



**The Ramblers
South Somerset Group**

Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting
held on Saturday 2nd November 2019 at 2.00pm
at East Coker Village Hall

Present: Roger Cripps (Acting Joint Chairman) and 16 members

Apologies: Eileen Cripps, June and Brian Curtis, Jenny Lucas Marion and Derek Pattison, Tony Prior, Rosemary Thomson,

Minutes of the last meeting – The Minutes were read and approved. Proposed: Stuart Thomson, Seconded: Carl Earl. The Chairman then signed the Minutes.

Chairman's Report

Roger Cripps, Acting Joint Chairman, gave thanks to fellow committee members and officers for their efforts over the past year. Carl Earl now on the Committee. The Committee nearly up to full complement. Thanks to all the walk leaders for their efforts in maintaining a full programme and without whom there would be no walks, Linda and David Fawthrop for the use of their home for the committee meetings. Linda Fawthrop, the Minutes Secretary. Thanks also to the Walk Coordinators, Jean Verkroost, June Curtis and Phil Bradshaw, David Fawthrop for putting the programme and walks together. Thanks to Ruth Goodland for arranging the Christmas lunch, Summer Supper, emailing programmes and organising printing and collection of the programmes and Somerset Rambler. Thanks to the inhouse catering team for keeping us refreshed. Thanks to all who have attended this year's 50th AGM.

We have a full programme of walks with members happy to alternate between C and D walks. David and Linda Fawthrop keep a tally of attendance which drops in the summer and with numbers dependent on weather. Carl Earl reported there are normally twelve walkers at the weekends. Some new people have joined as they have seen walks on the web site which makes the website worthwhile.

Christmas lunch will again be the Muddled Man. The Summer Supper was held at the Quarry, Keinton Mandeville which was successful although some felt the service a little quick with the event over by 8.15. Suggestions for 2020 are invited from members with a decision being made at this meeting.

John Oliver organised the group holiday to Menorca with 12 members attending but has asked Roger Clarke to take over which he agreed to do but subsequently withdrawn so nothing decided. The Chairman thanked John for organising this event.

The Area Holiday was held at Sidmouth, a very local venue with two members attending. Next year the Area Holiday is being held in Cromford and if anyone is interested David Fawthrop has details.

Sadly Ken Pritchard of Somerton who lead C walks passed away during the year.

Paul Cullen-James has resigned as Area South Footpath Secretary and Peter Milligan has offered to take this place.

1st Aid Training at St John Ambulance nine from South Somerset attended, 5 committee members. Highly recommended and walk leaders are encouraged to attend if it comes around again.

Secretary's Report

Another year has passed; almost without us noticing that we have reached our 50th. AGM. Our membership is not quite as high as it has been in the past but, nevertheless, we are still one of the larger Groups in Somerset Area. Last year I had to tell you that membership in that year had declined by 2. This year, up to 2/09/2019, it has risen by 3 to 261.

The membership department at Central Office tells us that there is a Ramblers member app which is downloadable for members. It contains new features such as 3000 walking routes with instructions, photos, and descriptions.

As far as the Membership Secretary's work is concerned Central Office send me brief details of new members joining and others who leave, about twice a month. Once a month they send a complete list of the Group's membership which includes the leavers and joiners already notified to us. This duplication makes one think you have 2 members when, in fact, there is only one.

It is probably worth repeating one paragraph from last year's Secretary's notes and that is for the telephone numbers at Central Office. Once upon a time they used to be easy to find in the Handbook which was issued.

Switchboard	020 3961 3900
Volunteer Support	020 3961 3170
Membership Services	020 3961 3232

This year, since I believe we are allowed to communicate with all members for whom we have email addresses in connection with an AGM notice, I have sent them a copy of our 50th. Agenda in the hope that we may see a good attendance at the meeting.

A new Ramblers brochure has been issued by Central Office for use after 1st. October 2019. A joining form and full details of subscription rates are not given but can be obtained on line or on application to Head Office. Some rates have increased slightly this year, but not all.

Ian Rendall reported that Committee members now receive membership details so we know who are genuine members and who might not be. It was felt that we should know who the members are. Majority of people apply online. Ian Rendall thought the subscription rate should be included in the printed leaflet. If you are not a member you can attend a couple of walks if you do not walk with other rambler groups. David Fawthrop said the front of our programme states that membership cards should be carried on all walks. Stuart Thomson mentioned some walking groups sign walkers in at the start of a walk and as ramblers we are supposed to sign members in.

Treasurer's Report

We finished the year with a balance of £668 which is slightly more than budgeted as we didn't spend so much on the work party tools and travel expenses as expected.

Nearly all of our income came from Ramblers Head Office based on our group membership headcount plus £40 from Ramblers Holidays Worldwide as a reward for one of our members booking a holiday through them. Something worth remembering if any other member is planning a walking holiday. For next year our income from Ramblers will also be based on our headcount.

