



Torbay Rambling Club

AGM

Saturday 25th November 2023 at Churston Golf Club

There were 55 members present and apologies had been received from 8 members. The meeting was chaired by Club Chairman, Rod Wilson.

1. Welcome

Rod welcomed members and reminded them of the yellow 'In Case of Emergency' cards, which they were encouraged to complete and have laminated. 48 cards were completed during the meeting.

2. Minutes of 2022 AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 26th November 2022 had been previously circulated to members. They were approved by the meeting. There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

Rod gave the following report:

Over the course of the last twelve months the Club has evolved in several significant areas. Not only have we managed to provide a nearly full programme of walks but have also had a great number of social events at regular intervals throughout the year. Here I must thank not only Peter Hancock and Carol Wren for their work on putting together the Wednesday and Sunday walks programme but also our valued walk leaders for volunteering to lead walks on behalf of the Club. On the whole walks have been well attended and I am sure you will all agree that we have managed to present a varied programme which we have all enjoyed. Peter Hancock has run two training courses for new walk leaders.

We have also taken part in the English Riviera Walking Festival and a big thank you to Paul Scott, Peter Hancock and Sarah Doman for offering to lead walks in the festival's programme. This keeps our name in the public eye and, thanks to their donations, the Club has gained £150 for our funds. Well done to the three of you.

On the social side we have been involved with several activities some of them new and others which have proved to be successful in the past. We had a drumming session with James Carr in January, Green bowling in August, crazy golf on Paignton seafront, a holiday in Ilfracombe, a coach trip to Lyme Regis, a canoeing experience down the River Dart, line dancing, Paul's musical

evening and several Sunday lunches. All of these events have been well attended and enjoyed by all who attended. A vote of thanks must go to Anne-Marie & Kevin Cochrane, ably assisted by Angela Staples, Annette Smith, Hazel Langford and Maggie Wilson, with apologies to anyone that I have missed.

Our website has been completely overhauled and is much easier to use than hitherto, especially for those who access it from their mobile devices. Many thanks to our webmaster Cliff Howell for all his hard work on this. He has done a great Job on this vital link to members and often had to input walk changes at very short notice to keep us all up to date. Thank you, Cliff.

The Club's Constitution is a topic in which many of you have only a passing interest but it is important for the successful running of our Club. Since taking office as Safety Officer, Chris Brennan has worked very hard to re-write and refine it so that it is much more logical and easier to understand. This has not been a simple task to undertake so thank you Chris for your dedication to this task.

Our Membership Secretary Susie Cormac has also done a great job since taking over the role and has proved to be a well organiaed and methodical addition to the committee. I am sure that her persistence has ensured that you have all paid your subs for the coming year. Thank you Susie.

Next I must thank our Treasurer Gwen Warde. Gwen volunteered to take over this role when the Club was facing a crisis with Covid and several members of the old committee wishing to stand down. She has kept us afloat and indeed the Club's finances are now in a healthy state. As you will know, Gwen wishes to stand down at this meeting and she will be sorely missed. Thank you Gwen

Last, but by no means least, the Club owes a huge debt of gratitude to our hard-working new Secretary Maureen Chivers. I am sure that she did not know what she was letting herself in for when she offered to take on the role. She has worked tirelessly to keep us all informed and up to date and her dedication to the successful running of our Club has been nothing short of miraculous. Thank you, Maureen.

You will gather from the above that I feel the Club has had a successful year with lots going on, a small increase in membership and a healthy financial position. So, what of the future?

In 2025 the Club reaches a significant milestone in its existence. We will reach our 75th anniversary which makes us one of the oldest rambling clubs in the UK. The committee are planning a number of events to celebrate this of which more in due course. If we are going to make full use of the year we will need your assistance in helping to organize these events. It is not fair that your hard working committee should be tasked with organizing every event so please do offer assistance as and when you can.

Sadly, during the year, we have lost Jenny Cherriman, Derek Hexter and John Mellor. Our thoughts go out to their families. Next Spring, I plan to lead a John Mellor Memorial Walk to one of John's favourite spots, Hisley Bridge.

