

Avon Area AGM
Minutes of meeting held on Saturday 12 February 2011 at
Easter Compton Village Hall
Hosted by Severnside Group.

Present:

David Waterstone – Chairman	Jill Fysh – Secretary
Chris Gaymer – Minutes Secretary	Julie Boston – Bristol Group
Maureen Johnson – Bristol & Information Officer	Val Epcutt – Bristol Group
Keith Budd – Bristol Group	Adrian Noyes – Treasurer Avon Area
Tessa Wyatt – Norton Radstock Group	Pam Billington – North Radstock Group
Simone Llimmer – Norton Radstock Group	Marietta Starbuck – Vice President
Margaret Ruse – Bristol Group	Geoff Harman – Bristol Group
Audrey Harman – Bristol Group	Mary Cross – Bristol Group
Warren March – Bristol Group	Linda Smith – Southwold Group
Ginny Lindow – Bristol Group	Ron Phelp- Access Officer
Narijan Singh – Severnside	Alan Holder – Somerset
Jenny Aspinall - Severnside	Joyce Powell – Severnside
Julie Bebbington – Bristol	Martin Bebbington – Bristol
Maureen Lambert – Bristol	Sue Holloway – Bristol
David West – Severnside	Sylvi Garratt – Severnside
Pauline Hart - Severnside	Jean Aellen – Severnside
George Clark – Southwold	Sylvia Parson – Severnside
Peter Mills - Vice President & Southwold	Heather Rickards - Severnside
Peter Gould – President & Bristol	Susan Carter – Bristol
Bob Hall – Bristol	Jo Wall – Severnside
Tom Ellson - Brunel	

The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked Severnside for hosting the meeting. He said that this would be his last meeting as Chairman, and then asked Heather Rickards to welcome attendees on behalf of Severnside Group.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Mrs P Davison (Bath) Sylvia Popham , Carolyn and Robert Muston and Martin Firth (all Severnside).

2. – Minutes of AGM held on 6 February 2010

These were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. – Matters arising. There were no matters arising.

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Jill Fysh and seconded by Adrian Noyes and accepted unanimously by the meeting..

4 Adoption of Annual Report and Accounts

1. Adrian Noyes reported that there was an amendment to the budget for the coming year; though the totals for the budget remained unchanged, the distribution to groups would be on the basis of £3.07 per head, which would change the amounts distributed to each Group. This amendment had been included as an insertion in the group report

2. The report from Kingswood Ramblers Group was also included as an insertion in the Annual Report.

Subject to the above amendments adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts was proposed by Jean Aellen and seconded by Peter Mills and adopted by the meeting.

5. Appointment of Independent Examiner

G Harman was proposed by Peter Gould and Seconded by Maureen Mills and agreed unanimously.

6a. Election of Officers

President – Peter Gould was proposed by Jill Fysh and Seconded by Julie Boston and duly re-elected unanimously.

Vice Presidents – Sylvia Popham, Peter Mills , Katherine Bullen and Marietta Starbuck were proposed en bloc by Tessa Wyatt and seconded by George Clark and duly re-elected unanimously.

Chairman Tom Ellson was proposed by Maureen Johnson, seconded by Jill Fysh and elected unanimously.

Secretary – Jill Fysh was proposed by Sylvi Garrett, Seconded by Heather Rickard and duly re-elected unanimously.

Treasurer – Adrian Noyes was proposed by Geoff Harland and seconded by Peter Mills and duly re-elected unanimously.

Minutes Secretary – Chris Gaymer was proposed by Adrian Noyes, seconded by Jo Wall and duly re-elected unanimously

Footpath Secretaries Peter Gould (Bristol) Ron Phelps (South Glos) and David Waterstone (BANES) were proposed by Maureen Johnson, seconded by Marietta Starbuck and relected unanimously en bloc.

Access Officer Ron Phelps was proposed by Jenny Aspinell and Seconded by Peter Gould and duly re-elected unanimously.

Environmental and planning Officers David Waterstone, Susan Carter and Bob Hall were proposed by Peter Gould and seconded by Marietta Starbuck and re-elected unanimously en bloc.

Press Officer – Julie Boston volunteered to fill this post. She was proposed by Maureen Johnson, seconded by Val Spence and elected unanimously.

Membership Secretary Jean Aellen was proposed by Pauline Hart, seconded by Jo Wall, and duly elected unanimously.

Information Officer Maureen Johnson was proposed by Julie Boston and seconded by Val Spence and duly re-elected unanimously.

Web Master Ken Mill was proposed by Tessa Wyatt and seconded by Jenny Aspinall and re-elected unanimously.

Representatives of individual members – There were no candidates.

6b – Election of Delegates to General Council

Jill Fysh and Ruth Ginver were proposed by Adrian Noyes and Seconded by Mareitta Starbuck and elected unanimously.

7 – Any Other Business

Peter Gould reported that in response to the Postcard Campaign we were offered a print run of 2000 which would cost the Area £196.00 the cost to be divided between Groups.

David Waterstone thanked Jill for her hard work as Secretary, and presented her with a rose bush. Jill, on behalf of the meeting, thanked David for all his hard work as Chairman over the past three years.

8. Date and Venue of next meeting to be announced later

9. David Waterstone introduced the Speaker, Tom Franklin, CEO of the Ramblers.

Tom gave an interesting and informative talk. He began by comparing the changes over the 75 years of the Ramblers Association existence. In 1935, there was limited access to the countryside; there were no National Parks, no Long Distance paths, and no OS maps showing walking routes; we now had all three, together with an army of volunteers, working to enforce and improve footpath access, but we still face challenges. 18% of land is in Forestry Commission hands, and this gives the public excellent access. There was concern that the Bill for the Sale of Forests would be pushed through before the consultation process was complete, and the concerns were not so much concerning the sale as concerns regarding continued guaranteed access in perpetuity. On Coastline access the continuous link round the English Coast should link up with Wales and Scotland, and this initiative is spearheaded by the RA.

Ramblers had cleared some 600 paths, and some 6 million people now took part in leisure walking. The RA were constantly looking at how savings could be made and how to improve efficiency. Initial membership problems have been sorted out, and the RA were beginning to see benefits from gift aid schemes and direct debit schemes.

There were 4 priorities for the future:

1. *Footpaths* - Campaign on footpath issues, both coastal and forest, and including the 'Mystery Walker' scheme.
2. *Membership*. This had been declining for 10 years. The aim is to finish the year with a net gain on membership. Direct Debit payments had been encouraged, with a proposed scheme for a DD payment of £3.00 per month.
3. *More income*. Obtain grant income, sponsorship, partnerships.
4. Continue to become more efficient and effective.

It was a challenging time for RA in many ways, but also an exciting time.

David Waterstone thanked Tom for coming along to the meeting, and the meeting closed at 2.55 pm.