

The Murvi Club

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Held on: 19 March 2016 at 18.00

Present:

Steve & Maggie Butler
Brian & Sheila Cady
Gay Chamberlayne
Roger & Anne Clough
Jackie Coles & Steve Little
Hugh & Jeanette Constable
Jane & John Day
Bob & Maggie Eley
Ellie & Simon Elsdon
Angela & Robert Emuss
Anne & Nigel Evans
Robert & Christine Flitney
Billy & Ingrid Gawthorpe
Philip & Hilary Greenwood
Tony & Chrissie Gumbrell
Wayne & Wendy Hallam
Kelvin & Jill Holford
Paul & Gay Johnson
Martin & Jane Jones
Joe & Theresa Kelleher
Ian Leslie
Alan & Marilyn Major
Nick & Yvonne Mawby
Penny McCallig & Andrew Shewan
Barry Moy & Den Richardson
Roger & Wendy Pepper
Tony & Margaret Phillips
Meg & Pete Privett
Paul & Linda Shingler
Chris & Sue Spencer-Higgs
Karin & Adrian Sumption
Martin & Penny Sweet
Gerry & Pat Thomas
Peter & Elaine Vincent
Alan & Chrissie Williams
Christine & Anton Woolford
Vince and Christine Wright

Apologies:

Robert & Carolyn Ash
Geoff Atkinson & Margaret Cannan
Ian Baxter & Jane Senior
Ray & Sara Bennett
Pete & Anne Bland
Ian & Joy Castle
Dick & Vicky Constable
Leigh & Annabel Darnton
Campbell & Lorraine Dixon
Mike & Sylvia Frew
Graham & Jenny Goodacre
Heather & Chris Gould
Barry & Joyce Hopewell
John & Mary Laidler
Peter & Margaret Lloyd
Dave & Liz Nayler
Jo Naylor
Pauline & Nic Nicholls
Roger Norman
Alice & Ian Palmer
Wendy Palmer and Lin Powell
Mike & Janet Perkins
Penny & Nick Potts
Chris & Nadine Reed
Mike Scratcher
Tim & Jacqui Simmons
Dean & Sarah Small
Alan & Marion Turner
Mike Warburton
Julia Wright

- 1 In the absence of Julia Wright, the Chairman, Alan Major took the chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2 The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 21/03/15 were approved and signed by Alan Major.
- 3 There were no matters arising from the Annual General Meeting held on 21/03/15.
- 4 Alan Major read Julia Wright, the Chairman's, report as follows:
Welcome to our 6th AGM. I am unable to be with you in person as I will be in Gran Canaria. I will be with you in spirit. As you can imagine, I felt extremely guilty having to desert you all. I have managed to assuage some of that guilt by treating my over-wintering trip to the Canaries as a fact-finding mission for the Club. Although I am not a blogger, I will share my conclusions with you about over-wintering in general and the Canaries in particular.
One interesting point was how easy it was to persuade the committee to let me have a sabbatical. I was under no illusions about how dispensable the Chairman's role is. I now have confirmation of that fact! Hopefully my job will still be there when I return.
In some ways it is easier writing this in January as not a lot is likely to change by March. Once again we have had a good year for new members with 34 joining us between January and December 2015. I

have been able to meet quite a few of the new members at events and they have always been very pleased with the way the Club operates and particularly our informality. We have had some excellent meets and although I wasn't able to attend them all, those that I did attend were excellent. Karin will probably say this but if you think you would like to offer a meet please speak to any of the committee members, who will be more than happy to advise you. It can be a very rewarding experience.

In 2016 we have our first member-organised meet in Europe in the Moselle Valley. There has been a great deal of interest in this meet, so hopefully it will be the first of many such adventures. Each year I thank the committee for all their hard work. I know that you appreciate the efforts they put in. Although we operate as a virtual committee, carrying out the Club business largely by email and telephone contact, a lot of time and hard work goes into that. So I am going to repeat my personal thanks for all their hard work and for the support that I have had from the committee this year. Finally, I'd like to thank you, the members for coming along and supporting us. I suspect that several of you here today have organised meets since our last AGM. We really appreciate your efforts in doing so. Enjoy the rest of the AGM meet in what I know is a lovely location. I look forward to catching up with as many of you as I can later this year.

- 5 Roger Pepper, the Secretary, reported as follows:
 Committee meetings took place on 22 March and 22 November 2015. The committee have been in regular touch by email between the meetings.
 Adrian Sumption was co-opted to the committee to act as our Editor
 The following decisions have been taken:
 Newsletters will be published in Spring and Autumn.
 The Club will not produce hats and other items of clothing bearing the Cub's logo. However the logo will be made available if any member wishes to use it for this purpose.
 Emails on the chat line have been changed to a daily digest.
 The limit of the Club's and organiser's liability has been included in the Events section of the website. When the club was formed in 2010 steps were taken to obtain certificates which would allow the club to hold rallies not exceeding 5 days on unlicensed sites. These were issued by Natural England and the Welsh Government in early 2011 for a 5 year period. They have therefore come up for renewal and this has been successfully completed. As part of the process, amendments to the club's constitution and code of conduct were required. This is covered by item 11 of the agenda. The certificate issued by the Scottish Government is not time limited.
 Membership of ACCEO and our public liability insurance have both been renewed.

