

AGM DRAFT MINUTES

Mid Cotswolds Tracks and Trails Group Annual General Meeting

7.30pm 19th October 2011 at the Amberley Inn, Amberley, Stroud, Glos.

16 members were present with 4 non members also in attendance.

1. Apologies were received from:

Caroline Barnes; Stephanie Dale; Julie Dickens; Kate Gibbons; Di Hall; Denise Jones; George Lang; Margaret McKiddie; Peggy and Sally Plowman; Leni Rozee; Debbie Wilkinson.

2. Minutes: The Minutes of the 2010 AGM were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising: None.

4. Chair's Report: Lois Eyre gave her report summarising the year's achievements, noting that most of the Group's activities had been fully documented in Pat Harris's splendid newsletters. She reminded those present that the Group had been in danger of folding at the time of last year's AGM, but that members had come forward to take on various roles and the Group now had increased its membership from 34 to 57. The Committee had agreed to meet once every two months for about two hours with an earlier start time. The Group had decided to make membership free while finances allowed and had adopted a new logo.

Highlights of the year included the revamped website provided by Steve Radcliffe; a safer road crossing at Edge and a permissive track through Standish Woods, both negotiated by Pat Harris. Pat and Caroline Barnes negotiated with the central division of Gloucestershire Highways, and obtained their agreement to treat slippery road surfaces where there was evidence that these might be used by horse-riders – and this had now been done in two locations to great good effect.

The Open Day included a further slippery road survey, fundraising bric-a-brac stall, free tack marking by police, and a competition with donated prizes negotiated by Lois, where first prize (Road Rider half chaps) was won by new member Sue.

Access Week Ride doubled as the launch event for Cotswolds on Horseback Edition 3 and both these events made small profits for Group's funds. The new Cotswolds on Horseback was a substantial achievement taking 33 months, 20 volunteers, over 500 hours, 401 miles of riding routes and 1700 miles of travelling. Problems remained to be resolved on 6 of the routes. Improvement work was undertaken on a Frocester bridleway, with the help of Gloucestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way Officer, Cotswold Wardens and donations from local riders. There were some other small access successes - with some difficult gates, for example - but others remained to be resolved, including some cattle grid bypass gates which Jo Chapman was dealing with. Member Julian had kindly volunteered to go on a power-tool training course, so that our clearance work parties in future could avoid the handtools only restriction.

Pat worked with the Stanley Tracks, Trails and Amenities Group, Kings Stanley Parish Council, and Gloucestershire Highways targeting improvements to Marsh Lane with great success. Lois had worked with the Churn Valley Cycle Group, which was renovating/improving a poorly-maintained length of bridleway and restricted byway, so that walkers and mountain bike riders could use it as a safe off-road route to Cirencester.

Sue Ellis wrote on behalf of the Group to everyone we could think of who might be relevant asking for cycle tracks – especially the Nailsworth to Stroud track – to be made available to equestrians. A first response was that this was agreed in principle but was not thought appropriate on the track suggested. This would be pursued.

5. Treasurer's Report: Katrina Thacker circulated copies of the receipts and payments account for the year ended 31st July 2011 which showed a healthy closing balance of £522.86, a modest increase on last year. It was the Group's policy to fundraise separately for individual projects and to use its reserves for general running costs.

6. Election of Chair: Committee members had indicated that they were happy to continue in role, except for Kate Gibbons whose children's success at polo had significantly curtailed her availability. Lois also wished to stand down after her enormously busy year. Pat Harris volunteered to stand as chair, was duly nominated by Julian Rees and seconded by April Read and elected unanimously by the meeting. Members were invited to consider joining the committee and encouraged to talk to Pat about what that might entail.

7. Any Other Business: None.

Lois Eyre thanked the Committee for all their work, and also those members who had helped in various ways. Pat Harris presented Lois with a bouquet and thanked her on behalf of the Group for all that she had done.

The formal meeting closed at 7.50pm and was followed by informal presentations by William Reddaway on his proposed 4 Corners of England long distance fundraising ride and by Central Horse Magazine on their publication.