

## **ALTRINCHAM & DISTRICT RAMBLING CLUB**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 9 November 2023, at 7.30pm

VENUE All Saints Church Hall, Hale Barns.

PRESENT 48 Members signed the register.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Phil & Ruth Worsley, Pam & Phil Grundy, Pauline & Steve Glover, Janet Blinkhorn, Edward Spark, Leo Garner and Gill Brookes.

### **2. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on Thursday 10 November 2022**

The minutes of the AGM held on 10 November 2022 were accepted as a correct record of the meeting.

### **3. Matters Arising**

Beverly Harrison (BHa) advised that any matters arising will be covered in the current agenda.

### **4. President's Opening Remarks – Heather Wykes (HW)**

HW began by welcoming everyone to the 67<sup>th</sup> AGM and thanked the committee for their hard work over the year. HW said that the recent death of Dean Edwards was a great loss, a memorial walk will take place next year and she hoped that as many members as possible will join the walk.

HW went on to say that a suggestion was made to the committee that the current grading system was not fully comprehensible. A subcommittee met to discuss this matter in September 2023 and a new grading system has been compiled. The new grading categories will be used from January 2024 and are on next year's membership card.

HW finished by thanking the leaders who continually put themselves forward to lead walks but stressed that more leaders are needed, and she hoped that those who have not led a walk, will do so very soon.

### **5. Reports**

#### **CHAIR - Beverley Harrison (BHa)**

BHa welcomed the General Secretary, Aptar Sandhu-Taylor to her first AGM and thanked Jeff Mellor for looking after the club's sound system.

Four committee meetings have been held since the last AGM, a subcommittee was formed of the walk organisers to a specific issue and any matters arising between meetings have been discussed by email.

BHa went on to thank all the committee members for their efforts in keeping the club running as well as the walks organisers and assistants for a varied walking programme. Les Stockton (LSt) is stepping down from his role as assistant walks organiser and a replacement was required for this essential role. BHa stressed that we need more walk leaders and was sure that most committee members would be willing to help potential new leaders receive a walk.

The weather had been kind for club holiday to Porthcawl and for the coach trips except for the coach trip to Ambleside where there was excessive heat on the day.

Since October 2021 Phil Worsley has been putting out the walking programme in addition to being the webmaster and Sunday walks organiser. Bha confirmed that a volunteer is being trained as a Programme Secretary and if the training period goes well, this is one job that Phil can be relieved of.

All members at the meeting were informed that to keep the books balanced, the cost to members who have their programme posted to them has had to be increased. There will be no additional costs for honorary members. BHa thanked Judy and Monica for assistance with this process and went on to thank Monica for the research she carried out to aid the committee in the grading of walks.

BHa went on to thank Zoe, sometimes assisted by Heather, who as well as being club vice president and club president have taken on board the task of organising the memorial plaques for past members who have made significant contributions to the club.

BHa concluded by saying that she hoped that she had summarised the main events of the past year and the club officers have done their best to keep the club functioning. She thanked Heather and her team for organising the refreshments during the interval.

Everyone was thanked for coming to the meeting and BHa apologised if she had omitted anyone's contributions.

#### **TREASURER – Terry Clarke (TC)**

TC advised those present that they should be able to see a copy of the club financial statement and that any questions will be taken at the end of the report.

Members who wished to pay their subscription this evening, could do so at the end of the meeting.

At the end of the year, the club had a surplus of just over £624, which when the coach trips and club holiday are taken into consideration, leaves £432.

Since becoming treasurer, TC confirmed that the subscription has been increased twice, now being £10 at which it will remain for this year. These increases were generally the result of the amount required to fund the monthly circulars to members who required them posted. We were only out of deficit by the surplus on the coach trips.

After much discussion, it has been decided by the committee that it is no longer acceptable for members who receive the monthly circular by post to be subsidised by members who download a copy online. Subsequently, the cost will increase to £20 per year, which will cover the cost of printing up to five pages, increase in postage costs and printing.