Nearly all of our expenditure is for printing and posting the walk programmes and newsletters. We will pay travel expenses for the working party members from the Groups funds as Somerset County Council Highways footpath team are planning to reimburse the Group £30 per working party activity.

The accounts have been independently examined by Peter Bradford and have been submitted to Ramblers Area to meet their deadline of 21 Oct.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Phil Bradshaw and seconded by Richard Yates. The Report was accepted unanimously.

Carl submits Working Party Claims quarterly to SCC at the rate of £30 per working party. They now owe SSRA £90.00. Roger Cripps reported that if you put in a working party expenses claim you are reimbursed at 28p a mile. Surveyors get 45p a mile for surveys. This comes from the County. Expense claims are submitted to Ramblers Area by 21 October deadline.

Phil Bradshaw brought up the question of travelling expenses for long distances to investigate path diversions. Stuart Thomson said if he puts in a claim it will be paid.

Programme Secretaries Reports

Jean Verkroost Sunday walks no report

Phil Bradshaw Short walks

Phil Bradshaw has Jim Fewkes folder of walks and suggested a library for walks, members lodging a walk into a central library with map and directions as they appear in the programme. Stuart Thomson drew attention to web sites that had walks covering our area www.adobe.co.uk Log in using ; user name: pubwalksinsomerset@gmail.com. password: **Walks4All** . Maps will be found under Document Cloud. Jim's folder contained about 35 walks and Les Stevens had taken advantage of the facility. Phil said it was difficult to fill every walk and mentioned he was leading six walks in the next programme. Could gaps be left? If there was only one walk for that date then that was to be the case. It was strongly iterated that Programme Secretaries are NOT expected or obliged to fill the gaps themselves. C and D walks are much closer in length nowadays.

June Curtis Medium walks New joiners have been very willing to lead local walks. Four new active walk leaders have meant a full programme. These are Bill Tregullis, Sue Appleby, Philip and Michelle Bowers-Tolley. It is still a struggle to find sufficient walk leaders.

David Fawthrop, Programme Co-ordinator

David mentioned he and Linda have put together the programme for the last six years and have decided it is time to take a rest and stand down as Programme Co-ordinator. The person taking over will have to be computer literate. It was felt the programme looks tired and needs a new view, boosting the production a little. There was discussion about whether the three programmes need to be combined and set out separately. We would get the basic information of walks to everyone. Back and front pages needed. Wendy Yates suggested a printer might be able to undertake the work and amalgamate the programme. Ruth Goodland pointed out that most of the front and back pages have standard information and only changes when personnel change. Advertisement for the post to go in the next programme advertising the vacancy. David said he would certainly carry on for the next two programmes. Wishes to finish by the next AGM. Liaise with Ruth to have a round robin sent out re the vacancy.

Ruth reported that the change to the Clover Press was meant we were being charged the same as previously when with the Taunton Group and much easier to pick up. .

Roger Cripps thanked Jean Verkroost, Website Manager for her efforts in keeping the website up to date.

Footpath Secretaries

Carl Earl - Somerset Area Footpath Secretary Report he is sent any information, requests and notices on rights of way and sends out to appropriate footpath secretaries. No need for reports from the individual footpath secretaries. Carl liaises with footpath secretaries on the ground, collecting responses, ensuring consistency in responding to the Highway Authority (the County). Each group footpath secretary may have issues of particular concern that they want to draw attention to. It is important to bear in mind we are notified at the consultation stage before it gets into the formal application of the order. At this stage we can object or we can oppose but suggest alternatives or we can raise no objections. If we oppose but suggest alternatives the landowner may well accept. Group footpath secretaries know the details and they know the issues and they can check it out and send back findings to Carl Earl. Carl acts as the post co-ordinator looking at points of interest and give the details to the group footpath secretary to report and deal with the problems.

Volunteer Working Party

Carl Earl has taken over the working party co-ordination role and mentioned we have had four outings and claims are made every quarter. Payment has not as yet been received and will be followed up. New recruits to join us on the working parties. Do not necessarily need eight on every working party. Working parties organised by the County Council Officer responsible for liaising with volunteers and Jake Taylor was excellent but has left and as far as is known they have not appointed his replacement. Working parties work is dependent on the work before organised with the wardens. No work taking place in November.

Awaiting notification of the first aid course organised by the working party organiser

Roger Cripps reported that surveys have been sent out. Eight surveyors on the list and require another two new surveyors to check out footpaths. Sue Appleby was suggested as a suitable surveyor. Carl Earl will ask the Sunday walkers if they wish to volunteer. A Volunteer Officer is vital to get the work done. Carl Earl said he sometimes contacts a warden direct to see if something can be agreed.

