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Chorley Ramblers AGM on Thursday 30th November 2023
Held at Charnock Richard Football Club Function Room, Charnock
Richard Chorley PR7 5LZ

Apologies There were 25 people in attendance and apologies had been received from 9 people.

Minutes of 2023 AGM Keith Pickup accepted these as read, seconded by David Millington.

Election of Officers Martin asked Dennis to take the chair for the election of Chairman and Dennis asked if there were any nominations. As there were no nominations, he declared that Martin Smalley be re-elected and this was accepted by Eileen Entwisle and seconded by Pat Berisford.

The following committee members in their respective positions elected at the previous AGM or co-opted have agreed to stand for re-election to the committee in their various capacities

Chairman	Martin Smalley
Vice Chairman	Vacant
Treasurer	Dennis Wilson
Secretary	Vacant
Minutes Secretary	Lilian Orme
Membership Secretary	Eileen Entwisle
Footpath Co-Ordinator	Rod Parkinson
Website Manager	Alan Cleator
Social Media Admin	Martin Smalley

Election Of Auditor Thank you to John Warner for auditing our accounts and agreeing to audit the accounts for the year 2023 to 2024.

Chairman's Report - Martin Smalley Generally speaking, Chorley has had another good year ; our membership has held up, Eileen will speak more on that later. Our finances are looking in good shape and more from Dennis on that.

The Coast to Coast walk, which started in June of last year is still proving popular. We are about two thirds of the way through the walk now and are on schedule to reach Robin Hoods Bay in September of next year. We have a regular group of around 30 walkers each month, give or take a few, which just makes the coach cost break even.

The winter Cheshire Circuit Walk, which runs from November to March also attracted a similar number of walkers and is also past the halfway point, aiming to finish back in Frodsham in March of next year. We now need suggestions from people what to do next, and also offers of help to arrange these walks.

Our Facebook Page this time last year broke through the 1000 followers mark and this year it currently stands at 1432. This has continued to be our main vehicle for communicating with the public in general and attracting prospective new walkers. We have a number of regular contributors who really do promote the group and we are grateful to them for their time and enthusiasm in posting pictures.

Our new website has proved to be very comprehensive , more from Alan on that later

We have had a number of initiatives this year to mark our 50th Anniversary. Numerous walks have been organised, Eileen and Marian have spent time on a display in the main town centre library and a large chunk of Terry Lewis's bequest has been spent on a number of benches in the Great Wood in Astley Park. Six benches have been installed each with a stainless steel plaque promoting Chorley Ramblers.

Do go along and look at them if you haven't already done so. Incidentally, our local MP, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, will be coming to 'open' one of these

benches on Friday 8th December and hopefully give us some publicity in the local papers, so look out for that.

You will notice from your agenda that the Chorley group is still running very much with a skeleton committee at the moment and this means more jobs are falling on fewer shoulders. We now have a Footpath Co-Ordinator as Rod has kindly stepped up to the role but we still have no Secretary and so the Secretary's role tends to be spread amongst other committee members. Lilian has very kindly joined the committee in the last year to take over the Minutes Secretary role. I will be staying on as Chairman but we really need more people to help run the group. The full committee only meets about 4 times a year so it's not an onerous task. If you want to help out in some way but not be a full committee member, that's ok. It really is a case of 'many hands make light work'. If you can help in any way to keep us going then please talk to us.

It is the same with walk leaders, even though we have a healthy membership, it is the same handful of people who put on the walks on to the programme. We really need more regular leaders. If it is just a question of confidence then come along on a recce to see what's involved. It really is easy.

