM- This will be Sunday November 23rd 2025. Venue to be advised.

This meeting was then closed at 3.30pm