Publicity Officer's Report

Another year of continuing regular distribution of programmes, to Tourist boards in the outlying towns. All the clothing shops receive programmes and we spread the programmes out more. They all disappear. Do not get much response in the way of new members. Making sure that people have the information they need.

Election of Officers

Chairman	Vacant
Secretary:	Ian Rendall
Treasurer:	Stuart Thomson
Programme Secretaries	
Sunday Walks:	Jean Verkroost
Thursday Medium Walks	June Curtis
Thursday Short Walks	Phil Bradshaw
Programme Co-ordinator	David Fawthrop
Footpath Secretaries:	
North	Jean Verkroost
East	Phil Bradshaw
South	Peter Milligan
West	Roger Cripps
Minutes Secretary:	Linda Fawthrop
Publicity Officer:	Wendy Yates
Working Party Organiser:	Carl Earl

Election of Committee

Prior to the meeting there were ten members. Phil Bradshaw, Roger Cripps, June Curtis, Carl Earl, David Fawthrop, Linda Fawthrop, John Oliver, Ian Rendall, Stuart Thomson and Wendy Yates. Committee proposed by Ruth Goodland and seconded by Richard Yates.

Les Stather, the Area Chair, has proposed that there be only one Area Meeting a year to coincide with the Area AGM. The Area cannot be abolished since The Ramblers cannot operate as an effective operation if the Head Office had to deal with so many groups over the country. Head Office require the Area to be the filter point of communication. Funding comes via the Area so central office does not deal with hundreds of different groups. Money comes to area and distributed by the Area Treasurer. Footpath Issues - particularly important in dealing with one Highway Authority Somerset County Council there is a risk if the group is independent and just relate to the centre that one group may decide as a policy that they will not oppose a diversion whereas another group feel diversion has to be opposed. Co-ordinate the responses and lose initial co-ordination. Publicity is a local issue. If you want to put a motion to the General Council of the Ramblers you put it from the group to the area for discussion at the national general council. Do not need to meet three times a year to do this. Need Area Treasurer, Secretary and Chairman. There must be at least one meeting a year. If a major issue comes up within the area will meet up.

Need written confirmation from the Secretary of our agreement to Les Stather's suggestion as to what has been agreed.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

It was agreed Peter Bradford be re-appointed as verifier for the accounts for the coming year. Proposed: Richard Yates, seconded: Mervyn King.

Any other Business

Summer Supper Venue 2020

The Windwhistle Inn was a suggested option but the new occupants who have been in for a very short period have not had long enough to build up a client base so it was felt this was too risky. The Yeovil Golf Club did not offer enough possibilities for a walk beforehand. It was agreed by the attendees that the next Summer Supper should be held on 9 July at the Lamb and Lark, Limington with a target cost of £17.50 a head consisting of two courses and coffee/tea. Ruth Goodland was asked to investigate!

Date and time of Next AGM– Saturday 7th November 2020 at East Coker Village Hall at 2.00 pm. It was suggested a later start time for the walk possibly 11 am to be agreed with Derek Lucas.

Meeting closed with celebratory drinks and cakes to mark South Somerset's 50th birthday.

Ramblers Association South Somerset Group
Balance Sheet as at year end 30 September 2019

<u>Assets</u>	2018/19	2017/18
General Fund at year beginning 1 October 2018	£828.14	£708.39
Income less expenditure 2018/19	-£159.21	£119.75
Balance	£668.93	£828.14

<u>Income</u>		
From RA Group entitlement	£375.95	£750.00
Interest	£0.00	£0.00
Self funded Sales of Programmes, donations	£40.00	£10.00
Total Income	£415.95	£760.00

<u>Expenditure</u>		
Walk programme	£316.46	£461.78
Publicity / Newsletter	£144.19	£138.24
Practical Work	£49.75	£0.00
Meetings	£34.94	£30.75
Admin	£4.32	£2.90
Campaigns & Casework	£25.50	
Total expenditure	£575.16	£640.25

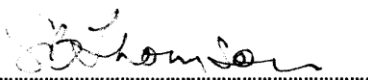
Income less Expenditure	-£159.21	£119.75
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BANK BALANCE

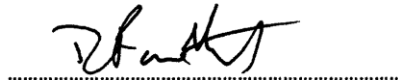
Opening Balance as per Balance Sheet	£828.14	£708.39
Plus deposits cleared	£415.95	£760.00
Less payments cleared	£575.16	£640.25
Current Bank Balance	£668.93	£828.14

NET FUNDS

£668.93	£828.14
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Treasurer



Chairman

I have examined the records of the group's income and expenditure for the year ended 30th September 2019 and I have received all necessary explanations. As with all charitable and similar organisations, there can be no checking that all income has been accounted for until it has been entered in the books. With this proviso it is my opinion that the above accounts give a true and fair view of the group's finances.



P. Bradford

Independent. Examiner