

WHITCHURCH RAMBLING CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Whitchurch Town Hall - 24 September 2008

1 Apologies for Absence: Mike & Audrey Bevan, Philip Young, Tim & Dorrie Bilson

2 Minutes of AGM held on 12 September 2007: these were read and agreed.

3 Matters Arising from item 2: It was noted that the Summer Party Quiz had not been geography free.

Mike Fletcher queried the outcome of the question about planning Winter Activities before the AGM to which Jeff pointed out that a 'Proxy Voting' form had been circulated giving members the chance to think about and vote for a choice of activities to be held in December and February/March.

He also asked about attendance at committee meetings, to which Jeff replied that the minutes of the meetings had been published on the website.

Sue mentioned that the Wednesday walks this year had been lacking in variety, which was discussed and it was agreed that this was because we had chosen the walks to minimise driving to the start point, thus it was inevitable that some ground would be covered repeatedly. Nick pointed out that a number of these walks had not been done for several years so he did not have the routes mapped – it would now be possible to avoid picking very similar walks in the same year.

Dave Middleton asked why the walks weren't being started earlier in the evening. This had been discussed on previous occasions and it had been rejected on the grounds that members with normal employment would not be able to attend. Julie Roach suggested that members should be asked to vote. Nick was actioned to organise this, and the committee would discuss the outcome.

4 Treasurer's Report 2008

Sue presented her report showing that the balance of £547.17 was £33.47 down on the previous year. Julie proposed a vote of thanks for making the report so clear and simple to understand.

Dave asked why we spent £36 on Ramblers Association membership. Jean Watts responded that they do a worthwhile job and that we should support them. The many benefits of membership include a yearbook listing places to stay in popular rambling areas, a quarterly magazine and the possibility of a discount on rambling equipment. A vote was taken and the majority were in favour of continuing our associate membership.

5 Election of Committee for 2009

Post	Name	Proposed	Seconded
Chair	Jeff Geary	Nick Copp	Sarah Davis
Treasurer	Sue Reynolds	Maureen Evans	Hugh James
Secretary	Nick Copp	Mike Fletcher	Jean Watts

Hugh James stood down from the committee due to council commitments. Christine Geary also stood down due to work commitments. Eve Jordan agreed to become a member (Jeff noted that she had in any case attended all the committee meetings). Dave Middleton and Maureen Evans were also invited to become members. The proposal to elect the committee en-block was made by Jeff Geary and seconded by Brian Bent.

Brian Bent	Richard Cann	Maureen Evans	Eve Jordan	Vic Jordan
Dave Middleton	Chas Roach	Julie Roach	Jean Watts	

6 Winter Activities

The 'Proxy Vote' mentioned at item 3 had asked for preferences both before and after Christmas. It was noted that the after votes would have been placed without the knowledge of the outcome from the before vote, whereas those at the AGM would know the before result before making the after vote.

		Proxy	Show of hands	Total
Before Christmas	A sit-down dinner in a pub/restaurant	1	4	5
	A buffet in the Gill Nethercott Centre	1	0	1
	A Skittles Evening with buffet	6	13	19
After Christmas	A sit-down dinner in a pub/restaurant	0	14	14
	A buffet in the Gill Nethercott Centre	3	0	3
	A Skittles Evening with buffet	5	4	9

Nick reported that, should the meeting decide to play skittles at The White Hart, Stoke, 29/11, 6/12 and 13/12 were available evenings. After some discussion about alternative venues, including a possibility of The Harvest Home, it was decided that we should book The White Hart, Stoke, and investigate alternatives for next year, bearing in mind that the venue should accommodate around 25, not be too expensive, and be within reasonable driving distance. A vote was taken on which date to choose and the casting vote of the Chair was required to pick 13 December.

Venues for the sit-down dinner after Christmas were discussed. Among several a shortlist of 3 was picked. Vic and Eve suggested The Red Lion, Overton, Jeff suggested The White Hart, Whitchurch and Julie suggested The Plough, Sparsholt. Would the suggesters please investigate price and availability for a final decision at the committee meeting in January.

7 Summer Activities

Jean kindly offered her premises again for a Summer Party. A non-geographic quiz was requested (again). We would aim for a date in June this year.

Heather Bent requested that we increase the price. Jeff pointed out that the accounts show that we are not making a loss. Heather pointed out that food prices are increasing so the loss is being borne by those not reclaiming their costs or by those that do shopping more frugally. It was mentioned that submitting claims for costs was complicated because any receipts were likely to be mixed with household shopping. It was noted that the same people tended to do the preparation each year, and that it would be good if there was some way that those who did not participate in the preparation could be required to pay more.

A proposal that the charge should be £6 per head and contributors forcibly encouraged to reclaim their costs was made. This was carried by 16 for to 1 against.

A further proposal that non-members be charged £7 per head and in return be given membership for the remainder of the year was made. This was carried by 12 for to 5 against.

8 Any Other Business

Christine informed the AGM that there is to be a meeting to discuss a grant to improve the 3 mills path, and that 2 or 3 of our members had been invited. Brian Bent and Vic Jordan would attend. After completion our role will be to alert the council to anything requiring maintenance. Hugh pointed out that this applies to all footpaths in the area.

She also informed us that new leaflets of Whitchurch Circular Walks and Whitchurch Heritage Trail were available here and in the library.

An additional or alternative social activity in the winter months was suggested by Claire Fairgrieve, to meet at The Hurstbourne on a Saturday lunchtime for fish 'n chips followed by a walk in the afternoon. If there was sufficient interest Claire would be happy to make enquiries into this idea.

Dave thought that we should talk more about walking, and that we should expand from just Wednesday walks. The history of the demise of Sunday and Bank Holiday walks due to lack of attendance was related. Brian pointed out that the Ramblers Association publishes walks in the area every day of the week which members are free to attend. Julie suggested that the agenda for the January committee meeting be circulated and discussed so that Dave could add items of interest.

Mike thought that someone should be in overall charge of volunteer walk leaders to ensure that one was always present. Jeff objected that it would be preferable for the person whose name was down to lead was responsible for finding a replacement if he/she couldn't make it.

Dave thought that the walk leader should be responsible for ensuring that all drivers knew how to get to and where to park at the walk start, as he had been in cars which got lost twice. It was suggested that drivers who didn't know where they were going should ask. If the leader had to go round asking everyone if they were driving and if they knew where they were going, it would add to the delay before we actually started walking.

Date of next committee meeting: Probably 2nd Wednesday in January at The Bell.

The meeting ended at 21:40

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