TC thanked members of the committee for their help in informing him promptly of payments made into the bank account. A special thank you to the auditors John Beardmore assisted by John Jagger, in their diligence in checking the figures and signing them off as being a true representation of the club's financial position.

**AUDITOR – John Beardmore (JB) assisted by John Jagger (JJ)**

JB confirmed that the accounts represented a true reflection of the club's financial position and thanked JJ for his assistance.

**LEGACIES FUND – Beverly Harrison (BHa)**

The Legacy committee members are Terry Clarke, Elsie Edwards, and Beverly Harrison. The money is authorised by the Legacy committee for memorial plaques and for the members' training sessions as detailed in the Treasurer's report (P2). BHa thanked Zoe for her efforts in finding suitable locations for the plaques and teas.

**GENERAL SECRETARY – Aptar Sandhu-Taylor (AST)**

No report.

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – Monica Beardmore (MB)**

Members were advised that at the end of the year to September 2023, the club had 201 members compared to 213 at the end of 2021/22 season.

There were 26 resignations/non renewals, reflecting our ageing population of members who have been with the club a long time but who are unfortunately no longer able to walk. Sadly, there have been 6 deaths of current members during the year, and these will be honoured by the Goodwill secretaries later in the meeting.

MB was pleased to inform that the club had welcomed 17 new members this year, however there were 24 in the year to September 2022. Two more members have been welcomed since the end of September 2023.

The club had received 73 enquiries during the 2022/23 season, compared to 62 last year. Majority of the enquiries were the result of web searches and the club Facebook page, proving how effective our website has become, thanks to the club Webmaster, Phil Worsley. MB confirmed that although we had received more enquiries this year, fewer converted to membership. The club has ceased to use the 'Nextdoor' platform as the enquiries generated did not translate to new members. It seems that the most successful leads in terms of converting to membership remain to be those who join by personal recommendation and MB urged all to consider who among their contacts might be interested in joining the club.

MB concluded by thanking the walks organisers and walks leaders who provide walks on Wednesdays and Sundays and without them the club could not continue. She also thanked Les Stockton for doing a brilliant job and stressed that if nobody comes forward to fill this role, the future of the short Wednesday walks is very much in jeopardy. MB urged someone to step forward and assured that there would be help and support in the handover stage.

**PROGRAMME SECRETARY – Phil Worsley (PW), report read by Terry Clarke**

Those present were advised that the monthly circular provided members with all details of the Club walks and other Club business. Due to the length of some entries or the

request to repeat items month after month, the required 4-page format has not been achieved and extra costs have been incurred.

36 printed versions of the circular have been printed per month this year, down from 50 in 2022. New members who join are not offered the option of receiving a hard copy. Judy Bailey was thanked for her hard work in getting the hard copy to members.

Walk leaders and contributors of other circular entries were thanked for submitting the information generally on time, with a polite reminder that the cut-off date for circular entries is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

Currently training is being provided for a member for the role of Programme Secretary. It is hoped this will work out and in time members will be advised of where to send future entries for the programme.

### **HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER – Beverly Harrison (BHa)**

BHa advised that two members had falls that led to ongoing injuries.

The first was on 30 January 2023 when the fall resulted in a wrist fracture and the second on 3 March 2023 when the fall resulted in a snapped tendon where rescue services had to be involved. BHa was pleased to announce that both members have returned to walking with the group.

The injury in March prompted BHa to review the club's Health & Safety procedures. The information is now having a more prominent position on the website, and we have ensured that all members are in possession of emergency health cards. BHa thanked Phil and Monica for carrying this through.

### **SUNDAY WALKS ORGANISER – Phil Worsley (PW), report read by Monica Beardmore**

Those present were advised that Sunday walking provides members with the option of 2 and on occasions 3 walks, this being despite the problem of securing leaders for walks. One major incident occurred with Alan Key sustaining a serious injury while walking and Mountain Rescue & Ambulance Services were required to attend. Alan is making excellent progress and is back walking.

