

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, 18 November 2021
Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Present: <u>Committee Members</u> Steve Nicholas - Chair Neil Elder - Treasurer Neil Pritchard - Walks Co-Ordinator Mandy Norris - Secretary <u>Members:</u> Julian Frankish Jo Sofaer Stephen Cocks Jane Hudson Vanessa Crookes Peter Williams Apologies: Vivienne Scales Richard Boardman David Morris Miranda Shoebridge Richard Bass Pat Kelly		
1.	Welcome Steve Nicholas opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.	
2.	Approval of AGM Minutes & Matters Arising The Minutes of 19/11/2020 were accepted as an accurate record.	
3.	Annual Report – November 2020 to November 2021 <u>Chairman's Report</u> Steve said that Covid-19 continues to be the new norm, however, most people understand the need for pre-walk registration and we will continue to monitor this in line with Ramblers' guidance. Ramblers is launching a brand change early in the New Year and we are awaiting further information so that adjustments can be made to the Group's website and Facebook page. Nationally, Ramblers' membership is over 101,000 and the Group has experienced a small reduction from 175 to 167. There have been no Area Meetings this year due to Covid-19. Steve thanked all Walk Leaders who have offered a wide range of walks across Hampshire and further afield – they are the backbone of the Group.	

	Steve thanked Elaine Cooper for organising the Dorset weekend, even though sadly she couldn't walk herself due to injury. Steve thanked Neil and Jane for organising and leading a great trip to East Devon in perfect autumn weather (except the last day which was a little wet!). Steve thanked all the Committee Members for their continued support. Steve closed his report by mentioning Jan Wilson, Membership Secretary, who lost her valiant two-year fight against cancer in May. She was a much-loved member of the Group since 2014. Her infectious smile never left her face regardless of weather or conditions underfoot, and she was a great ambassador for the Group and the many benefits of walking. <u>Treasurers Report</u> Neil reported that it has been a quite year financially for the Group. Neil highlighted the following:- • The balance in the main account was £430.71 following a half year grant and receipt of income from a Ramblers holiday incentive. • The balance in the surplus account is £182.69 There was discussion about the proposal to fund a memorial gate or bench in memory of Jan Wilson, however, it was not easy to organise due to needing the landowners' permission. There was positive support from the Committee and Members for this proposal. <u>Walk Co-Ordinator's Report</u> Neil said that 2021 was semi-normal in terms of the number of walks for the Group – there were a total of 88 in 2019; 39 in 2020; and 70 in 2021 with all walks continuing to be well attended. Neil thanked those who stepped in to lead the Dorset walk following Elaine's injury and all those who attended the East Devon trip, especially those who stayed for the monsoon-like conditions of the third day – it was a good way to test weather-proof clothes. There have been several new walk leaders who have supported the programme and they are a very welcome addition and they are thanked. Richard has also put on a number of mid-week walks with mixed support, however, attendance may increase as members retire from work in future. The programme is looking cautiously optimistic for the future!	
4.	Election of Committee Members All Committee Members stepped down and roles were agreed for the next year as follows:- • Steve Nicholas - Chair (Proposed by Vanessa Crookes. Seconded by Jane Hudson.) • Mandy Norris - Secretary (Proposed by Julian Frankish. Seconded by Jo Sofaer.) • Neil Elder – Treasurer (Proposed by Mandy Norris. Seconded by Jane Hudson.)	

	• Neil Pritchard – Walks Co-ordinator (Proposed by Julian Frankish. Seconded by Jane Hudson.) In addition, Stephen Cocks agreed to continue in the role of Web Master outside of the formal Committee structure.	
5.	Any Other Business • There was discussion about whether the Group’s official name should change in line with the bank account and the implications of any change. It was agreed it will remain the same to avoid confusion. • Discussion was held about whether the Group should have a policy regarding permitting dogs on walks. There have been occasions recently when a small number of dogs were not well-behaved and owners did not adhere to the Countryside Code in terms of safety and cleaning up after their dogs. It was confirmed that a number of long-standing members regularly brought their dogs to the walks and their dogs have behaved very well and the owners have a good appreciation of safety and are very responsible. Steve agreed to explore the subject outside of the meeting so that the Committee could take a position on this at a later date. • There was a discussion about Ramblers’ requirement for Walk Leaders to carry out a risk assessment in advance of walks, although there was no electronic system available to upload or store the documents which is less than satisfactory. Steve said he will look into this further and suggested the Committee review this at a later date.	
6.	Close of Meeting It was recognised that the AGM meeting attendance was smaller than usual and it is hoped that it will return to normal numbers next year when it will hopefully be face-to-face. Jo Sofaer took the opportunity to thank the Committee for their continued amazing work. Steve closed the meeting.	