

INDEPENDENT ASSOCIATION OF HOBBYISTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting held at The Rugby Club, Ambleside, on Saturday, 18th June 2011 at 11 am.

Present: 22 members

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Nicholas Pearce, Mr & Mrs Antill, Mr & Mrs Ansell, Mr & Mrs Barden, Mr & Mrs Sinclair, Mr & Mrs Phillips, Mr Denis Kearns and Mr David Steel.

Chairman's Report:

The Chair, Mr Geoff Oman, extended a warm welcome to everyone, especially to two new members Chris and Jenny, and two 'old' members Derek and Maxine who, although long-standing members of the Hobby Club, had not previously attended any rallies or the AGM for many years through various commitments. He also thanked those members who had organised the food for the event. The Chair announced that Tony Charity was standing down as General Secretary and expressed his gratitude on behalf of everyone for the work he had done for many years on behalf of the club. A new General Secretary would have to be elected.

Minutes of the last AGM:

The Minutes of the last meeting had been published on the website and copies distributed prior to the meeting. All matters arising had been covered. The Minutes were accepted and AGREED that they were a true record of last year's AGM.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer, Mr David Lawson, reported that more income had been received over the past year due to an increase in membership, bank deposits now totalling £3,504.68. The accounts for the past year had been distributed and these were accepted and AGREED.

News Editor and Technical Officer's Report:

Clare and Trevor Barden had sent their report to be read out as they were in Portugal and unable to attend the meeting: Four newsletters had been produced in a standard style and format, various discrepancies having been sorted out. Clare expressed her thanks to Terry Lambrose and Tony Flanders for sending in their articles for the last newsletter, without which 'news' would have been scarce, emphasising that it was important to keep the stories coming in. It was also extremely important that all members should download the newsletter from the website as the cost of sending out hard copies in the post worked out at £10 each. For those members who possess a computer but do not have a printer then a CD for one year's supply of newsletters could be provided, which would be less costly than a hard copy. If there are members who do not own a computer or a friend or member of their family with a computer, then information can be accessed from any computer in a public library or internet café. Both Clare and Trevor were prepared to stand again for election for another year.

Membership Secretary's Report:

Christine Lawson reported that there had been a drop in membership which had stood at 69 members a year ago. Ten members had resigned. At present there were 45 paid up members and 14 unpaid, in spite of repeated reminders on the website, by e-mail, by post, and telephone calls, to no avail. The Chair made the suggestion that there should be a time limit for payment, after which, membership would automatically cease. The Standing Order arrangement was implemented in order to prevent this situation arising but a number of people had not done so. Any alteration to the present arrangement would necessitate a change in the Constitution.

Website Officer's Report:

Mr Ken Cookson reported no problems with members logging onto the website, but was disappointed in the lack of activity on the Forum, which gave the impression that people were either not accessing the website or did not want to participate in the interaction of information that the Forum provided. He recommended that people should use this facility as there was a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the club that could be shared. He also raised a concern that there should be someone willing to take on the role of Assistant to the Website Officer who would be able to take over the running of the website if he was unable to do so at any time. This needed to be addressed.

General Secretary's Report:

Tony Charity said there was little to report other than the insurances had been paid (£240 per annum) and the club was up-to-date with 'Natural England' for the organisation of rallies with exemption certificates. He brought up the subject of the club-owned 'party' tent, which had been used at a number of rallies in the past but was now wearing out and in need of repair. He had been storing it for some time and as it had not been used recently and was far too heavy for one person to transport (it was usually divided into three parts for transporting to rallies), the decision had been made to give it to a local residential home and was now in regular use. He had seen a better type of 'Event' tent at a Garden Centre, which was on a smaller frame, easier to store, and would be more useful as a meeting place at rally sites where there was no covered area. If this tent was purchased, he would be willing to continue to store it as he still had the storage bags, but if someone wanted to borrow it for a rally they could have it and bring it along to the next rally. The question was raised that, should that person be unable to attend the next rally, transportation might have to be paid for and this would have to be accepted. It was proposed and seconded that a new tent should be purchased, and AGREED by all members present.

Disciplinary Officer's Report:

Vera Watson reported no disciplinary measures had been necessary (other than her husband, Ed, over the last 50 years – they had celebrated their Golden Wedding the previous day with drinks, nibbles, and photographs of the happy couple.)

