



# South Cotswold Ramblers' Group

## Newsletter - December 2020

Published each year in February, June and October. We look forward to hearing from you with stories, opinions, photos, poetry, art, funny tales, cartoons, appeals, you name it. This edition was edited by Sally 01453 872729, email: newsletter@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

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## Invitation to our Annual General Meeting

December 2020

Dear Members,

We warmly invite you to the **South Cotswold Ramblers' Group ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** on Thursday 14 January 2021 at 7.30pm (**via Zoom**).

A link to Zoom will be on the Message Board on the website 2 days before. There will be a Practice Zoom on Friday 8 January at 7.30pm for those not familiar with Zoom. Details of this will also appear on the Message Board on the website.

All of you are most welcome.

At the meeting Reports and Plans are discussed. Then all committee members stand down and are eligible to seek re-election as officers or committee members. We look forward to welcoming new people too. Posts will be as shown in last year's minutes overleaf.

Please do come. We look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

*Andrew Hawkins*  
Group Secretary (01452 857958)

**SOUTH COTSWOLD RAMBLERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 14 JANUARY 2021 at**

**7.30pm**  
**(via Zoom)**

**AGENDA**

1. Brief welcome by the Group Chairman, Richard Davis
2. Apologies for absence which have been notified to the Secretary before the meeting
3. Approval of the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting – attached
4. Matters arising not likely to be covered in reports below and notified to the Secretary before the meeting
5. Adoption of the 2019 – 2020 Reports already circulated
  - a) Chairman's Report
  - b) Footpath Secretary's Report
  - c) Treasurer's Report
6. Election of Officers and Committee Members to comprise en-bloc re-election of last year's officers (see minutes) plus appointment of:
  - a. Malcolm Taylor – Footpath Secretary
  - b. Ros Burnip – Membership Secretary
  - c. ? – New Chairman
  - d. ? – New Vice-Chairman

If there are any other nominations then please inform the Secretary no later than a day before the Annual General Meeting

7. Appointment of Honorary Auditor
8. Motions of which notice has been received by 31 December 2020
9. Any other business notice of which has been given in writing to the secretary prior to the meeting

# **Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting of the South Cotswold Ramblers Group**

**held on Saturday 16th November 2019 at Rodborough Tabernacle, Rodborough, Stroud, GL5 3UJ.**

Everyone was welcomed by the Chairman, Richard Davis.

## **1. Present**

Richard Davis (Chairman), Mike Garner (Vice Chairman), Andrew Hawkins (Secretary) , Brian Witcombe (Treasurer), Sally Davis, Bernard Smith, Penny Fernando, Jim White, Caroline White, Patrick Marks, Angela Marks, Diana Davis, Heather Garner, Jenny Sawtell, Ann Adams, Janet Williams, Gwen Chaney, Susan Jones, Peter Jones, Colin Boosey, Ron Burnip, Goff Lane, Trish Lane, Ann Ruther, Brian Ruther, Margaret Turner, Olivia Gunn, Michele Holden, Anne Eamer, Janet Hale, Sheelagh Collier, Sue Clark, Robert Aubrey, Janet Aubrey, Lawrence Arnall, David Richardson, John Geoghegan, Derek Pitt, Ray Floater, Jonathan Cullum, Charlie Morriss, Cheryl Lang, John Lang, Sheelagh Witcombe.

## **2. Apologies**

Keith Eyles, Pam Wright, Steve Priddey, Rosemary Burne, Bob Frewin, Chris Creswick, Karen D'Amico, Tony D'Amico, James Skinner, Linda Skinner, Lenneke Jansens, Jill Stuart, Sarah Booth.

## **3. Agreement of the Minutes of 2018 AGM**

The minutes were approved as accurate and signed by the Chairman, Richard Davis.

## **4. Matters Arising**

There were no Matters arising from the previous meeting.

## **5. Annual Reports**

### **5a Chairman's Report**

Richard Davis presented his report (printed in the Newsletter).