- 6 Alan Major, the Treasurer, reported as follows:
 Treasurer's Report 2015
 A copy of the 2015 accounts was circulated with the AGM papers. As in prior years the accounts have been audited by Martin Sweet and I would like to place on record my thanks for his time in undertaking this activity.
 These accounts show that the club continues to meet its expenses from the subscriptions received from members and once again there is a surplus for the year. The club aims with member cooperation to keep its operating expenses to a minimum by using email and the internet as far as is possible. Events themselves are run on a cost neutral basis to ensure that attendees do not benefit at a cost to members who are not able to attend. Nothing is foreseen which would change this approach.
 Over the years the surpluses have led to a significant sum accumulating in the club's General Fund. Looking forward I expect the club to continue meeting its expenditure from the subscriptions raised so do not expect these funds to be depleted. On this basis I will once again be recommending to the committee that the subscription remains at £5 per year.
 Now, at the time the club was formed it was decided to charge new members a joining fee of £5 to provide the club with cash funds to pay deposits for events in advance of receiving the attendance fees from members and also to ensure that any unexpected expenditures could be met. These joining fees have been kept aside in a Contingency Fund which totalled £1,395 at the year end and since its inception there has been no need to utilise these funds.
 The current level of General Fund ensures that the Club has sufficient funds to meet its cash flow requirements without the need for a Contingency Fund. In fact the General Fund is now at such a level that it can meet all the needs which originally justified the establishment of the Contingency Fund through the charging of a joining fee. Since this original justification for the joining fee is no longer valid I intend to recommend to the committee that the joining fee be abolished and furthermore that the accumulated Contingency Fund be returned to existing members in the form of a free year's subscription.
 Although the constitution allows the Committee to make a decision on joining fees I would be

interested in hearing if the members present have any comments on this.

Nick Mawby said he would prefer that the Club kept a good reserve as further funds could be needed for campsite deposit and website cost increases caused by an ever increasing membership level.

Following a further debate when some suggestions for the use of surplus funds were made it was indicated by a show of hands that those present were divided on whether the joining fee should be abolished but were unanimously against the return of joining fees already collected.

The acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Paul Johnson, seconded by Tony Phillips and agreed unanimously.

- 7 Nick Mawby, the IT and Membership Secretary, reported as follows:

Website report:

We have had a 250% increase in website visitors; in the last 3 months we had 4,246 visitors who viewed 34,349 pages.

At the last AGM, Martin Sweet proposed that each member includes details of a favourite campsite on the website to enable all members to share this information. I agreed to make this available via email. This was done, and instructions put on the website and included in the Spring newsletter. I even had one of my neighbours produce a photo to draw attention to this.

I now have to report the performance of you, the members. The first recommendation for a site came from Adrian Sumption; the only recommendation for a site came from Adrian Sumption.

When we first setup there was great enthusiasm for submitting tips for the website, but apathy appears to have set in.

I will now repeat what I said last year:

"It is now possible for members to be given rights to upload and edit their own posts, and there is information on the website (under info) on how you can send an email with photo attached and it will automatically be posted on the tips section.

It would be great if those who post a question on the chat group could summarise the responses and send them for posting on the website, with a photo where possible."

So I have to give the membership a D minus for effort and say 'must try harder'.

On a more positive note, John Laidler has starting editing some pages on the website and we have had four new blogs during the year.

I have reinstated the stayover page which lists nine members who are happy to have others stay a night on their property. You need to be logged in to see this option.

Tony Gumbrell sent me details of a festival he is camping at and I have setup a new webpage so that members can send details of festivals or shows they are attending, so that others can get in touch to meet up. Hopefully this will inspire some enthusiasm.

I will be monitoring you all during the next year!

As the website has grown, it has slowed down and may reach a stage when a more expensive server package will be needed.

I am keen to hear ideas for website development.

Membership report:

The club was formed in summer 2010 and at our first AGM in 2011 we had 89 vans, in 2012 there were 124, in 2013 there were 163, 2014 we had grown to 191 and last year 210 vans. At the last AGM I predicted that our numbers would peak at between 220 and 230. I regret to announce that I was wrong and our membership has now grown to 235 motorcaravans. I will refrain from making a forecast this year.

We have had 39 new vans join us since the last AGM and 18 have been lost.

Of those who have left the club, one had health issues, one was away from home most of the time, 5 had sold their van, 9 resigned with no reason, one resigned because there were 'no nearby rallies' and one resigned saying they did not wish to take part in our activities.