Finally, I have enjoyed my time as Chairman of this wonderful Club and, thanks to all my fellow committee members, my job has been made relatively easy.

4. Financial Report

Gwen Warde, Club Treasurer, gave the following report:

Wow, what a year it's been with all the wonderful social events and trips that have been organised. This has kept me on my toes ensuring all payments have been recorded and

crosschecked with the names on the Organisers' lists. To give you an idea, £5,102.50 was received over the past 12 months. The breakdown is attached to the Financial Statement which is available here.

The Wells Trip and the Christmas Party have already been paid, and there just remains the Line Dance costs which will be paid during the next financial year. You will also notice that the long-distance trips where walks were involved have resulted in several recces which are offset by any credits remaining on activities. It's not always realised how much preparation and time goes into organising these trips.

Membership subscriptions have been received very promptly this year, so much so that it looks as though we have more members than listed. This anomaly has occurred because late payers last year have paid early this year.

Ramblers Walking Holiday Travel have donated £60 to us for a walking holiday courtesy of Chris and Susie. Also Peter and Sarah have donated the fees they received from leading walks for the Walking Festival which is fantastic.

The Torbay Council Community Grant has been used to purchase First Aid Kits and High Viz Jackets for Walks Leaders and is listed under Equipment.

In my wisdom (NOT!) I suggested and it was agreed that a deposit account be opened as a contingency fund for the club. However, it has proved not to be practical due to lots of form filling which is unnecessary for a walking club, and so the £1000 with a little bit of interest has been brought back into the current account.

The Accounts have once again been audited by Ken Beevers. He has stood as the Club's Auditor for more than six years on a voluntary basis and I personally would like to thank him for his input. I am standing down from being Treasurer, after a relatively short time, but am pleased to have been able to help the club of which I've been a member for over 15 years.

I'm just going to keep on walking now!

The Financial Statement to which Gwen referred in her report showed that receipts for the year 1st November 2022 to 31st October 2023 amounted to £7937.90 and that outgoings for the same period were £8591.68, leaving a balance in the bank at 31st October 2023 of £2917.82.

Gwen presented Ken Beevers with a bottle of wine in appreciation of his service as Auditor.

5. Social Secretaries' Report

Anne-Marie gave the following report:

The club has enjoyed a full and varied programme of events this year. This is entirely due to the support of members. Particular thanks to the following people:

- Gwen for being our wingman
- Paul for organising the music night and for planning super day trips (even though some were scuppered due to unforeseen circumstances)
- Denise for organising our Christmas party
- Hazel for sorting out the popular Sunday lunches at the Riviera Hotel
- Annette, Jan, Jaqui and Moira for inviting us to share a very pleasant evening at their bowling club in St Mary's
- Maggie for taking the bookings for our trip to Wells

➤ Angela for taking the bookings for the Line Dancing event

We are always looking for new ideas. If you have any suggestions or would like to offer your help, please see Kevin or Anne-Marie or any of the committee members.

Summary of events November 2022 – November 2023

- 19th November 2022: Trip to Bath. 54 people enjoyed a super day out to Bath which included a canal walk and time to explore the city
- 11th December: Christmas meal at the Riviera Hotel
- 20th January: Drumming workshop. Great fun was had by all, with a very successful if somewhat surprising outcome at the end of the evening. Who knew that TRC members were so skilled!
- April 2023: Ilfracombe Holiday
- 16th April: Sunday Lunch at Riviera Hotel
- 11th June: Canoeing. 20 attended this very successful event. All seemed to enjoy the day so we could do a similar activity in the future possibly using a different starting place or time for variation.
- 1st July: Coach trip to Charmouth and Lyme Regis. This was a very popular choice of destination. The coach was filled within a week with many on the waiting list. All went well. The weather was kind and everybody seemed to have a great day out.
- 7th July: Crazy golf. 20 played golf and 2 more joined for the meal afterwards. As this event required no organisation from us, it is certainly something that we could repeat in the future, possibly using a different golf course / pub.
- 12th August: Excursion to Mount Edgecombe and coast path walk to Kingsand and Cawsand, followed by a boat trip back to Plymouth.
- 17th August: Bowling and Fish and Chip Supper. 32 people enjoyed a very pleasant evening playing bowls followed by a fish and chip supper at St Mary's Bowling Club in Brixham.
- 8th September: Music evening at Galmpton Village Hall. Our very own saxophonist, Paul ably assisted by Ukeclear Fusion provided a fabulous evening of fancy dress and fun.
- 24th September: Autumn meal at the Riviera Hotel combined with a pre-meal walk
- 17th November: 32 people attended and enjoyed the line dancing at St George's church hall.

