

The Ramblers Association, East Surrey Walkers Group

37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

1:45 Saturday 16 November 2019. St Andrews Church Hall, Limpsfield Chart

Chair's Welcome: Judy Brua welcomed 57 members (not including committee members) to the AGM. Judy thanked Christine Scott and the social team for the delicious lunch.

Apologies for absence: Carmen Lambert Singer, Jean Scott, Steve Hanks, Kevin and Lynne Lewis, Val Stubbings and Richard Mascall

Minutes of 2018 AGM held on 10 November 2018

Judy read through the minutes and these were agreed by a show of hands

Matters arising: There are about 50 members who do not use email or any other electronic vehicle for receiving communications. Stuart Pickford raised the issue of how this group is kept up to date with what's happening within ESW. Pauline Guy was asked to look into the matter in conjunction with Sue Halsey.

Reports

Chair's Report

Judy reported how delighted she was that the Walks Library is now up and running. She thanked Brian Smith and Adam Wilson for all their efforts in making it a reality. Adam, as the walks library editor, has put up all the walks including a number of his own walks. He also does a lot of work behind the scenes such as being the assistant webmaster and posting items to the website when requested. To show appreciation for all his efforts Adam was presented with a gift

In response to questions, Judy confirmed that the walks library is open to anyone, including those who are not members of the Ramblers Association. Adam also advised that only he can add a new walk to the library so if anyone has a walk they want adding please send him the details – ideally as a GPX file (but he can work with a map with the route marked on it).

A new volunteer group is being launched in 2020 – the Cut Back Crew – with the aim of supplementing the work done by Ken's Krew in clearing vegetation from footpaths which have become overrun. Judy asked if there was anyone who would like to lead this new group. Anyone interested should contact Judy.

Mention was made of the Kissing Gate fund and the success in 2019 in getting new kissing gates installed. For 2020 Limpsfield Parish Council has allocated £2000 for the purchase of kissing gates which will be installed by ESW. This is in addition to the funds raised in 2019 and the £1300 which ESW has been allocated by Ramblers Central Office to be used for the purchase of kissing gates.

Treasurer's report

Continuing with the Kissing Gate fund Robert confirmed that £555 was added to the Kissing Gate fund from the 2019 BBQ – comprising of £258 profit and £297 from the raffle. Robert confirmed that ESW has the funds to purchase 8 kissing gates in 2020.

Robert advised that since the report and accounts were finalised £350 has been received from Worldwide Ramblers Holidays. £100 of this is in respect of group holidays but the remaining £250 is in respect of individual holidays booked by members. Thanks to all those who mention ESW when booking their holiday. This money will be added to the General Fund. Robert also thanked members who pay fees and other expenses electronically or via a bank branch as this does save the Group money.

A question was raised at this point about ownership of Kissing Gates once they are installed and Tony Pearson advised that ESW effectively donates the gate to the landowner who is then responsible for any maintenance.

The Report and Accounts were adopted by a show of hands.

Membership Secretary's Report

63 new members have joined this year. Pauline described this as very much a team effort. Publicity has increased this year through Pamela's efforts; this results in more first time walkers. The walk leaders capture these individual's contact details which are passed onto Pauline who contacts them to see if they want to join. Since the last AGM 99 new names have been collected by the walk leaders and of those 45 have joined – over 70% of all new members.

However, it is not just about new members - in recognition of the 42 years they have been members Stuart and Alice Pickford were presented with a gift.

Helen then presented the leader's prize draw for Q3 19 (Jul – Sep 19). This was won by John Hollands

Pauline presented prizes to those leaders with the highest leads to member conversion rate

Joint winners - Tony Pearson and Jeff Marks with 5 new members

Joint 2nd - Arthur Darby and Keith Towers with 4 new members

Joint 3rd - Toni Pearson Helen Whiteley, Sue Halsey and Fay Revell with 3 new members. Alice Pickford drew Fay's name so Fay was awarded the prize.

ESW won the Surrey Area Recruitment Cup this year and Pauline will collect the cup in February.

Tony Pearson questioned the amount ESW has paid in fees as reported in the Membership Report. Pauline admitted this was out by a factor of 10 as a number was missing.

Walks Co-ordinator Report

Helen thanked all the leaders but gave an impassioned plea for more people to come forward as walk leaders. There are about 55 active walk leaders and although 9 new leaders have joined, and are leading or are in the process of undergoing training, it is not felt to be enough to cover all the walks that ESW would like to offer.

