



MINUTES OF THE 41st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH DEVON RAMBLERS

Held at the Livermead House Hotel, Torquay

on Tuesday 14th November 2023

Attendance – 55 members

Apologies - 11 members

1. Welcome, Apologies and housekeeping.

Minutes signed as read:

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Eric Evans / Chairman

Date

Eric Evans, Chairman, welcomed all to the 41st AGM and read the 11 apologies (appendix i). Details of fire exits were given, and copies of the Summary of Accounts and Agenda were distributed in the room.

He thanked Bob W for compiling the slideshow, and Karen for organising the paperwork and room booking. Also, Celia for the accounts and George C for auditing them.

2. Matters Arising

Karen stated the only matter arising from the 2022 meeting was the trial of the earlier start time for Sunday walks. Nicky would elaborate in her presentation but it had not been well received by leaders so the time would revert to 10.30 for all walk days, unless leaders requested otherwise.

Eric signed the 2022 Minutes as 'read'.

3. Officer Reports

Chairman – Eric Evans

Eric thanked his committee for their efforts over the past year, supporting him and working for the Club to ensure a full walks programme and an exciting social programme.



Eric stated that each Officer would provide an individual update, but in summary; the financial and membership situation remained stable thanks to Celia B and Dorothy W, Karen had slotted in well to the secretarial role and led an interesting History Walk of Exeter. Nicky had once again created a full winter walks programme, Bob continued his hard work on the John Musgrave Trail and footpath issues, as well as the Don't Lose Your Way project and had organised two very successful group holidays to Porthcawl and Portugal. He was also responsible for the excellent slideshow this evening. Val, Paddy and Janet were thanked for planning an interesting and well-attended programme of social events.

Two members have volunteered to monitor a section of the Dartmoor Way, Haytor to Bovey Tracey – Brian S and Carol C.

Eric also made mention of the South West Coast Path walks, which he stressed were separate from Ramblers activities, but after four years of hard work, initially by Arthur and latterly Tessa and Ann, three tenacious ladies had completed the whole 630 mile route. Tessa would give more information in her presentation later. The project continues into 2024, as new members are now undertaking the challenge.

Eric also advised that Devon Area is no longer 'in abeyance' as a Chair and Secretary have been appointed. The structure will evolve over the coming months and Eric and Karen had been involved in Zoom meetings, affording an opportunity to comment on and contribute to Ramblers National, future strategy and website updates.

Finally, Eric advised that there were to be changes in the Committee in 2024 as Celia, after 25 years in the Club, with 4 as Walks Secretary and 18 as Treasurer, would be standing down. Also, Janet is relinquishing her role in the social committee. In accordance with the constitution, nominations were invited prior to the AGM and three names have been put forward. This would be raised later in the agenda.



Treasurer – Celia Broom

Celia took the floor and referred to the Club Accounts, summary copies of which had been distributed. George was thanked for auditing.

Income was buoyant in the main account at £631.41 helped by various sponsors. The self-funding account has a balance of £1191. A further £300 is anticipate from Ramblers Holiday as reward for the Portugal Trip. which is within RA guidelines.

The Dr. Mason legacy still has £22.00 credit (included in Self-financing) and the JMH legacy has £22,926.

Celia was pleased to confirm George Coles has audited the accounts and is willing to do so for a further year.

Membership Secretary – Dorothy Webley

Dorothy provided some interesting statistics and advised that the membership averaged 237 during the last year. As at, September 2023 it stands at 239, this is 9 more than the September 2022 level.

Average numbers of members on walks:-

	Oct 22 to Sep 23	Oct 21 to Sep 22
Sunday	14.9	12.0
Thursday	20.0	19.2
OSE	19.4	22.8
TSW	13.5	10.4
Total	17.3	16.0

A total of 238 individuals walked at some time during the year, of which 106 were associated by Central Office to South Devon Ramblers.

Of the list of members from Central Office, 44% have walked at least once during the last year. Three walks were cancelled during the year, for forecasts of heavy rain.

The miles covered by people on all the walks was 16,745 miles. This is the equivalent of walking over two thirds of the way around the equator. Over



the 14 years that Dorothy has been collecting the information, we have collectively walked around the equator nearly nine times.

