



North West Wiltshire Ramblers AGM

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th November 2020

The meeting was conducted via Zoom

In Attendance: Roger Barnes Ian Birch Sylvia Chumbley Barry Cox
 Clive Frankham Colin Fry Judith Hible Bob Maddick
 David Preston Alan Roberts
 Proxy Voter: Phil Wadey

Agenda Item		Actions / Notes
1.	Welcome	Judith began by welcoming everyone to the 46 th NWWR AGM.
2.	Apologies for absence	Caroline Longley, Margaret Roberts and Mike Chislett .
3.	Approval of last year's AGM minutes	Accepted, proposed by Roger and seconded by Bob .
4.	Matters arising	None.
5.	Officers' reports	
	a. Secretary	See attached.
	b. Treasurer	See attached. The accounts were accepted, proposed by Clive and seconded by Colin .
	c. Footpath Secretary	See attached.
	d. Membership	See attached. Roger reported that the membership has since increased by 4 to 168.
	e. Programme	See attached.
	f. Publicity & Publications	See attached.
6.	Election of Officers	The following committee members were re-elected en bloc, proposed by Roger and seconded by Alan: Chair - Vacant Secretary - Clive Frankham Treasurer / Footpath Secretary - Judith Hible Programme / Membership - Roger Barnes Publicity / Publications - Alan Roberts and Barry Cox Committee Members - Caroline Longley and Bob Maddick David Preston was voted onto the committee, nominated by Judith and seconded by Bob. Liz Palmer was appointed independent examiner, nominated by Judith and seconded by Alan.

Agenda Item		Actions / Notes
7.	Motions for General Council	None.
8.	Any other business	None.
9.	Close	The formal part of the meeting ended at 2000hrs.

Clive Frankham
Secretary of the North West Wiltshire Ramblers

11th November 2020

5a. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Members won't be surprised when I report that the group's activities during the last year have been severely curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The year began well with us having a near full complement of committee members, a couple of productive and enjoyable committee meetings, and a full walks programme. Upon lockdown almost all activities ceased. Some footpath activity continued, and at the start of July we began organising unofficial walks whilst still observing the social distancing guidelines. In August we learned that the Ramblers had successfully negotiated a solution that would allow us to lead walks officially, subject to certain conditions, for up to 30 individuals. These conditions are commonsense and aren't onerous, e.g. we now ask individuals to book a place on the walk and note their contact details for track and trace purposes. I'm pleased to say that we've enjoyed a number of very pleasant walks since resuming.

I would also like to thank members for continuing to contribute to our social media presence, i.e. Facebook. We all know how enjoyable our walks are, and it's lovely to see this reflected online through your photographs and comments, knowing that the general public are getting a sense of what we are really about.

5b. TREASURER'S REPORT

In spite of lockdown, Alan has managed to keep selling walk books so are finances are in a good position. Too good in fact, so we need to spend some. The intention is to purchase a brush cutter for work party use. We reprinted Walk Book 1 in January so we are well-stocked with those but Walk Book 2 is still out of print. Plans for a revision have been put on hold but, hopefully, it may be ready around the end of the year. Some of our reserves could be used to purchase kissing gates for the 'White Walls Way'; particularly if Book 2 starts selling well.

Main					
Receipts	Current yr	Prior yr	Payments	Current yr	Prior yr
From CO (funding)	-		To CO	-	
From CO (other)	-		To Area	-	
From Area (funding)	-		To Group (funding)	-	
From Area (other)	-		To Group (other)	-	
From Group	-		To S/W Council	-	
From S/W Council	-		Walks programmes	297.44	322.30
T/fer from 'Self-funded'	-		Walks related	-	92.29
Donations	-	50.00	Walks leader training	-	
Legacies	-		Newsletters/publicity	50.64	35.02
Grants	-		Publication/goods costs	544.24	522.00
Fundraising	-		Campaigns/casework	-	
Deposit interest	-		Practical work	372.02	79.00
Investment income	-		Fundraising costs	10.36	
Publication/goods sales	775.00	844.00	Meetings (inc. AGM)	60.00	28.74
Advert sales	-	200.00	Admin	37.03	279.98
Other	-		Other	1.80	25.60
Total receipts	775.00	1,094.00	Total payments	1,373.53	1,384.93
Surplus/(deficit)	-598.53	-290.93			
Name:	North West Wiltshire Ramblers			Year ended:	30/09/20
Code:	WE01				

Cashbook reconciliation				
		Main	Self-funded	Total
Opening balance		2,114.98	170.77	2,285.75
Surplus/(deficit) on R&P		-598.53	-	-598.53
Closing balance (rows A + B = C)		1,516.45	170.77	1,687.22

[A]

[B]

[C]

Closing balances	Cash	Bank	Total
	-	1,687.22	1,687.22

[D]

Variance
-

[C] - [D]

5c. FOOTPATH SECRETARY'S REPORT

I estimate that the Walk Leaders and working parties have spent 180 hours surveying 462km of path; plus 74 hours clearing 8.7km of path, 26 hours repairing 24 stiles and 12 hours putting up 149 waymarks.