Upcoming events:

- **Christmas Party Friday 8th December** organised by Denise. This will be at the TLH Carlton Hotel 7pm. £35 to include three course meal, drink on arrival and a disco. Some members are taking advantage of the option to stay overnight at a special bed and breakfast rate. This event is fully booked.
- **16th December: Trip to Wells** There are still 4 places available on the coach.
- **Riviera Hotel Sunday Lunch 17th December** (Contact Hazel if you would like to attend)
- **Barn dance Feb 23rd 2024** with Stargazey Pie at St George's church hall 7:15. £10 per head. Soft drinks included - bring own alcohol and snacks
- **24th – 28th June 2024 Holiday to Penzance.** I have 33 people who have booked or who have told us that they intend to book. Please can you let us know if you have already booked but not put your name on the list so that we know the numbers? We don't really want number to

go much higher than this because we won't all fit onto the buses and we don't want too many people on each walk. We have various walks in mind. Rod has booked the Lugger Inn for an Italian themed buffet on the first night so that we can enjoy a get together and plan how the week will pan out.

- **Coach trip 2024**

I'm thinking of Fowey. A couple of nice walk possibilities. Any suggestions for future coach trips welcome especially if you are able to lead a walk.

A suggestion was made to travel by coach to Lynton and Lynmouth and do a walk to the Valley of Rocks. Angela Jones asked for walks along the Tamar Trail to be included in the programme and Anne-Marie said that this was in hand.

Anne-Marie said that planning was underway for the Club's 75th anniversary year in 2025, including the

75th Anniversary Holiday in Brittany- May 2025

Anne-Marie asked Paul Scott to speak about this. He said that the itinerary was based on a trip he had done with friends in 2022. It was expected to be as follows:

Monday: Train to Plymouth and shared meal in Wetherspoons prior to boarding ferry to Roscoff leaving at 11pm and landing 8am the following morning.

Tuesday: Bus or taxi to large 3 star hotel in village of Roscoff. Walk around Ile de Batz including visit to tropical gardens.

Wednesday: Trip to Morlaix and city walk using leaflet from Tourist Office

Thursday: Explore St Pol de Leon

Friday: Free time in Roscoff and trip home. Return ferry 3pm - arrives in Plymouth 9:10pm in time for train back to Torbay.

Paul had costed the trip and the current price was £270. This included ferry crossing as a foot passenger, including a berth in a 2-berth en-suite cabin on the outward crossing and 3 nights bed and breakfast accommodation, but not including other meals, train, bus and taxi fares and ferry to and from the Ile de Batz. Members would make their own bookings with Brittany Ferries (for both ferry and hotel), having been given all the relevant information.

Paul said that he had mentioned the proposed holiday to members on the Mount Edgecumbe, Kingsand and Cawsand walk and that a high level of interest had been shown. Chris Hawes said that he knew the area well and highly recommended it, especially the coast.

Anne-Marie went on to ask for a show of hands as to whether members would be interested in various social activities during the coming year. There was considerable interest in canoeing, crazy golf, lawn bowls, ten-pin bowling and line dancing and some interest in another drumming workshop. Skittles was also suggested. Preston Conservative Club was suggested as a venue, as this year we had been let down by The Old Manor Inn.

Paul expressed thanks to those members who had taken the opportunity to support Rowcroft Hospice by giving donations at the Music Evening. There would be further opportunities to raise funds for Rowcroft, including at Wanda's walk on 23rd December.