TREASURER'S REPORT YEAR ENDED 30/09/23 - Dennis Wilson
ACCOUNT BALANCES

CURRENT YEAR 2023PRIOR YEAR 2022

5,202.57	Restricted (Terry Lewis)	7,156.96
2,541.64	Main CR A/c	1,595.26
2,471.55	Self Funded Coach A/c	2,364.23
10,215.76	Totals	11,116.45

Main Income total £9062.65

Head Office Funding	1,150.00
Donations (RWH-Ramblers Holidays)	100.00
TSB Coach A/c Receipts (self funded)	7,812.65

Main Expenditure Total £9963.34

Printing (walk programme, leaflets, etc)	17.50
Walk related (admin, postage, stamps etc)	92.30
Donations, AGM Guest Speakers etc	150.00
Various expenses, website hosting etc	43.82
Memorial Benches in Astley Park etc (Terry Lewis)	1,954.39
TSB Coach A/c Payments (self funded)	7,705.33

Membership Report Year ending 30 September 2023 - Eileen Entwisle

For the last few years our membership figures have been as follows

Year ending 30th September 2019 - 341 members

Year ending 30th September 2020 - 351 members

Year ending 30th September 2021 - 366 members

Year ending 30th September 2022 - 367 members

And this year's end 30th September 2023 366 members

The total membership has basically stayed the same for the last two years. During the period 1st October 2022 to 30th September this year, 71 people have been sent a welcome to Chorley Ramblers pack. This includes a welcome letter from our Chairman, an ICE card, The Chorley Circular Walk leaflet and any current Area Newsletter.

However, we are losing a similar number of members as we are gaining as our membership numbers stay the same. This means members are either

1. Changing the group they walk with within our area - Mid Lancashire. They were probably assigned to the wrong group in the first place !
2. Moving to a different area of the country.
3. Resigning from the Ramblers.
4. Or just letting membership lapse.

Of the 71 who joined during this current year, 10 have already resigned. Perhaps rambling with our group is not for them.

Website Report - Alan Cleator

This time last year we had just created the new website :-
chorleyramblers.co.uk

This year has been about consolidation and expanding the site's content.

Firstly - the facility for making important announcements are advertised (AGM, Xmas lunch, short notice walk amendments/cancellations).

I know that most people use the Facebook page for this but some people don't use Facebook, so it is important to have an alternative source for this information.

Secondly - Ramblers related points of interest

Lots of information is on the site regarding the 50th anniversary both history and the commemorative events that we have put on this year as part of the celebration. Leaflets from Lilian's canal walk kindly provided by tonight's speaker Nigel Hardacre.

Thirdly - Walk Programme

The major task this year was the integration of the new system that Walk Leaders use to propose walks. This new system, Walk Manager, is now up and running and walks that the walk leaders publish, automatically sync to our website.

I'd like to thank our Regular walk Leaders for their fantastic efforts in getting used to this new system. There is a learning curve and a bit of admin to get up to speed but feedback I am getting is that they actually find the new system easy to use,

What I have noticed is that since the introduction of Walk Manager, occasional leaders, ie those who only put on 1 or 2 walks a year, have not been proposing walks. I think it is a pity that we have lost these occasional walk leaders as they provide different types of walks in terms of terrain and location which I think enhances the walk programme.

What about next year ?

More consolidation and content.

Website is only as interesting as it's content. Any Ramblers related content or photographs anyone wishes to share on the website, they can contact me via the contact page on website or collar me on a walk to discuss.

One of my own ideas for next year is to introduce a new form on the website which will allow occasional walk leaders (OWL) to suggest a walk without getting involved with Walk Manager (WM). They can provide the required detail via the form and I will put it on WM for them. When this new form is complete, I will send out an email to see if this encourages a few OWLS to propose some walks.

Finally , just a few facts and figures about the walks Chorley Ramblers have provided this year. In the last 12 months we have :-

132 walks

Led by 18 different walk leaders

Anyone who completed all those 132 walks would have walked 911 miles, which is 37 miles further than the official distance you would travel walking from Lands end to John O Groats (874)

Something to think about for your next year's resolution maybe ?

Lancaster Canal Trust Talk and Slide Show

After the interval Nigel Hardacre of The Lancashire Canal Trust gave a talk and slide show about The Lancaster Canal and Tram road and rail bridge around the Chorley and Preston area. Thank you Nigel for an interesting and enjoyable presentation !