

## **Independent Association of Hobbyists**

### **Annual General Meeting**

**Minutes** of the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held at The Rugby Club, Ambleside, on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2013 at 2.30 pm.

**Present:** 32 members

**Apologies for absence** were received from Terry and Kay Ambrose, Denis Kearns, and Sue Burgess.

The Chair, Mr Tony Charity, welcomed everyone to the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, and this year's rally at Ambleside attended by 17 vans in all. He extended a special welcome to new members, Doris Adams, Jim Smith, and Alan Flynn, and also to those members who had suffered illness during the past year and had made the effort to attend (Margaret Woodhead, John Anderton, and Ray Wood). He also thanked Christine and David Lawson for being Marshalls for this rally and the fact that they had gone beyond the call of duty in not only organizing the excellent food but also the entertainment on the previous evening, which took the form of a Beetle Drive and Quiz, much enjoyed by all.

#### **Minutes of the last AGM:**

The Minutes had been circulated and hard copies were available on the table for those who had not seen them. A survey had been conducted regarding the venue for the next AGM and it was agreed that Ambleside was the best choice. It was proposed and seconded that these Minutes were a true record of last year's AGM.

#### **Chairman's Report:**

The Chair announced that his present position as Chair and General Secretary was not in accordance with the Constitution, so a separate post at General Secretary must be appointed. He drew attention to the display of past copies of newsletters and photographs taken over the past 14 years, which he invited everyone to look at and reflect on the wonderful memories and number of friends made over the years in the Hobby Club. However, there was a need to reconsider the future of the club and the lack of members coming forward to fill a number of posts on the committee. Not only were the posts of Chairman and General Secretary to be re-appointed, but also the Treasurer and Membership Secretary who had completed their term of office. The News Editor and Technical Officer were also resigning their posts and the Chair thanked Claire and Trevor Barden on behalf of the club for their efforts.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer, David Lawson, reported an overall income of £414.98 for the year plus some late subscriptions. Last year's AGM had cost £10 each for the 10 members who had attended the meal at the venue, plus the site fees at Overbrook Farm as well as the site fees for the Ambleside Rally. No costs had been incurred on the production of the newsletters now that they were available on-line and there had been no requests for postal copies. 39 members had paid their subscriptions by Standing Order Mandate but there were still 25 members who had not set up to pay by this method and preferred to pay by cheque, which necessitated a trip to the bank. The current account stood at £3102.56 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. The accounts having been checked by Jan Charity in her role as Accounts Examiner, were agreed and accepted.

### **Membership Secretary's Report:**

Christine Lawson reported that she was regularly sending out application forms in answer to enquiries but this had only resulted in 8 new members. She had also sent out 2 more application forms during the present rally. There was concern that the £25 one-off joining fee was a deterrent to prospective new members.

### **News Editor and Technical Officer's Report:**

Claire Barden said she had been unable to produce a newsletter this quarter due to the lack of information, no-one had submitted any articles. Claire felt there had to be more activity in the Club to provide material for a newsletter.

Trevor Barden reported that since the last AGM there had been 21 entries on the website, some of which he had passed on to people with better knowledge. He thanked Ken Cookson who had been able to answer a number of queries. He questioned whether this post was really necessary as anybody with any expertise could answer queries on the website.

The Chair thanked them both for their efforts over the past 3 years.

### **Website Officer's Report:**

Ken Cookson said there was little to report and hoped there would have been much more activity on the Forum. He said the website needed to be up-dated to incorporate mobile devices i.e. i-pods, mobile phones etc. as that was the way forward.

He had received a number of enquiries about advertising on the website but had not responded as he was unable to 'second-guess' whether the club wanted to advertise on a commercial basis. There was the potential to do this but so far he had not accepted any offers i.e. special deals for caravan and camping sites.

Since the resignation of Ed Watson as Club Photographer, it had been suggested that members post their photographs on the website but Ken pointed out that this was not easy to do in a way that ensured they were not accessible to the general public. It was suggested that someone should be appointed to take photographs at each rally and that these could then be collated into an album.

The Chair said that all these points would be discussed by the new committee.