I have been having regular liaison meetings (every 2 months including electronic meetings during lockdown) with the Countryside Access Officer's (formerly called Rights of Way Wardens) for the North of Wiltshire. **Stephen Leonard** has been joined by **Alison Rasey** who was previously a Countryside and Tree Officer. The Rights of Way Department at Wiltshire Council has been reorganised with the Head of Department, **Richard Broadhead** being given extra responsibilities (including country parks and cemeteries). **Ken Oliver** (previously of the Wilts and Berks Canal is in charge of the CAO's, under **Richard. Paul Millard**, CAO for West of Wiltshire has been joined by **Vicky**. Corsham comes under West and the rest comes under North. **Paul** mainly deals with the West Wilts work party; most of Corsham Area Board is covered by Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, except Lacock and parts of Corsham. **Brian Flynn**, a West Wilts member who lives in Lacock, undertook a survey of Lacock RoW, reported back on problems and waymarked them. I attended a liaison meeting with **Paul, Vicky, Richard, Tim Lewis** (Area Footpath Secretary) and West Wilts members – **Dave Yearsley, Brian Micklam, Peter Henden**. This was mainly to discuss issues around cropping of paths. **Peter Henden** does regular maize surveys in Melksham Without. The outcome of the meeting was that a leaflet of landowner's responsibilities regarding ploughing and cropping (based on one from another County Council) would be sent out to the usual suspects in Spring 2020. This was duly sent out but, with lockdown, it was deemed inappropriate to add extra burdens on farmers who were already having a hard time of it. They leaflets will go out again in Spring 2021 and, hopefully, there will be follow-up from the Council. The COVID-19 emergency has affected the Council's spending plans (they were ready to declare themselves bankrupt but were given extra funding), but the RoW Department seem optimistic that their budget will be ring-fenced as it comprises statutory duties.

I have been working with a number of organisations across the district: Malmesbury Area Pathfinders are trying to set up the 'White Walls Way', a 20 mile route connecting Malmesbury with the villages along the River Avon to the southwest; Malmesbury Climate Action Network Transport group are trying to set up a network of cycleways to connect with local schools; MCAN members in Hullavington working with a local footpath group; Combined Parishes RoW Group (Avebury, Cherhill, Hilmarton, Berwick Bassett, Clyffe Pypard, Broad Hinton and Calne), organised by local CPRE Chair **Anne Henshaw**, to improve RoW in the parishes at the west end of the North Wessex Downs AONB. I am also hoping to work with Corsham for Walking on footpath maintenance in the Corsham Area Board area (Box, Corsham, Colerne, Lacock). The 'White Walls Way' was due to be launched at Malmesbury Carnival but this has been delayed.

As ever, on my wish list is a volunteer work party for North West Wiltshire to help me keep the RoW usable.

5d. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

As at the middle of October 2020, the membership of the group stands at 164 having steadily increased from a low point of 152 in March, which coincidentally is when the pandemic lockdown began. The 164 (86 women and 78 men) constitute 97 individual members, 66 who are in a joint membership and one affiliated member. There are 9 life members in the group. The current figure is the highest it's been since December 2018.

5e. PROGRAMME SECRETARY'S REPORT

Due to the pandemic, there has been an unprecedented reduction in the group's ability to arrange led walks. Since our last AGM in November 2019 we have only been able to organise 31 walks instead of the usual 45-50. The walks that have taken place have had a distance spread of between 2½ and 18 miles (or 4 and 29 km). Ramblers walks were only allowed to restart by the Government from the middle of August and at present our walks are all being led by just 3 of our normal leaders.

This year again, our walks have been mainly on Sundays, with just a couple on Saturdays. Should anyone have been able to do them all they would have covered about 197 miles (or 317 km).

Judith has again devised and led a series of shorter "Sunday Strolls" ranging from 2½ to 5 miles (4 to 8 km) in length which take place usually on the alternate Sundays between our normal longer walks. These are proving to be very popular and are the source of several new members.

A further 4 'unofficial' walks were led by **Clive** prior to the resumption of the official walks programme.

5f. PUBLICITY & PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY'S REPORT

Until March 2020, when COVID-19 disrupted normal life and Ramblers' activities ceased, the Information Sheet and Walks Programme was displayed in all the usual places around Chippenham, i.e. the library, museum, town council offices, Waterstones and BCH Outdoors, and also the libraries and TICs in both Calne and Corsham. The Sunday Strolls programme was also distributed to health walkers in Chippenham and Corsham. Our walks poster appeared on the Chippenham Town Council website under 'What's On' (Sport, Exercise and Wellbeing) giving a link to our website for walk details. The weekly walks were advertised there too.

I continue to be grateful to **Barry** for taking on the 'electronic' publicity task, placing our current walks programme into Community Matters' websites, Gazette and Herald, Swindon Advertiser, Wiltshire Times, Wiltshire Council website and having contact with Wiltshire Sound as required. Also to **Judith** for organising our Facebook entries. Many thanks to you both.

Edition 3 of our local walks book, "12 Walks around Chippenham", started selling in January 2019 and sales have been very good despite COVID-19. Of the 1,000 printed, 900 have been sold through 20 outlets within 10 miles of Chippenham, a few of which are unfortunately no longer available. On the strength of this, a reprint of another 1,000 has been received. Our other walks book, "12 More Walks around Chippenham", is actively being revised and should be ready in early 2021.