### **5b Footpath Secretary's Report**

Bob Frewin report was printed in the newsletter. Bob Frewin was unable to attend the meeting

Richard Davis thanked Bob Frewin for all the hard work that he and his team do.

### **5c Treasurer's Report**

Accounts were distributed prior to the meeting and were available if required on receipt of a stamped address envelope.

Report attached.

We have declined Central Funding again approx. £150 per quarter.

Richard Davis praised the good state that our finances are in.

The reports 5a, 5b, and 5c were accepted and this was proposed by Sue Jones and Patrick Marks.

## **6. Election of Officers and Committee Members**

<i>Officer</i>	<i>Nomination</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Seconded</i>
Group Chairman	Richard Davis	Andrew Hawkins	Ann Adams
Vice Chairman	Mike Garner	Derek Pitt	Bernard Smith
Hon Secretary	Andrew Hawkins	Colin Boosey	Brian Ruther

<i>Officer</i>	<i>Nomination</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Seconded</i>
Hon Treasurer	Brian Witcombe	Andrew Hawkins	Patrick Marks
Membership Secretary	Mike Garner )		
Newsletter Editor	Sally Davis )		
Joint Website Editor	Mike Garner )		
Joint Website Editor	Sally Davis )	Block Vote	
Walks Programme Coordinator	Mike Garner )	Bernard Smith	Ann Adams
Publicity Officer	Vacant )		
Committee Members	Diana Davis )		

### **Footpath Support Group**

Footpath Chairman	Bob Frewin )		
Footpath Secretary	Bob Frewin )		
Footpath Vice Chairman	Vacant )	Block Vote	
Footpath Minutes Secretary	John Corry )	Bernard Smith	Andrew Hawkins
Committee Members	Penny Fernando )		
	Charlie Morrisey )		
	Gwen Chaney )		

### **Walks Collectors**

Walks Collectors	John Lang )		
	Ann Adams )		
	John Geoghegan )	Block Vote	
	Jacqui Pycroft )	Mike Garner	Brian Witcombe
	Olivia Gunn )		
	Karen D'Amico )		
	Margaret Turner )		
	Sarah Booth )		
	Lenneke Jansens )		

### **7. Appointment of Hon Independent Examiner (Auditor)**

Steve Priddey to continue as the Auditor. Proposed by Brian Ruther and Seconded by Colin Boosey.

**8. Motions Received by the Due Date** Thursday Evening Walks – Raised by Ann Adams. Do they continue? Towards the end of the summer the numbers are very small. Richard Davis has decided that they will continue for the time being providing we have the leaders. There is normally a core group who normally turn up. Possibly put something on the notice board to advertise the evening walk. The Rodborough evening walks are quite popular mainly with people from South Cotswold Ramblers with a small contingent of Rodborough people. Also the possibility of press publicity e.g. Stroud News and Journal

**9. Any Other Business** Thanks were given to everyone who provided cakes. There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 13:50.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Not a lot to report really for the last year unless you are interested in my exploits in the garden. I hope you have all come through unscathed so far and maybe, like Di and I, the enforced isolation has given you chance to sit back and think, and decide on your personal ways ahead with possible life changing implications. I think we have all missed walking together and, while there is still some way to go before we can start to walk properly as a group again, we can start to plan, although it is difficult to see things quite getting back to the way they were in the foreseeable future.

A number of members have been meeting up since the middle of summer for informal walks within Government guidelines and Ann Adams is about to lead the first programmed walk as I write, the walk being fully booked with numbers restricted to 15. I hope to see more leaders coming forward after Christmas so that we can gradually build up to a full walks programme.

As previously reported Bob Frewin has resigned as Footpath Secretary, thanks again Bob, and has been replaced by Malcolm Taylor who has been doing a marvellous job given that circumstances have precluded the usual work of the Footpath Committee. Hopefully the situation will soon improve and he can look for more support. Area has been kept very busy with the A417 enquiry and following lengthy discussions with a variety of opinions expressed finally came up with a very creditable submission. Penny Fernando made a great contribution to this document.