6. Safety Officer's Report

Chris Brennan gave the following report:

Firstly, thanks to our Secretary Maureen's well-presented grant application to Torbay Council's Community Fund we received over £280 to help supply Walk Leaders with Torbay Rambling Club Hi-Vis jackets and compact First Aid kits. Unfortunately, not every Walk Leader has taken up the offer, with one saying that we are "getting into the nanny state". She said her walk training had specifically warned against giving any first aid whatsoever, even a plaster, to prevent being sued. Instead, professional emergency help should be sought. This view is misguided but not uncommon. A survey found half of people are deterred from volunteering, helping others, or intervening in an emergency due to the fear of liability. Because of that, in 2015 the Social Action, Responsibility and Heroism Act was passed. Its aim was to provide reassurance to people who act in socially beneficial ways, behave in a generally responsible manner, or act selflessly to protect someone in danger, by ensuring that the courts must recognise their actions and always take the context into account if something goes wrong, and they are sued. So please, Walk Leaders, wear your Hi-Vis vest and carry your first aid kit and don't be afraid to come to the aid of a member. That applies to all members of course.

I also want to mention our insurance. We are one of about 30,000 with the same Sports Club policy. For our Club, it expressly insures the Committee but I've read the 100 pages or so of the policy and noticed it had added a definition of employee in the public liability section. One of the seven inclusions was "a voluntary worker engaged with your permission". The insurers confirmed that this would include our Walk Leaders. So, the good news is Walk Leaders, you are covered by our insurance. But there's always a but, like all insurance cover one has to mitigate potential losses. We must take reasonable steps to prevent accident or injury and make every reasonable effort to minimise loss, damage or liability. We do this through requiring leaders to recce walks and carry out a risk assessment and communicate details to members at the pre-walk briefing. We also have our walking rules which we call our policies which have been made not only for safety but for our enjoyment of the walks. They include the Club's Safe Walking Code and Guidance for Walk Leaders. Please make sure you have read them and follow them so I can rest easy knowing that I leave the role of Safety Officer with the Club and its members safer than they were when I started!

7. Walk Co-ordinators' Report

Peter Hancock gave the following report on behalf of the 3 Walks Co-ordinators:

Saturday walks

Rod reports that Saturday walks have been very successful and well attended on the whole. The highest attendance was Maureen's walk from Newton Abbot train station to Stover via Kingsteignton which had 35 walkers attending. This could be due to the fact that she circulated a flyer about the walk which was excellent. The lowest attendance was Helen's walk from Penn Inn to Coffinswell circular on a damp, drizzly day when only 10 turned up. On average we get around 18 - 20 members but this can vary widely.

Not only did we cover the local area but also down to Plymouth and beyond which Paul has been requested to repeat next summer. There were a couple of walks in Cornwall which had to be cancelled owing to severe weather warnings and train strikes but these were replaced by something more local. For the forthcoming programme we have gained a couple of new walk

leaders which is encouraging. Rod would also like to appeal for more leaders to come forward and anyone who does so will get his full support and backing.

Sunday walks

Adam reports that Sunday walks attendances have ranged between 8 and 19 walkers. They have taken place over a wide area, including Dartmoor, the South Hams and Torbay. One local walk which proved popular was that recently led by Martin and Heather - an excellent walk to Gallows Gate and back to the warmth and comfort of their house at the top end of Preston for tea, coffee and cake. Such walks provide an excellent standby, particularly during the winter months and also in summer if the weather is not up to much, so Adam would welcome similarly accessible walks that don't involve much travelling.

However, plans are also afoot for walks further afield. Mandy is thinking of offering a new walk in East Devon at Newton Poppleford with assistance from other members and she and Adam are planning an eight mile walk from Okehampton Railway Station which is now part of the National Rail Network. An off-peak day return from Torbay with a railcard costs £9.60.

Adam wishes to express big thanks to Denise for the excellent support she has given him in his new role. Thanks also go to John Llewellyn, Gail, Mandy and Kata for their company and for helping out on recces.

New walk leaders would be welcomed and Adam would be more than happy to share some guidance with anyone willing to lead walks.

Wednesday walks

We have achieved 50 Wednesday Walks over the past 12 months. A Big Thank You to all members who have supported those walks. But a special thanks to the walk leaders who have made this possible.

