

SOUTH EAST BERKS RAMBLERS

38th Annual General Meeting

Saturday 09th November at 2.00pm

The Seeby Hall, St Michael's Pastoral Centre, Lower Church Road, Sandhurst GU47 8HN

Present: 17 Members including the committee.

1. The Chairman's Welcome and Introduction of the Committee

Shirley Poulton welcomed everyone and thanked the John and Sue Campbell for the pre-meeting walk and the ladies who had donated cakes.

2. Apologies for absence.

Received from: Andrew and Anthea Johnson, Marion and Bill Cope, Brian and Diane Kemp, David Hunt, Judith MacLennan, Debbie and Chris Walker, Ann Harrison, Peter Maguire, Bruce Collins and David Price.

3. Approval of previous minutes and matters arising.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved by a show of hands and there were no matters arising.

Proposed by Kate Wratten and seconded by Penny Tomlin.

4. Chairman's Report - Shirley Poulton

The Chairman's Report was made available on line and paper copies were available at the meeting. The report is attached in Appendix 1.

Shirley Poulton expanded on her report to members at the meeting. Shirley asked if anyone would like to join the committee and that the present committee would be attending a thank you lunch at the Bird in Hand in November which will be paid for by Ramblers funds.

The members approved the report by a show of hands.

5. Treasurer's Report - Steve Wells

The Treasurer's Report was made available on line and paper copies were available at the meeting. The report is attached in Appendix 2.

Steve Wells went through the report. Steve explained that although money was made available to SEBR from Area for local footpath maintenance, The Ranger. Rob Solomon had not requested any donation for 18

months. It may be that Ramblers could review the amount given to SEBR as we do not use as much as in the past.

Shirley reported that two planks of wood crossing The Cut had been temporarily replaced and we will be donating a sum of money towards this.

A question was asked about the donation of money from a visiting member, Nick, from the USA. Shirley explained that the donation was put into the general funds and that she had been in touch with Nick to keep him informed and will continue to keep him informed whenever his donation has been spent. Nick had a preference for the money to go to a project in Frost Folly.

Steve explained that full accounts are available for inspection by request.

Steve thanked Kate Wratten for examining the accounts.

Proposed by Rodney De Costa and Seconded by Roger Jones.

The members approved the report by a show of hands.

6. Membership Secretary - Andy Young

Andy's report was available on online and in paper form at the meeting. It is attached as Index 3.

Andy went through his report in brief and explained that membership had fallen to 257, a fall of 6 members. Approximately 10% of members attended walks.

Shirley explained that Ramblers' membership was falling in all areas of the UK.

A new member, Diana De Costa said how welcoming members had been when attending walks with the group.

7. Publicity Secretary - Brian Poulton

Brian's report was available online and in paper form at the meeting. It is attached as Appendix 4.

Brian went through his report and explained that it was difficult to tell where member's had heard about Ramblers, but that approximately 85% of members were recruited from the main Ramblers' website.

Brian described how attempts to be present at 2 local events had not gone ahead as either too costly or not available. Steve Wells asked if identifying sites was a task for Area and Colin Bird asked if we had tried Warfield fete as this was only £20 per pitch.

Brian agreed to look at various sites in our area and to ask Area for advice on the many walking festivals that they hold during the year.

An SEBR publicity presence would be at the Santa Dash which Shirley and Brian are joining in November.

8. Footpaths Secretary - Colin Bird

Colin's report was available in advance online and in paper form at the meeting. It is attached as Index 4.

Colin went through his report in detail and told the meeting that through his role as Chairman of the Countryside Access Forum he had the opportunity to identify and action any areas that were of interest to SEBR.

John Campbell asked about a locked gate at Bucklers park. Colin advised that he had been unsuccessful in getting this opened.

Colin asked if anyone had a wish list of any land where a connecting route could be introduced, especially on Council land, he would pursue it. Colin had been instrumental in obtaining a new access path into Frost Folly.

9. Walks Programme Secretary - David Hunt

The Walks Programme report was available on line in advance and in paper form on the day. It is attached as Index 5.

Brian Poulton went through David's report in his absence, Brian explained that as we now have to have a new Website we need to find a new way of connecting the Walks Programme to the main Ramblers' website. Brian is in the process of completing the new website and is hoping that the site will be running in a few day's time.

10. Election of Officers and Committee

The Chairman proposed that the officers and committee members willing to stand again could be re-elected en-masse as there had been no nominations received contesting any of these positions.

The Committee and Officers were elected by a unanimous show of hands.

Shirley Poulton invited three members to explain their roles in more detail.

10.a. Ed Berridge - Holiday Organiser

Ed explained that a group of members had visited Lake Garda, Italy in the spring and all members had taken part in organised walks during that week.

22 Members will be travelling to the Western Algarve in Portugal from 30th March to 6th April 2025.

Ed told the meeting that if any member feels that they would like to suggest a trip within the UK or abroad, to let him know and he will look into it.

10b Alan Hoskins - Sunday Short Walks Coordinator

Alan explained that the Sunday walks were generally 6 miles in length and approximately 2 and a half hours in length, starting at an earlier time of 9.30m. The walks usually take place in the northern area of Bracknell.

The Sunday walks often attract members from London and other nearby groups. Some visitors are from overseas. Alan thanked the other walk leaders Andrew Johnson, Ed Berridge, Brian and Shirley and Andy Young who have covered for him when he is not available. There have been 41 walks with an average of 16 walkers with a record 24 in September.

Alan would like to organise a long Sunday walk once a month to attract younger walkers.

Walks this year have included a picnic in Windsor Great Park to see Royals entering carriages prior to Ascot Races and a trip from Clapham Junction to Battersea Power Station.

Alan explained that he likes to ensure his walks are safe, timely and interesting.
Shirley led the thanks to Alan.

10.c John Campbell - Tuesday Short Walk Coordinator

John explained that the Tuesday walks took place on the first Tuesday of the month and set off from the Moor Lakes car park through Finchampstead Ridges and back. There were generally 4 - 9 walkers. The walks attract newer walkers or walkers from other groups.

Shirley asked what happened if John was unavailable. Alison MacKenzie offered to step in to cover these instances.

Shirley advised that Steve Wells was organising a walk along the Kennet and Avon Canal on the first Saturday of the month. The walks include public transport as the railway runs parallel to the canal. Two sections had already taken place and the next section, Midgeon to Theale will take place on Saturday 7th December. There is another leg from There to Reading. All members can join in if they wish.

11. Election of Honorary Examiner of Accounts

Kate Wratten was proposed by Steve Wells and seconded by Denise Jones.

12. Any Other Business

There were no topics for discussion and the meeting closed at 15.05.