Thank you.

Phil Greenwood commented that it was unfortunate that there were no new tips on the website as they were very useful to new members.

- 8 Karin Sumption, the Rally Secretary, reported as follows:

Last year's meets

In the last year we have had eight meets varying in size from three vans to thirty five spread over the country from Cornwall to Yorkshire and one to Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

Future meets

Five meets have already been planned for this year, again very wide spread, from Manchester to the Mosel in Germany.

We would love lots more people to organise meets. If you fancy doing so there is information on how to do this on the Info section of the website. If you're still not sure do email or phone me, I'm very happy to help.

Christmas Lunches

Last year there were also two very successful Christmas lunches and again, it would be lovely if there were more in other parts of the country. It isn't difficult to plan one. All you need to do is find a good restaurant or pub and email Nick to authorise you to contact all the members to find any local people who would like to join you. If you can find a restaurant with a campsite nearby you can kill two birds with one stone and have a Christmas lunch and rally!

Festivals and Shows

Those of us who met at the Priddy Folk Festival had such an enjoyable time we decided it would be good to have a system of publicising festivals that members were going to. There is now a section on the website where members can post about festivals or similar events, if they would like to invite others to join them there.

AGM Dates

Various members have asked about the possibility of moving the AGM date. The committee are investigating having the next AGM in the summer, when more attractions are open and we could use a rally field. There is also a hope that the weather would be more clement and there could be more socialising outside vans which, when it happens, makes Murvi meets more inclusive.

Following a short debate, a show of hands indicated that a small majority of those present were in favour of moving the AGM date to the summer.

- 9 Adrian Sumption, the Editor, reported as follows:

Being editor of the Murvi Club Newsletter is a bit like the sex life of the frog. You spend months twiddling your thumbs doing very little and then there's a sudden frantic bout of activity. The only difference (apart possibly from the level of excitement) is that in my case the frantic bout of activity happens twice a year instead of just once - and it's just about to happen again which is why you find me in a state of nervous anticipation.

However I must admit that I do try to be slightly more selective than a rampant frog on the hunt for a female. I do my best to make sure that everything that goes in the newsletter is checked carefully and is in of course the best possible taste.

Last year we decided to change the cycle of newsletters slightly and we published in late spring (early May) and in the autumn (late October). It was felt that this might fit in better with the activity cycle - if not the mating cycle - of the average Murvi Club member, if there is such a thing as the average member. I am once again deeply indebted to all those of you who were good enough to take a break from exploring the furthest outposts of the UK and Europe - and occasionally even further afield - to pen an article for previous newsletters. I've even had one or two members with the foresight to send me articles for the next newsletter well before I've even started to think about it, which incidentally is usually a few days after it should already have been published. Many thanks to those that did so. It certainly makes my job easier.

And so can I just say to the assembled company, you are privileged to be the first people to hear the good news that I would love to have your articles for the next newsletter. I hope you feel suitably honoured. So please send me anything you think might be of interest to fellow members, not just your travelogues. Murvi hints and tips, articles about hobbies, recipes etc are always welcome – but please remember, do try to keep it to 800 words or less and attach some nice photos if possible.

I am greatly looking forward to finding out what you've all been up to over the last six months!

- 10 Roger Pepper spoke as follows:

As I said in my report, I have recently renewed two of the paragraph 6 exemption certificates which allows the Club to hold rallies limited to a maximum of 5 days on unlicensed sites. Natural England, the agency who administers the awarding of certificates, required that we include a paragraph in the Club's constitution stating that only members may attend these rallies. Amendment to the spacing and density requirements in our code of conduct is also required. Draft documents showing the changes in red on page 1 of the constitution and page 2 of the code of conduct were circulated to members with the notice sending the agenda.

The Executive Committee therefore decided to propose the motion at this meeting 'That the Constitution and Code of Conduct be amended in accordance with the draft documents circulated to members on 02 March 2016'. I now make that proposal on the Committee's behalf.

Members not able to be present today have been given the opportunity to appoint a proxy, or submit their voting intentions to me. 9 members have voted unanimously in favour in this way.

The proposal was carried unanimously.

- 11 Alan Major, Nick Mawby, Roger Pepper Karin Sumption and Julia Wright were elected to the Executive Committee.

- 12 Roger Pepper said that Martin Sweet was prepared to continue to act as Auditor and his election was carried unanimously with the meeting's thanks to Martin for carrying out this function.

- 13 Meg Privett proposed a vote of thanks to the committee for their hard work in running of the Club. This was greeted with a round of applause.
- 14 Alan Major thanked Karin Sumption for organising the AGM weekend and Meg and Pete Privett for providing the sound system for the meeting.
- 13 The date and venue of the next Annual General Meeting will be announced in due course.

The meeting closed at 18.50