

**The Northamptonshire Shamblers**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**Held on 8 August 2019 at 8.00pm at Thrapston Church Hall**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Pat Goff, Linda Hovland and Diana Moss.

**2. Minutes of the AGM held on 9 August 2018**, which are on the website, were proposed by Jean Mole and seconded by Nick Nichols.

**3. Chair's Report**

A copy of the report will be found at the end of these minutes. In summary, we have held 15 walks over the year with our new Picnic Walk in July being very successful and we are looking forward to our Away Weekend in Whitby in September. Membership hovers around the 30 mark, but we still need new members and any suggestions for attracting them would be gratefully received. Finbarr thanked all walk leaders and back markers and appealed for more during 2020 who would be willing to lead a walk. Help will be provided wherever we can to make the process less challenging.

The Committee is planning another Away Weekend in September 2020 and we are proposing to stay in Bournemouth where some lovely walks have already been recced. For the Away Day in June, we propose to travel to Carsington Water and Ashbourne in Derbyshire.

**4. Treasurer's Report**

4.1 Jean Mole confirmed that at the end of 2018 we had a bank balance of £633.86 which was inflated due to new members who paid their subscriptions for 2019 between August and December 2018. This makes accounting more difficult, so Jean proposes that in future the Constitution be changed so she can present the accounts from 1 August to 31 July. To transition this, she proposes that for current members who renew their subscriptions in January 2020, they only pay £6 for seven months until 31 July 2020. Going forward, from 1 August 2020 annual subscriptions will revert to £8 for the full year until 31 July 2021. Guest walkers would remain at £2 per person. This was seconded by Nick Nicholls.

4.2 During the year we had 32 paid up members including 9 new members – an increase of 28% over last year's membership. We also had 14 guest walkers. The Away Day to Sheringham made a small loss of £23 due to having a second pick up point.

4.3 Stuart Emmerson has agreed to be the Accounts Examiner this year so we do not need to elect an Examiner.

4.4 We have raised £44 in the charity box for the Away With Pain charity to date, but we hope to raise more before the end of the year. However, it was suggested that a further £25 be added from the Shamblers' bank balance to the total raised.

4.5 For the 2020 Away Weekend to Bournemouth, we have a very special rate with the Trouville Hotel of £55 per person for bed, breakfast and dinner, with no single supplement. However, this special rate is only available until the end of January 2020, so if anyone wishes to take

advantage of this you will need to let us know by that time. An email with more information will be sent towards the end of the year.

- 4.6 Our AGM for 2020 can now be held on the first Thursday of August again (6 August 2020) as the Women's Institute, who also hold their meeting on the first Thursday, have moved to another location. Jean has now booked the Hall for that date.

## **5. Election of Committee**

In the absence of any further volunteers to join the Committee, Finbarr confirmed that the current Committee have agreed to stand for a further year. This was agreed by all present.

## **6. Planning for 2020**

- 6.1 Finbarr outlined plans for visiting Carsington Water and Ashbourne in June next year and all agreed to these locations.
- 6.2 Suggestions for a suitable location for our July 2020 Picnic Walk were one of our local Country Parks, Selsey Forest or Barnwell. After discussion, Barnwell was the favoured choice.
- 6.3 Finbarr once again asked members to consider being walk leaders and the Committee are willing to help with suggested walks etc.
- 6.4 We were planning to meet at Summer Leys again for our December evening walk this year, but Stuart mentioned that there is now a notice advising that the gates are to be locked during the evenings in future. We may need to consider a different location for this walk, so any suggestions would be helpful.
- 6.5 As not everyone will attend our Away Weekends in September, it was suggested that we add an extra evening walk in September 2020 as it will still be light enough at that time. Ruth will include this in the list of walks for next year.

## **7. Any Other Business**

- 7.1 Peter Riches suggested that for 2020 our charity should be Water Aid and he will obtain a charity box for this purpose.
- 7.2 Finbarr confirmed that we still advertise in Village Connect every two months, but if anyone knows of any other free papers or magazine that we could also use then please let him know.
- 7.3 Ruth will bring printed flyers to the next walk to distribute to members so they can promote the Shamblers around their area.
- 7.4 Peter Riches suggested promoting the 2020 Away Weekend to Bournemouth on our website. A meeting will be arranged with him and the Committee to review the website for this purpose. Finbarr thanked Peter for all his work and help with our website.
- 7.5 Ruth to liaise with Peter to make the necessary changes to the Constitution regarding accounting (as mentioned in 4.1 above).