### **Friends of Hobbyists':**

Mr Steve Phillips brought up the question of past Hobby owners having changed the make of their motor home and was now in the position of being a 'Friend of the Hobbyists' with no voting rights. As they already pay their yearly subscription he felt they should be entitled to equal standing as good past members of the club rather than feel alienated.

It was agreed that it was the people aspect of the club which was more important than the make of a motorhome, and inevitable that with changing needs and tastes members would eventually change the make of their motorhome and become 'Friends of Hobbyists' which meant they could continue to be members of the club but not have voting rights.

It was suggested that in future all present members should have full voting rights. However, it was not possible for owners of any other make of motorhome to join the club as new members.

Guests would be welcome to attend one rally if they were intending to buy a Hobby motorhome but not allowed to attend any further rallies unless they were full-time owners of a Hobby.

After a unanimous decision it was proposed and seconded that the Constitution (para. 4.4) be changed to allow 'Friends of Hobbyists' to have full voting rights with immediate effect.

Proposed and Seconded by Steve Phillips and Ken Cookson

The Chair said that all these points would be discussed by the new Committee which must now be elected.

### **Election of Committee:**

<b>Chairman</b>	Tony Charity	Proposed and seconded by Tony Flanders and John Anderton
<b>General Secretary</b>	Doris Adam	Proposed and Seconded by Trevor Barden and Pat Miller
<b>Treasurer</b>	David Lawson	Proposed and Seconded by Vera Watson and Geoff Oman
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Christine Lawson	Proposed and Seconded by Jan Charity and Gillian Brookes
<b>Accounts Examiner</b>	Steve Phillips	Proposed and Seconded Ken Cookson and Jan Charity
<b>Web Site Officer</b>	Ken Cookson	Proposed and seconded David Lawson and Tony Charity
<b>Discipline Officer</b>	Vera Watson	Proposed and seconded Tony Charity & Christine Lawson

### **Any Other Business:**

#### **Joining Fees**

The Chair said there had been concerns that the £25 'one-off' joining fee, plus the annual subscription, could be putting prospective members off from joining the club, but new members were adamant that this was very reasonable compared to other societies, so it was agreed to continue as at present.

#### **News Editor**

It was agreed that all items of interest could be posted on the website so there was no need to continue with a magazine.

#### **Technical Officer**

This position was no longer needed as all queries could be answered on the Forum of the website, which could eventually be adapted to accommodate mobile devices.

It was suggested that a link to a Facebook page would open up the potential to outsiders having access to information regarding the existence of the Hobby Club.

The posts of Newsletter Editor, Technical Officer, and Club Photographer were now disbanded.

### **Organisation of Rallies**

The Chair said there had been a variety of venues for rallies in the past, many of them being in a field with no facilities, but it was becoming increasingly necessary to have access to electricity because of members having devices which needed an electric supply. Information on suitable sites should be fed back to the club.

It was suggested that there was a need to change the marketing and demographics when arranging rallies to cover all areas of the country and to be more open-minded. Dealers in Hobby motorhomes could be asked to supply new owners with information about the Hobby Club, plus advertising in motorhome magazines e.g. MMM.

It was also suggested that there should be an annual rally programme organised by the committee to cater for all areas of the country so that members could plan their year accordingly and also attempt to define the problem of not enough members attending the rallies. A brainstorming session needed to take place as to the core objectives:

- the mutual enjoyment of Hobby Club members
- rallies to be arranged in order for members to meet each other
- committee members not to be burdened with having to provide entertainment
- to provide a suitable venue for people to meet

Discussion followed on the problems of low attendance at rallies and some new members expressed surprise at the negativity shown as they were grateful for the warm welcome they had received and their first impressions had been that it was an excellent club.

The Chair proposed that 4 rallies per year be arranged to cover all areas of the country and to look at suitable sites on the internet.

### **Liaison with Hobby Motorhome Suppliers**

Christine Lawson had been contacted by a new supplier of Hobby motorhomes and it was hoped to negotiate discounts where possible.

### **The Website**

It was proposed that the updating of the website should be a priority and be funded by the Club after information had been gathered on the costs involved.

The Chair expressed his thanks to the Committee for their efforts over the past year.

The meeting closed at 5 p.m.