There were 95 Sunday walks in the past season.

47 Longer 'A' walks, with average mileage of 9.9 – average attendance of 11.7

14 Intermediate 'B' walks, with average mileage of 7.65 – average attendance of 9.3

34 Shorter 'C' walks, with average mileage of 6.36 – average attendance of 15.3

The overall participation in the 95 walks was 1,163.

Leaders Phil and Heather will continue to work hard to secure a full programme of Sunday walks, but this will be leader dependent. Please offer to lead walks. Looking ahead, for the coming season, 19 Sunday walks are already in place.

In conclusion, thanks go to Heather who has once again worked extremely hard in securing walks and leaders for the Sunday shorter walks. Thanks also go to members and guests who attended and actively supported the leaders. With a big thanks to all walk leaders of the 95 Sunday walks that have taken place last season.

### **WEDNESDAY WALKS ORGANISER – Jill Weir (JW)**

JW advised all that the Wednesday walking programme has continued to provide members with options of not only a Longer, but often an Intermediate (B) as well as a shorter (C) walk. One walk was cancelled this year as a club member's funeral was on that date and many walkers wished to attend and a replacement leader was not found.

No incidents were encountered on the longer (A) walks.

There have been 95 Wednesday walks.

44 Longer (A) walks, with average mileage of 9.23 – average attendance of 12.3

10 Intermediate (B) walks, with average mileage of 7.3 – average attendance of 12.1

41 Shorter (C) walks, with average mileage of 6.4 – average attendance of 19.5

JW went on to say that Les Stockton has resigned from his role of organising Wednesday shorter (C) walks programme and thanked Les on behalf of the club for his commitment and hard work to find leaders for the shorter (C) walks for the past few years. It has been greatly appreciated but sadly it is a fact that if no one comes forward to replace Les, the shorter (C) walks may sadly cease.

### **COACH TRIP ORGANISER – Jill Jagger (JJ)**

JJ advised that 4 successful coach trips had taken place in the year with Finglands coaches, a medium priced reliable local company.

The average cost of the coaches was £849 compared to £775 for 2022. The charge was £20 per person.

The Porthmadog trip made a loss of £211 as only 42 members were on the coach. The Ambleside, Haworth and Ilkley made a combined surplus, resulting in a surplus of £164 at the end of the year.

The Harrogate & Harlow Carr trip in August was cancelled due to lack of support and there were no cancellation charges incurred.

In 2024, the coach committee propose to run 4, day coach trips for walkers.

Grasmere in May, Settle in June, Conwy in July and to Church Stretton in September.

The average cost for these coaches will be £950, an increase of £100 from 2023. They will be 57-seater coaches, which will generate more income.

BHa added that we need more leaders for the coach trips, so please contact her if you can help.

### **HOLIDAY ORGANISER – Beryl Hunwick (BHu)**

BHu advised that the 2023 holiday to Porthcawl had a full complement of people and believed that everyone enjoyed themselves. The weather was kind and walks in Porthcawl area were well received. The trip to Cardiff and St Fagans was super, the coach driver was most obliging and much deserved his tip.

2024 holiday to Isle of Man arrangements are well in hand. Final payments for the holiday are due at the end of December 2023. Unfortunately, a few members who initially booked had to withdraw but members from the waiting list have taken up the places. At present there are 48 people on the holiday. The walks will be led by local guides, the cost of these have been included in the holiday price.

Beverly is looking at destinations for the club 2025 holiday, if you have any suggestions please get in touch.

**SOCIAL ORGANISER – Heather Wykes (HW)**

No report

**GOODWILL SECRETARY – Jeanne Gregory (JG) & Lesley Short (LSH)**

Those present were advised that 12 Get Well cards, 12 milestone Birthday cards and 2 New Home cards were sent to members in the last year.

Brian Warburton and Roger Parker are in their 90<sup>th</sup> year. Guilio Poletti turned 99 and hopes to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday next year.