Finally you will no doubt have seen an email which has been sent to members in which I indicated that I wished to relinquish the post of Chairman, a position which Di and I have adopted with all of our volunteering roles. I hope that there will be someone in the membership who will be prepared to take the role on, to lead the Group out of the current crisis, get the walks programme up and running again, encourage the Group's involvement in all other Ramblers activities and reverse the decline in membership which we have experienced.

I don't wish to single out anybody in particular but would just like to say thank you to all those who have helped with Group activities over the last most difficult of years.

*Richard Davis*

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## **FOOTPATH SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Following Bob Frewin's retirement from the role in the summer, after many years of much appreciated service in the role, I have been acting as Footpath Secretary for the Group and hope to be elected to the position at the AGM. Obviously, the pandemic has severely limited our activity this year so mostly I have been tracking planning applications and forwarding details of PROW problems to the authorities.

The Pathwatch system is now running well. Any problems reported through it are automatically sent not just to Stroud District Council but directly to their works office. I am copied on them as well, so I do ask all members to use this as their primary reporting tool. Since I took on the role in September there have been 37 such reports, about double last year's running rate.

Much time has been spent reviewing and discussing a revised proposal from Highways England for the A417 Missing Link project, converting the stretch of road between the Cowley roundabout and the Brockworth bypass to dual carriageway. Significant improvements have been made, in particular with regard to safe crossing points, but some remaining concerns were highlighted in the Area response.

A site visit to a locked gate at Gloucester Beeches and subsequent diligent research by Charlie Morris has resulted in a County Council acknowledgement that the right of way was not extinguished by the A417 dualling and a commitment to pursue the matter with the land owner, a satisfactory result.

The District Council provides notice of all planning applications, which makes monitoring them relatively easy. None have required site visits, and I have only needed to register comments on two. A very large application in the Council's area, a scoping request for up to 2,700 houses just south of Tuffley, is being handled by the Gloucester group, the location falls within their remit.

Finally, thanks to those of you who have volunteered to investigate problems with footpaths in your local parishes. I am pleased to note that we have gained one new volunteer who has already taken care of a site survey for us. Others would of course be most welcome.

*Malcolm*



**SOUTH COTSWOLD GROUP OF THE RAMBLERS**

## **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS - 1 OCTOBER 2019 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

<b>A. RECEIPTS</b>	2019/20	2018/19	B. PAYMENTS	2019/20	2018/19 £
Funds from Ramblers			AGM expenses		33.60
Donations	<b>260.00</b>	470.00	Publication/print	<b>128.70</b>	134.00
Advertising receipts	<b>170.00</b>	255.00	Admin:Postage/station./Photostat.	<b>126.19</b>	139.79
AGM income	<b>59.17</b>	35.20	Website/ newsletter	<b>277.18</b>	465.98
Book sales			Sundries (footpath improvement)	<b>301.92</b>	100.00
Bank Interest			Promotion/campaigns		873.37
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>489.17</b>	<u>760.20</u>	Total Payments	<b>833.99</b>	
Surplus / (Deficit)	(344.82)	(113.17)			
<b>C. BALANCE SHEET</b>			<b>D. FUND ALLOCATION</b>		
<b>Group bank bal. at year start</b>			<b>2,000.00</b>		
Surplus / (Deficit)			Designated		
<b>Total at bank at year end</b>	<b>3387.94</b>		Unrestricted		
<b>E. HOLIDAYS AND SOCIAL EVENTS FUND</b>			<b>Total Fund</b>		
Balance brought forward 1/10/2019			<b>3387.94</b>		
Bank Interest					
Members' Contributions					
Expenses Paid					
<b>Balance carried forward 30/9/2020</b>	<b>241.02</b>				
Group Accounts prepared by					
Brian Witcombe					
Honorary Group Treasurer					

## TREASURER'S REPORT 2019-2020

Covid 19 may have devastated the walks programme and upset much else but it has had little effect on our financial position which remains strong.