Association Photographer's Report:

Mr Ed Watson said he was willing to continue in his role as official club photographer, but queried whether it was still necessary to proceed with making hard copies of the photographs for the club albums as there was a more comprehensive selection of photographs on the website for all to see.

The Chair stated that the role of Association Photographer was to keep a storage of photographs as a record of rally activities, both on the website and on CD and, if he did not want to continue making hard copies it would be his own choice. Some discussion followed as to whether the albums, which had to be compiled, stored, and brought to events, should continue. In order to arrive at a conclusion, a vote was taken and it was AGREED to keep the albums as they were a source of great interest and provided a talking point at social events.

Changes to the Constitution:

- 1) The Newsletter: Ref. 4.2 One copy of the newsletter per household.

The Chair said a decision had to be made to cease all postal copies of the newsletter which, in future, would be accessed and downloaded from the website. The appropriate amendments would be made to the Constitution to satisfy current needs. The alternative would be to supply a CD to cover one year's supply of the four newsletters, which would be cheaper than sending out hard copies in the post.

The motion that the Constitution be amended was proposed by David Lawson and seconded by Terry Lambrose. A vote was taken and AGREED by all members present.

- 2) Membership Fees: Ref: 9.7

The continual late payment of some annual fees had highlighted the need for a reform to the Constitution. The reason for a lapse in payment of fees was unknown, be it lack of interest in the club, a desire to leave without informing the secretary, or inability to set up a Standing Order. A decision had to be made to limit the time allowed before membership expired. It was suggested that if fees were not paid within 30 days then membership of the club would automatically expire together with access to the website.

Ken Cookson said that the way the website had been set up security could be suspended either temporarily or removed entirely, so that in the event that there had been a mistake, it could be re-instated.

In the past, when a new member joined the club, a one-off fee of £25 was payable, and a subsequent fee of £12 per year paid by cheque. If members paid by Standing Order they were entitled to a reduced annual fee of £10. The Mandate for the Standing Order could be downloaded from the website. Out of the 69 past members, only 24 had set up a Standing Order. There was no reason for people to be unsure of this arrangement as it was not like a Direct Debit, they would still be in control and able to cancel if they wished to cease membership. Out of the 14 people who had resigned, the majority had never been seen at club rallies. This could be for a variety of reasons e.g. they live abroad, or too far away. Chasing up fees by the Membership Secretary had proved to be time-consuming and costly. The Club was set up as a friendly, social gathering of people who own a Hobby motorhome, not as a resource by people who only wish to sort out their problems.

It was proposed that when a new member joins the club they be asked to set up a Standing Order for the annual fees as well as a cheque for the initial joining fee of £25. There would be a 30-day limit for payment of fees by 1st April, after which, non-payment would result in a cease of membership and automatic exclusion from the website. The motion was seconded and AGREED by general vote. This would require an additional paragraph (4.7) to the present Constitution rules.

Election of Committee:

Chairman:	Geoff Oman to continue.	Proposed and Seconded.
General Secretary:	Angela Wood.	“
Membership Secretary:	Christine Lawson to continue.	“
Treasurer:	David Lawson to continue.	“
Accounts Examiner:	Jan Charity to continue.	“
Rally Co-ordinator:	Angela Wood to continue	“
Disciplinary Officer:	Vera Watson to continue	“
Association Photographer:	Ed Watson to continue.	“
Website Officer	Ken Cookson to continue	“
Newsletter Officer	Clare Barden to continue.	“
Technical Officer:	Trevor Barden to continue	“

Any Other Business:

Rallies:

Jan Charity enquired as to whether the incentive of two free nights would continue to apply for those attending a full week of a rally i.e. the AGM rally at Ambleside and the following one at Binsoe. This was agreed.

Fire Regulations:

John Anderton was concerned that in the event of a fire, whether regulations were in place such as the provision of fire buckets, and whether fire extinguishers should be available at each rally site. It was pointed out that fire buckets were no longer compulsory and that each motorhome should have their own fire extinguisher. Tony Charity had a copy of all the Fire Regulations if anyone wanted to view them.

Terry Lambrose expressed his thanks to everyone who had made him and his wife, Kay, so welcome on their return from Australia, and at the rallies they were able to attend whilst in the UK.

The Chair thanked everyone again for attending the meeting, which closed at 1 pm, and the sumptuous feast which followed, together with games and entertainment for the rest of the day.

(Pat Miller)