7.6 Nick Nicholls, as a new member, thanked the Committee for all their hard work.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm – our thanks for all who had managed the evening's events.

## Shamblers AGM - 8 August 2019 - Chair's Report

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen and welcome.

Tonight is our chance to review our activities of the past year and also to plan for our future. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the year and welcome all your suggestions for the future.

We held 15 walks over the year. Stepping into Bedfordshire for a lovely walk in Pavenham and into Leicestershire when walking in the ever popular Foxton area. At Summer Leys we again enjoyed our night walk and Christmas party. Our Away Day was to Sheringham and from all I hear it was a great success - thank you Sue for stepping in to lead the walk at short notice.

A new venture this year was a picnic walk, this was held in Abington Park, with a short walk followed by a treasure hunt, and then a picnic. Some folk stayed to listen to the Northamptonshire Male Voice Choir who were very entertaining. Hopefully a picnic walk will become a regular feature and I welcome your thoughts on a venue for next year. Personally one of my favourite walks, was one with perhaps the lowest attendance. Forecasted rain meant 5 walkers attended our first evening walk this summer at Weston. But we enjoyed a walk through picturesque countryside steeped in history, just a few drops of rain and nice food and chat in the village pub afterwards, proof that a good walk doesn't have to be a big walk. As a club we try to be flexible and are prepared to move dates to avoid clashing with Easter, Mothering Sunday and Father's day - we want to keep our members happy.

Membership continues to hover around the 30 mark. Each year we welcome some new members but we also lose a few. New members equals new ideas and hopefully a spread in the workload. Your thoughts on attracting new members is welcome.

I would like to thank all our walk leaders and back markers. We walked by rivers and canals, castles and cottages, towns and lost villages. Every walk required planning and reccing. Local pubs and shops enjoy our custom, we do our little for the economy both locally and beyond. I want to take this opportunity to appeal for more walk leaders. We will help in every way possible, we can supply walking books, OS maps, and we have useful information on our website. We can help suggest walks, we can contact the pubs, and we will help with recces. Please consider leading a walk, those members that do will confirm it gives a great feeling of satisfaction receiving thanks at the end of a Shamblers walk.

Looking forward, our first Weekend Away is rapidly approaching. Around 12 to 14 people have expressed an interest in going to Whitby, but it is never too late to decide to travel. There is loads of information available if you have yet to make up your mind. All members will get an informative email in the near future and if anyone has a question don't hesitate contacting a committee member and we will try to answer asap.

The committee is already planning a weekend of walking for 2020 and travelled en bloc to Bournemouth earlier in the year and recced walks in the New Forest and in Dorset's lovely coast and countryside. For our Away Day next year, with our members' approval, we will travel to Carsington Waters visitor centre and walk through countryside, a pretty village and returning beside the lake. On our way home we will stop in Ashbourne for tea and shopping. We also intend adding an extra

evening walk next year in September so we will have a local walk in every month of the year for our members.

Thankfully, the past year has been incident free. Our members' health and safety is always our priority. We are investing in new Shamblers printed Hi-Viz tops and intend also to have whistles available to purchase. Remember to have an ICE (in case of emergency) number on your mobile. This can be invaluable to emergency services if ever needed.

The clubs website is one of our main sources for new members and I thank Peter Riches for his invaluable help in maintaining it. The site tells you all you need to know about the Club and its ideals, and the walk reports are always worth a read. We also place the walk reports on our Facebook page, you are welcome to comment, give a thumbs up, post a photo, insert articles regarding the countryside, walking and similar topics. I encourage people to visit the Facebook page as the more hits the more it gets noticed. We also plug our walks in the free Village Connect magazine which is circulated in the north of the county, if there is a publication that you feel is worth advertising in please let us know.

Our committee has had a busy year. Planning a year's walking and extra activities requires a number of meetings. Thanks to Jean for hosting these meetings, the tea and cake is always appreciated. When I get home I know I will have a "things to do" email from Ruth, she is brilliantly efficient, keeping us organised, dealing with membership queries, correspondence, administering the Facebook page, the list is endless. Thank you Ruth. Stuart does a great job researching and writing up our walk notices as well as providing sensible advice when needed, thanks Stuart. And Sue has been busy travelling the island reccing walks north, south, east and west as well as being an important voice at our meetings, thank you Sue. To conclude I would like to thank you all for the pleasure of your company on our walks.

Thank you.

Finbarr Finn  
Chair