**Holiday Account:** The balance in this account is £241.02 which is a good amount to have ready to pay deposits for any future events. Sally ensured that receipts for the group meal in February covered costs (£1041.50) and payments for members' group holidays arranged by Ann were paid directly to resorts so did not pass through the account. No Christmas or spring meal has been arranged for this year.

**General Account:** The annual income was £489.17 accrued from advertising receipts (£170), sale of tea and cakes at the AGM (£59.17) and donations from Ramblers Worldwide Holidays (£260). HF holidays and Ramblers Worldwide Holidays (RWH) pay us respectively £30 and £55 for advertising in each Newsletter but there was advertising in only two of our Newsletters this year rather than three as in previous years. We receive a donation from RWH for each member who holidays with them so members are encouraged to mention our group when they book with RWH.

Outgoings consisted of £126.19 on administration (postage, stationary and photocopying), £128.70 on printing costs and £277.18 on maintaining the web-site. £310.92 was spent on two kissing gates near Standish giving a total expenditure of £833.99 which exceeded our income by £344.82. Even with this small loss we still have a balance of £3387.94 at the end of the year which is rather more than the Charities Commission prefer. In view of our healthy financial position we again relinquished any allocation from central Ramblers' funds and continue to seek suitable projects to fund from capital.

Brian W

### GROUP VOLUNTEERS 2020 pre AGM

#### **Chairman:**

Richard 01453 762373

chairman@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Vice Chairman:**

Mike 01453 873625

mike@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Group Secretary:**

Andrew 01452 857958

groupsecretary@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Group Treasurer:**

Brian W 01453 872220

treasurer@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Membership Secretary:**

Mike 01453 873625

membership@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Publicity Officer:**

Vacant

Without portfolio:Diana

#### **Website:** Mike & Sally

website@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **South Cots Newsletter:** Sally

newsletter@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Footpath Chairman and Footpath Secretary:**

Bob 01453 545752

footpaths@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Footpath Committee Minutes Secretary:**

John C 01453 845574

footpaths@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

#### **Footpath Clearance**

Bob

#### **Footpath Committee Member:**

Penny F

#### **Led Walks Programme Co-ordinator:**

Mike 01453 873625

mike@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

### Welcome to our new members

We have welcomed 17 new members since June 2020, and we are looking forward to meeting them as soon as the situation improves.

### HOLIDAYS UPDATE

Given all the uncertainty over where, when and who with, with regards to holidays, I am not planning on organising a South Cotswold holiday next year. While we had a brilliant time in Polperro in September, we were lucky to be in such a narrow window which permitted our holiday to take place. Our proposed Catalonia March holiday was fraught with problems with people having to gamble on whether they wanted to risk going, as lockdown became more likely, or whether the FCO would ban travel and therefore entitle everyone to a full refund.

However, I will be monitoring the situation and if anyone is interested in a UK walking holiday, let me know ([holidays@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk](mailto:holidays@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk)) and I can keep you informed of any change of plan either directly or through the website.

Ann

## **THE HOLIDAY WE THOUGHT WE WOULD NEVER HAVE!!**

After being unable to go on the holiday in Catalonia in the Spring this year, we were not confident that the Polperro holiday in September would ever go ahead, with restrictions on travelling, group sizes, mixing households etc. But we were lucky and everything fell into place to allow us to have this holiday, though with some alterations.

### **Arrival Day -Saturday**

After an arduous (individually driven) journey to Killigarth Manor on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September the 9 of us (Ann, Colin, John, Sue, Mary, Andrew, Sheelagh, Pauline and me) found our lodges and settled in. While 3 of the group self-catered, 6 of us ate at the restaurant on site. With Covid we have learnt that hospitality businesses have developed their own ways of ensuring safety, but this was one of the more bizarre. A waitress came (unmasked) to take our orders, brought us our food, and took payment from us. Getting a drink was a whole different ballgame! We were sat less than 2m from the bar, but we had to order online. Ann couldn't get it to work, so Sue had a go, and after about 20 minutes she was able to enter our drinks order, her credit card details and probably the length of her inside leg, it took so long! She then got an email thanking her for her order. Nothing happened for ages, then there was a bit of a clinking, and a man in a plastic mask appeared and disappeared. Eventually our much-needed drinks were delivered by said man.

### **Day 1 Sunday**

After Ann went through the required risk assessment (organised outdoor physical activity is exempt from the Rule of 6 with certain caveats), we walked from the holiday park east towards Looe on the coastal path. It was a beautiful day, perfect weather. We ate our lunch on the sea front then headed towards Looe itself which looked quite busy below us. Two people caught the bus back, the rest of us turned inland steeply uphill and across fields, descending to Talland Bay where there were ice creams. From there we headed back to our lodges. In the evening the eating-out brigade went to the Jubilee Inn where most of us enjoyed a Sunday Roast.

### **Day 2 Monday**

This was a free day so while Andrew and Sheelagh parked in Looe and walked east along the coast to Seaton Valley, the rest of us caught the bus to Looe. After coffee and a mooch around the shops, where Ann bought John a man-bag to carry his stuff in, rather than the soap bag he was using, and the ladies explored charity and outdoor shops, and Colin waited outside patiently, we bought crab sandwiches which we ate in the harbour. In the afternoon we went on a boat to Looe Island, gifted to the Cornwall Wildlife Trust by two sisters. The walk around the island was only 1 km but there were seals to sit and watch before we got the boat back to Looe and the bus to our holiday park.

### **Day 3 Tuesday**

We drove in convoy (generally forwards but occasionally in reverse – the delights of Cornish single-track lanes with passing places for just 1 or 2 cars!) to the car park at Lantic Bay where we walked across a field and joined the coastal path heading west to Polruan. Once again the weather was perfect. Andrew fixed 2 different signposts on the way. Once we got to Polruan, we walked up the river to Pont Pill where we stopped for lunch then did a loop back up the river. The eating-out brigade drove to the Crumplehorn Inn in Polperro where we were horrified to discover it cost a minimum of £5 to park even at night, but the food was good and we rebooked for Thursday. Janet had now joined us.

### **Day 4 Wednesday**

Most of us walked down into Polperro where we had coffee and a wander. We had lunch in the Three Pilchards, which had a waiting list of 10 for tables, then did a boat trip along the coast, where we could see part of the coast path we would be on on Thursday. The people on the boat before ours said they had seen dolphins, but we weren't so lucky. We had take-away pizzas from the park restaurant, and John had fish and chips.

### **Day 5 – Thursday**

We walked into Polperro and along the coast path to West Coombe then went inland and back to Polperro where the energetic walked back to the lodges and the rest caught the bus (with great hilarity!). The eating-out brigade returned to the Jubilee Inn for another excellent meal.

### **Day 6 – Friday**

Our last day of walking, and rather than face the stress of the convoy of cars all the way to Polruan, we caught the bus, then the ferry across to Fowey. We split into 2 groups, Andrew, Sheelagh and Janet going clockwise with an extra loop, and the rest of us going anti-clockwise, starting on the Saints Way. We then headed down to the coast where we had lunch and a paddle at Polridmouth Bay, before continuing on the coastal path to Polruan and the bus. Unfortunately the later bus which Andrew and co. were planning on catching seemed to have disappeared off the face of the earth, so they were left with a long wait for the last bus. In the evening we had takeaway curries from the holiday park restaurant and packed, ready for an early departure to allow the site time for sanitising before the next arrivals. Fortunately we all had much better journeys back.

We had a great time, with great company, the weather was perfect, it was so lovely to see the sea after all that had happened, Ann had thought of everything - we couldn't fault it.

*Sally*