

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Hamsterley Trailblazers held on Monday 2 April 2007 at 6.30pm in Hamsterley Village Hall.

PRESENT

Trustees

Andy Samanjoul (Chairman)
Ollie Graham (Vice Chair)
Bill Pike (Treasurer)
Vicky Chilcott (Secretary)

Committee Members

Ash Scott
Chris Goldsworthy
Dave Church
Gary Ewing
Jamie Butcher
Kath Gander
Marie Brown
Mat Clark
Neil Gander
Peter Watson

Members

A D Frith
A G Jackson
A Kellett
B Dalton
B Ward
C Whitlock
D Nicholson
F Simpson
J Chilcott
K Graham
M Chilcott
M Stout
P Walton
R Bell
R Bower
S Bridge
S Summerside
S P Chilcott

Others

Neil Taylor (FC)
Sue Berresford (TDC)
Steve Lee (Parish Council)
Susan Cowan (Deaconstar)
Carla Reid (Deaconstar)
Maureen Jordan (Deaconstar)
Bill Jordan (Deaconstar)
Lorraine Young (Deaconstar)
Lorraine Taylor (Deaconstar)
Melanie Bishop Thompson (Deaconstar)
Brian Batey (Deaconstar)
Pauline Simpson (Deaconstar)
Michael Robson (Deaconstar)

1. Welcome Andy Samanjoul welcomed everyone to Trailblazers third Annual General Meeting.

2. Annual Report Andy, Ollie, Bill, Vicky and Mat gave a Powerpoint Presentation outlining Trailblazer achievements over the last 12 months:

- Planning and development – funding and planning applications for new 20km Red Route plus design and costing work by Pete Laing (estimated at £500K)
- New trails – work has started with Pete on the first priority for the Red route – a 6km singletrack descent from 5 Lane Ends.
- Volunteer trailbuilding – with funding from membership fees and FC, work has started on a new section of the Red trail near the Loop – contractors delivered materials whilst features and finishing work was carried out by volunteers. Special thanks to Cummins who allowed 60 employees to help with trailbuilding.
- Other funding – apart from funding applications for the Red Route, 'Awards for All' gave £5K to help develop a summer activity programme and Parish Paths gave £2K to complete work on the infamous Hamsterley Bog and other sections of the Bridleway network.
- 4th GMSR – September 17th saw us holding the highly successful 4th Great Milk Stout Ride for Macmillan Cancer Support – over 100 riders and walkers took part and raised £4K . Trailblazer Peter Watson raised £1K and once again received the Glenwood Trophy for the single most sponsorship (presented at the meeting) whilst Team Deaconstar raised the most team sponsorship and were presented with the Team trophy.
- Teesdale Community Cycling – This joint programme between Groundwork, Teesdale Council, the Primary Care Trust and Trailblazers aimed to maximise investment in cycling and encouraged people to be more active with over 1000 people of all ages getting on their bikes in the last year.
- Trailblazers participated in a number of events including the FC Consultation weekend 28-29 May; Chopwell Festival 8 & 9 July; IMBA Conference 29 Sept-1 Oct; Halloween Evening 29 October; WoodNWheels Night Ride 4 November.
- A Club BBQ was held on 8 July.
- Ash Scott, Trailblazer's Member, held a Sports Psychology Evening on 17 July that raised £230 for Trailblazer funds.
- About 12 Trailblazer members went on a cycling holiday to Morzine from 27 July to 5 August.

- Vicky Chilcott, Trailblazer's Secretary, was invited to the CDENT Reception at the House of Commons on 19 October to talk to MP's about cycle trail developments at Hamsterley.
- In July we said a sad goodbye to Forest Ranger, Robin Lofthouse and presented him with a GPS. We also welcomed new ranger, Neil Taylor.
- Monthly Sunday club rides have continued throughout the year.
- Wednesday Night Rides have been organised by Gary Ewing and Mat Clark.
- Trailblazers have been flying the flag across the world with Bill Pike riding the Coast and Castles; James Chilcott competing in the South African Cape Epic Mountain Bike Race and Jayne Emesley doing the Marie Curie Trans Poland Marathon.
- We were delighted to guide reporters from the 'Independent' through the forest and were even more delighted with the 2 page feature they wrote about biking at Hamsterley.
- Trailblazers are also currently featured on the front page of the County Durham Tourism Partnership Newsletter.

Particular thanks went to all the funding and other organisations with whom we had worked during the past year and who had continued to help raise the profile of Hamsterley including Groundwork, Teesdale Marketing, Teesdale Council, Parish Councils, Durham Primary Care Trust, Forestry Commission, CDENT, Co Durham Tourism Partnership, ONE, WoodNWheels, Descend, Cross Keys, Cummins, Durham Fell Runners and Hamsterley Horse Riding Association.

3.Future Plans

- Build the Red Route!
- 5th GMSR – 30 September 2007 will see us working closely with other forest users (walkers, fell runners and horse riders) to raise more funds for Macmillan.
- Female Specific Coaching sessions on 22 and 29 April 2007.
- Return trip to Morzine – 30 June to 14 July 2007.
- Sustrans 30th Birthday celebration – Bill Pike riding.
- Trans Rockies – Ash Scott and Nigel Wilkinson to take part in this 600 km epic race.
- We will continue to promote responsible cycling by working with other organisations to enable everyone to enjoy the forest and cycling in particular.
- We will continue to develop our volunteer coaches and group leaders.
- We will look to secure funding to develop coaching and training as part of the 2012 Olympic Games.

4. Annual Accounts 2006/07 and Independent Examiners Report

Bill Pike presented the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 2006/07. It was noted membership numbers had continued to grow. Bill drew attention to cycle training

as a potential area for growth and the need to look at income generating activity, especially for replacement equipment and cycle trail maintenance. Vicky Chilcott proposed the accounts be adopted. This was seconded by Andy Samanjoul and AGREED by members.

5. Election of Officers

The following appointments were made:

- Chair – Andy Samanjoul (proposed by Ollie Graham and seconded by Vicky Chilcott)
- Vice Chair – Ollie Graham (proposed by Pete Watson and seconded by Mat Clark)
- Secretary – Vicky Chilcott (proposed by Andy Samanjou and seconded by Chris Goldsworth)
- Treasurer – Bill Pike (proposed by Andy Samanjoul and seconded by Ollie Graham)
- Assistant Treasurer – to leave vacant for present

6. Election of Committee Members

The following members were elected to the Committee: Marie Brown, Jamie Butcher, Mat Clark, Chris Goldsworth, Gary Ewing, Neil Gander, Kath Gander, Ash Scott, Martin Stout.

7. Derek Purdy

Members welcomed Derek Purdy, pioneer of British mountain biking, who gave an illustrated talk on his epic journey across Scotland by bike, following in the footsteps of R L Stevenson's 'Kidnapped.'

8. Close of Meeting

Andy Samanjoul thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.