Secretary – Karen Howes

Karen confirmed her role as providing admin to the Committee, distributing information via email and also managing our public profile via Facebook page, SDR website, and linking as necessary with Ramblers Association over policy and future strategy, publicity and national website.

- SDR Facebook Page - Not a public site but open to non-members. Currently 620 followers (5 banned)
- SDR Website - A recent refresh. Committee Minutes available for members to access. Gallery has changed and now loads quickly.

A History Walk of Exeter took place last April and Karen plans an evening history stroll, in May 2024, of Paignton/Goodrington, ending with Tapas at Molly's on Paignton Harbour. Karen added that she may have another history walk up her sleeve for the summer programme.

Karen invited ideas for events, comments – positive or otherwise – and feedback on the Club or Committee via the email address; secretary@southdevonramblers.com.



Walks Coordinator – Nicky Ward

Nicky advised that whilst we had a full programme for Winter/Spring, we have lost 8 experienced leaders through unforeseen circumstances, which amounts to at least 18 walks. She urged members, once again, to step up and try leading a walk.

A Leaders Training session was held by Bob and Nicky which included basic map reading, walk protocol and support to plan and lead a walk on the next programme. This has produced 2 new leaders so far.

On this programme there are 22 walk leaders picking up a total of 64 walks, meaning our leaders have gone over and above, to ensure a full programme.

Nicky confirmed the 10am Sunday walk start would not apply in future. It was not popular with most leaders but if a walk was particularly long, or leaders felt it important to start/finish early, then a 10am meet could be set. This would be noted on the programme in bold, and on the website in red - i.e. Hilary's recent Remembrance Walk, which necessitated an early start to reach the Memorial Cross for 11am. Important, therefore, to check the website as this would can be updated at short notice.

JMHT Officer, Footpath Officer & DLYW – Bob Ward

As Footpath Officer

Bob advised that he checked on the occasional path modification order e.g a minor one in Kingswear, plus major construction projects that may affect rights of way. For example, quarries, housing developments and road schemes (A382 Newton Abbot to A38 link road).

As JMHT Officer

10 of 14 monitors have given their reports for summer 2023. Many thanks to the monitors. Outstanding issues which will be fixed in the coming months.



Currently, one monitor a year usually leaves - he is looking for a volunteer to monitor the Galmpton alternative route section.

Good feedback has been received from a couple of walkers and the website description continues to be updated as a result. One walker even did the entire trail in one day!

DLYW

The government is planning to replace the deadline for 2026 with 2031. Bob has digitized many maps from the public archives in Exeter and is moving forward with getting documentation from national records in Kew.

Social Committee Report

Val Rose, Paddy Jewry & Janet Evans

Val went through the events of the year, supported with shots from Bob's slideshow.

- Last December's Christmas lunch at the Livermead Cliff was enjoyed by 40 members. Thanks were conveyed to Jackie Mann for organisation again. Unfortunately take up on the 2023 Dinner (evening, 8th December) had not been high so far. The meal would still take place, -but the disco was unlikely. Next year Val felt they would revert to a lunch.

- February saw an illustrated talk about the Brixham Heritage Railway, followed by supper at the Berry Head Hotel.

- On a cold, wet day in April, a group of members received a warm welcome to Hunt's Cider, Yalberton, (Cider with Pastie) for a tour of the cidery with plenty of samplings and a pasty lunch.

- In June, an SDR member was supported in leading an evening walk at Broadhempston followed by supper at The Monks Retreat. This was a really nice event and hopefully will be just the first of other such social evenings in the future.

- In July, despite a last-minute change of venue, the fish supper went ahead as planned. Thanks to The Harbour Light restaurant, Paignton, for stepping in

and turning what might have been a potential disaster into a most enjoyable social evening.

-In November, a full-day first-aid workshop was held at Paignton Sailing Club. The tutor gave up-to-date information on first-aid procedures to an appreciative group of members.

Planning for next year's social calendar is well underway with a talk on 'Defending the Dart' and supper at Berry Head Hotel; a visit to Brixham fish market; a guided walk around Paignton followed by tapas; a coach trip to RHS Rosemoor; and a Christmas lunch.

As always, any suggestions and ideas for future events are welcomed.