Our walks have been varied, taking in coastal and inland areas and Dartmoor. We have enjoyed some historical walks which have added a more interesting aspect to our surrounding towns and countryside. We have from 6-20 attending and enjoying a great day out.

In the latter weeks we have been experiencing some extreme weather conditions. So, for safety reasons, we have had to make a decision to offer an alternative walk for those who still wish to walk. I think we have only had to cancel one walk.

PLEASE check the programme prior to making your decision to walk, especially if conditions are not favourable. We endeavour to give ample warning via email of any changes but, if in doubt, contact the Walk Leader. Their contact details are always on the programme.

Walk Leaders' Training

At last year's AGM we appealed for more members to step up and offer to become Walk Leaders. It is not an easy task for The Walks Coordinators to create an interesting programme for you all to enjoy. We were struggling for walk leaders, putting pressure on the faithful few to come up with the walks. I said that I would be willing to run a Walk Leaders' Training Day. When I asked for a show of hands there were 4 Members interested, so this was arranged for 13th March. With the success of this event, along with more interested members, I ran a second event on 2nd October with 6 members attending. As a result, we now have a further 9 qualified new walk leaders. However, can you please bear in mind that this is new to them. They are doing their best

to offer you new walks, whilst gaining experience themselves. Give them the encouragement they deserve.

If you do have any issues concerning any walks please contact the Walks Coordinator who will endeavour to offer a solution.

Thank you once again for your support. I would like to express a special thanks to the rest of the Committee for all their support and hard work.

Paul Scott expressed thanks to Peter for the recent history walk in Totnes. Peter said that, following the interest expressed that day, he was planning a further Totnes History Walk, which would include a visit to Totnes Castle.

8. Webmaster's Report

Cliff said that, having spent most of his working life in IT, he had realised that the Club website needed renewing and had been well-placed to undertake the task. The most significant change he had introduced was a radically different walks programme which could be quickly updated when walks were changed. When this was introduced, Cliff has not expected there to be a need for a printed programme. However, it had become apparent that some people like a printed copy and so Cliff had introduced the facility to print the programme from the website. A printed four month programme ran to about 15 pages and there were some issues with the way it printed, which Cliff was addressing. He was open to any suggestions for improvements to the website.

Hazel Langford said that she was one of those who had been reluctant to forego a printed programme, but had decided that the online programme was "brilliant".

Anne-Marie said that Cliff had also spent many hours designing the Club's new roller banner and Cliff pointed out that all Committee members had had input into the design – a good example of the Committee working together.

9. Election of Officers

Before proceeding to the election of Officers of the Club, Rod said that, as had already been indicated, Gwen Warde was stepping down from the role of Treasurer. He expressed appreciation of her hard work for the Club under difficult circumstances. On behalf of the Club, Maggie Wilson presented Gwen with a card, a plant and a voucher to thank her for all the work she had done.

Members had previously been advised of the nominations received for the offices of Treasurer, Safety Officer and Sunday Walks Co-ordinator. No further nominations were forthcoming.

Treasurer

Proposal: That Chris Brennan be elected Treasurer of Torbay Rambling Club

Proposed: Susie Cormac

Seconded: Gwen Warde

The proposal was carried

Safety Officer

Proposal: That Chris Price be elected Safety Officer for Torbay Rambling Club

Proposed: Chris Brennan

Seconded: Peter Hancock

Chris Price was a fairly new member of the Club, so introduced himself. He will be leading walks and his photography skills have already been used by the Club.

The proposal was carried

Sunday Walks Co-ordinator

Proposal: That Adam Smith be elected Sunday Walks Co-ordinator for Torbay Rambling Club

Proposed: Peter Hancock

Seconded: Susie Cormac

The proposal was carried

Adam was being assisted by Denise Moore and together they had already completed the current Sunday Walks programme, as Carole Wren had been unable to do so before moving away from the area.

Chairman, Secretary and remaining Committee Members

All remaining Committee members were willing to serve for a further year. Rod suggested that the rest of the Committee be elected en bloc. Members were content to proceed in this way.