Questions were put to the floor to try and ascertain the barriers that people have to leading. Many of the objections were due to lack of confidence, inability to follow a route, getting lost etc. The view was that these barriers could all be easily overcome as support and training is available. 2 training courses are available in 2020 in April and August and these will be publicised more widely nearer the time via NB. Members were also urged to download the Ramblers app, Pathwatch and/or Viewranger

Points raised from the floor in respect of walk leading included

- Once a walk has been recce'd it can be reused so there is no need to redo it every year
- Not wanting to commit to leading up to 4 months in advance. The answer to this is that as we now have a live website, walks can be added to the walks programme at short notice. If a leader does discover they are unexpectedly available to lead a walk it can be included. While this should not stop leaders filling the quarterly walks programme in time for its publication date it does mean gaps can be filled

In his absence a round of applause was given to Nigel Poulter in thanks for all his work as Walks Administrator.

Di Nathan thanked those who help with the annual London Blind Walk. Lorna Ball and Julia Draper were specifically mentioned along with all those who help with the tea. The 2020 walk will be on 26 April.

Social Secretary Report

Christine reported that numbers attending social events this year has been good with the exception of the Annual Dinner. As a result, moving forward this will only be held in years where there is a something significant to celebrate such as ESW turning 40.

The band booked for the Autumn Social has had to be replaced and Whiskey Sour will now provide the entertainment.

Christine did say that while she does need to know who is attending social events there is no need to let her know once money has been paid as she will liaise with Robert. This avoids her receiving excessive emails.

There is the possibility that an alternative venue will be found for the 2021 New Year's Lunch to provide sufficient space for all those who want to attend.

Publicity Officer's Report

Pamela did not add to her report other than to ask if people were aware of any local magazines she was not in touch with then to let her know.

Footpath Secretaries' Report

Tony Pearson presented the update on behalf of the Footpath Secretaries of which there are now 4. Tony reported that according to the latest BVPI survey where a random sample of 5% of footpaths has to be surveyed, Tandridge has the lowest percentage of footpaths in Surrey which are deemed easy to use.

Sue Halsey and Jim Hearson were due to attend the Volunteer Footpath Warden course the following week.

It was mentioned that many of ESW walks take place in Kent and it was asked how footpath defects are reported in Kent especially as Kent. This can be done via the Kent CC web page (there is a link from our website). If anyone is unsure about logging a defect eg because they're not sure exactly where the defect is then the ESW footpath secretaries are always happy to help.

Ken's Krew Report

Judy read out the Ken's Krew report on behalf of Barbara Bulman. The year since the last AGM has been very positive with 6 new gates erected and 360 hours of voluntary working time. Positive publicity has been received especially in respect of the gates erected near the Haycutter.

Adam thanked Barbara for the assistance she provided in making sure the path was accessible for the walk before this year's BBQ.

Report on Surrey Area

Judy and Barbara represent ESW at County level. Holly Matthews is the new chair. Vacancies exist for a new webmaster and Treasurer. Both of these positions are for 5 years and emails have been issued across the Surrey area seeing if anyone is interested in either role.

The Surrey Area AGM is on Sat 15 February at Banstead. There will be a choice of 5 walks beforehand and lunch and afternoon tea will be provided. ESW will not be offering its own walks that day. Further information will be available nearer the time.

Election of officers

Since the last AGM Pamela Cuniffe has joined the committee as Publicity Officer. No existing committee members were standing down so the whole committee including the auditor was standing for re-election. Ratification of Pamela's appointment as Publicity Officer was also sought.

Nomination of Auditor

	Proposed by:	Seconded:
	Keith Towers	Stuart Pickford
		Lorna Ball

Re-Election of Chair	Judy Brua	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball
Re-Election of Walks Co-ordinator	Helen Whiteley	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball
Re-Election of Membership Secretary	Pauline Guy	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball
Re-Election of Social Secretary	Christine Scott	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball
Re-Election of Treasurer	Robert Coupland	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball
Re-Election of Secretary	Janette Ruiz	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball
Re-Election of Publicity Secretary	Pamela Cuniffe	Stuart Pickford	Lorna Ball

All re-elections and ratification of Pamela's appointment as Publicity Secretary were confirmed by show of hands from the floor.

At next year's AGM the following officers will be standing down from their current positions Judy (Chair), Pauline (Membership) and Helen (Walks co-ordinator). Although a way off if anyone would like to join the committee please contact Judy or any other committee member.

AOB

Stuart Pickford gave a short speech explaining how his association with the Ramblers goes back as far as 1948 when he joined primarily to enjoy a cheap holiday walking in Belgium and Luxembourg!

He then went on to thank the Committee and officers for all their hard work.

Meeting finished at 3:15 pm