4. Election of Officers

To start the process, Karen confirmed that Eric is willing to stand as Chairman for a further year.

He was duly elected and the process to re-elect or propose and elect the Committee members began.

Officers were, therefore, duly elected as illustrated below and a show of hands confirmed the Club decision.

<u>Officer and Role</u>	<u>Standing</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Second</u>
Eric E - Chairman	Y	Trish W	Tessa S
Celia B - Treasurer	N		
Linda Lister - Treasurer	Interested	Verity V	Bob W
Dorothy W - Membership Secretary	Y	Paddy J	Chris N
Karen H - Secretary	Y	Vicky H	John W
Paddy J - Social Committee	Y	Tessa S	Kate McC
Janet E - Social Committee	N		
Hilary B – Social Committee	Interested	Paddy J	Verity V
Kate McC – Social Committee	Interested	Val R	Bob W
Val R - Social Committee	Y	Chris T	Trish W
Nicky W - Walks Coordinator	Y	Chris T	Linda L
Bob W - Footpath & JMHT Officer	Y	John W	Brian S
George Coles – Auditor	Y	Geoff W	John W
All proposals were carried unanimously by a membership show of hands.			



Eric then expressed his appreciation for the work undertaken by Celia B over the years as Treasurer, ensuring excellent record keeping and balancing the accounts, as well having the ability to recall events and details from further back than anyone else.

He secondly mentioned Janet E, who also had worked tirelessly to ensure a varied social programme alongside co-ordinating the popular OSE walks, as well as supporting him in his role. Both were presented with bouquets of flowers from the Club.

A break was enjoyed at this point, tea and biscuits provided, before the next presentation, by Tessa S.

5. **'Tales of the Coastpath'**

Tessa S presented an interesting, amusing and very well received account of South West Coast Path project, the differences between coast path walkers and 'normal ramblers', and the joys and drawbacks of doing 630 miles of the sometimes arduous terrain. It was illustrated with an excellent slideshow of the group's recent escapades.

Tessa also mentioned the Tamara Way as a future project. This will prove tricky to organise due to transport and some sections being too long for one day. She will work on it for the summer programme.

6. **Insurance/Risk Assessments**

Bob ran over the cover once again, reminding all that leaders have some cover, where the information can be found and the differences between personal and public liability. Risk Assessments were once again raised. It is still Rambler's policy to do one, but they can be retained by leaders, or Nicky is happy to hold them. There is a simplified single sheet RA available on our website, designed for OSE and OSJ walks but could be modified for all,



should leaders wish. Ramblers are still reviewing RA's and their content/usefulness, and this would be cascaded, when available, by Committee.

Q – Kate asked about cover for walkers in the event of being trampled by cows?

Bob confirmed only the leader is insured for personal injury.

Common sense must always prevail, particularly around livestock and dogs must be kept on leads.

Holidays – Future plans

Bob W advised of the mini-break plan, ie Dorset/Swanage/New Forest and promised more information on accommodation (caravan park) when available. A flyer will be on the website and email distributed. The date has been set as **29th April – 3rd May** and he will be looking at the Sandford or Rockley Park (Parkdean / Haven) Caravan Parks. He hopes that a variety of walks can be found and is seeking leaders to support that. *NB – Flyer now available and info distributed on email.*

The second break for 2024 has been provisionally booked in the Yorkshire Dales, which became a National Park in 1954. Bob has secured the 3* Herriott Hotel in Skipton, with a selection of rooms at varying prices. He has created a flyer, which is available on walks and on our website, under *Events/Holidays*, too. £100 deposit required by 1st March to secure a place, balance in July.

The group will travel by Blakes Coaches from Torbay and have the coach all week. The dates are **22nd September – 27th September**.

Q – Did the prices on the flyer include the coach?

Bob confirmed he had factored in the coach cost.



7. Any Other Business

Comment was invited from the membership. There were no queries or issues of concern. Eric thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting concluded at 8.50 pm.

KSH/SDR Nov 23

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Appendix (i)

Apologies Received South Devon Ramblers AGM – November 2023

Jenny Saxelby

Rowena French

George Coles

Theresa Luscombe

Mike Wilkin

Lesley Wilkin

Jan Chapman

Susan Holding

Kevin Holding

Elizabeth Emerson

Theresa Code