Apologies to anyone who celebrated a special occasion this year and didn't receive a 'Congratulations'.

Sadly 8 former club members and 2 relatives of active club members have died in the past year.

Brian Peacock	Ordinary member
Dean Edwards	Honorary member and past President
Graham Walsh	Former member
Karen Wingate	Former member
Edwin Barron	Former member
Gordon Bird	Former member
Harry Hewlett	Former member
Claire Jours	Former member

Jenny Rydell's husband and Jane Milne's brother.

A minute's silence was observed to remember those who had died.

**WEBMASTER – Phil Worsley, report read by Zoe Spark**

All present at the meeting were advised that the club website continues to run well and accounts for almost all membership enquiries. No major issues but apologies that Phil is unable to offer a full IT help desk facility and can help members when he is able to.

The password for access to the Members Area of the website will change from close of business on 31 January 2024. The new membership card will have the username and new password on it. Only the password will change, the username remains the same. Reminders will be on the December and January circulars; it will not be possible to change the password prior to 1 February 2024.

Housekeeping for the website continues daily, thanks go to those who have sent in photographs for the website, in particular Chris Sadler and Les Stockton who are the main contributors.

The online walk submission form continues to perform well with thanks to Judy Bailey who is on hand to help those who do not use the form or have difficulty when submitting their walks.

Please continue to use the club website if you already do so, if you could use it but haven't yet logged onto it, please have a look as it has considerable information about the club and club activities.

## **6. Election of Officials**

BHa announced that all officials were in their roles, but please speak with her if you are interested in any of the roles for the future or would like more information on any of the roles.

**INTERVAL 8.15-8.45**

## **7. Donations**

TC confirmed that a donation of £575 has been made, each organisation receiving £75.

The Peak District & Northern Footpath Society

The Buxton Mountain Rescue Team

The Lake District Search & Rescue Association

Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation

Oldham Mountain Rescue Team

Rossendale & Pendle Mountain Rescue Team

Edale Mountain Rescue Team

John Jagger raised a point that we hold £10,000 in funds, an increase of £500 from 2022. As six of the seven organisations are mountain rescue teams and a member of the club needed mountain rescue assistance recently, John Jagger suggested the annual donation be increased, but stated it was up to the committee to decide on this matter. John Beardmore formally proposed a request for donation amounts to be increased to the Mountain Rescue teams.

BHa confirmed that there is a formal procedure that needed to take place but requested a show of hands from those present. There was a majority show of hands from those present in favour of increasing the donation. BHa confirmed that she would refer this to the committee.

Keith Wykes made a comment that the legacies fund currently held £2,672.52. Would the committee consider sending a donation from this fund to the Mountain Rescue?

## **8. Honorary Members**

BHa informed those present that the club currently has 10 Honorary Members, this is the maximum number we can have until club membership has increased. Honorary membership is worked out as a percentage of club membership.

## **9. Any other Business**

- a. Jenny Rydell asked if all members were aware that they should have a first aid kit on their person when walking. MB confirmed that it is mentioned in the information sent out to new members. MB asked everyone to make sure their emergency contact cards were up to date and to let her know if they needed a replacement.
- b. BHa announced that spaces were still available at the Christmas lunch on 7 December at the Vinery, anyone interested to contact Jean Hibbert.
- c. BHa reminded members that TC would be near the entrance doors should anyone want to renew their membership this evening.
- d. Andree Lambert announced that the High Legh walk on 6 December would have a stop at High Legh garden centre for tea and scone. If you are interested, you need to let Andree know so that she can inform the garden centre of numbers.
- e. BHa also reminded all present that places were still available at the Christmas lunches to Blaze Farm (Heather Wykes) and Knott Inn, Rushton Spencer (Jill Weir).

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

### **Date of next Annual General Meeting**

The next AGM will be held at All Saints Church Hall, Hale Barns on Thursday 7 November 2024 at 7.30pm.