Proposal: That the following people be re-elected for a further year:

Rod Wilson	Chairman and Saturday Walks Co-ordinator
Maureen Chivers	Secretary
Susie Cormac	Membership Secretary
Anne Marie Cochrane & Kevin Cochrane	Social Secretaries
Peter Hancock	Wednesday Walks Co-ordinator
Cliff Howell	Webmaster

Proposed: Angela Staples

Seconded: Mandy Lindsay

The proposal was carried.

Appointment of Auditor

With Ken Beevers stepping down as Auditor, someone else was needed to take on the task of auditing the Club accounts at the end of each financial year. David Balgobin volunteered for the job.

The meeting appointed David Balgobin as Auditor for the year 2023-2024.

10. The Club's 75th Anniversary in 2025

Rod said that we were one of the oldest walking clubs in the country. The Committee wanted to really celebrate our 75th anniversary and needed the help of members to make the celebrations a success, so Rod encouraged members to contribute ideas and offers of help. Offers to organise

an event would be particularly welcome. We had already heard about the holiday in Brittany being planned for 2025. Another idea mentioned was to walk the whole of the Bay, from Hopes Nose to Berry Head. This had been planned to celebrate the Club's 70th anniversary but, like so much that year, had not come to fruition because of Covid.

Chris Brennan spoke about the formation of the Club at the building which was now the Hyde Dendy. An anniversary event could be held at that venue.

The inaugural walk had been in November 1950 from Bolton Cross, Brixham, to Berry Head and on to Kingswear. The same walk could be undertaken during the anniversary year. Peter Hancock was willing to lead the walk as far as Mansands and then back to Brixham while another walk leader continued on to Kingswear with the rest of the group.

A series of challenge walks could be held.

Maureen mentioned a publication called '50 years of Rambling' by Mary Carter which had been brought to the attention of the Committee and asked whether any members knew where a copy might be obtained. Chris Hawes thought that he had a copy and would look it out. Jacqui Beevers said that, on leaving the Committee, she had passed on a large ring binder containing much useful information about the history of the Club, possibly including '50 Years of Rambling'. Rod believed that this was in his possession.

Chris Brennan showed members a photo album with old photos of Club walks. Members were welcome to help themselves to any they wished to take.

There had been a large number of photos on the website before Cliff redesigned it. These had been removed to make the website more manageable. They were stored safely and this archived material could be made available for members to access in conjunction with the anniversary celebrations.

Cliff suggested forming a sub-committee or working party for the 75th Anniversary and Rod asked that any further ideas be passed to Anne-Marie and Kevin. Before leaving the meeting, Gail Johnson, Gill Low, Helen Wills and Gwen Warde volunteered to serve on the working party. Gail offered to lead a 75th Anniversary Ten Tors walk of 9-10 miles on a Sunday or any other day. She also suggested the possibility of a picnic on Torre Abbey Green whereby everybody brings a plate to share.

11. Open Questions to Committee

Mandy Lindsay asked that people keep to the start time of walks, rather than starting off in advance and going ahead of the rest of the group. Peter Hancock agreed that the start time should be observed. It was sometimes possible for the start to be put back a little if members were unavoidably delayed on the way to the walk and contacted the walk leader.

12. Any Other Business

Mandy Lindsay advised members that she still had a selection of Club T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts and beanie hats. These were available at the back of the room. She wished to express a big thank you to Gwen for her support in selling these items.

Barrie Chivers introduced himself as the husband of the Club Secretary and made a plea that, before contacting her, members gave some thought as to whether she was the one to deal with the matter. Maureen said that, as Secretary, she operated the Club's email address and, as Committee members personal emails were not made public, she would not wish to discourage

members from contacting the Club's address. She had not felt able to take up Paul's kind offer to stand in for her so that she did not have to deal with Club emails while on holiday. However, plans were in progress for Walk Co-ordinators to update the online walks programme, rather than the Secretary being involved in any amendments to walks. This would substantially decrease her workload and would mean that she could take a few days break without having to check Club emails.

Maggie Wilson asked that members express their appreciation of the Committee members by giving them a big round of applause. Members did so.

At the end of the meeting, the raffle, held in aid of Club funds, was drawn.

Signed: (Club Chairman)

Date: