

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Hamsterley Trailblazers held on Monday 7 April 2008 at 6.30pm in Hamsterley Village Hall.

PRESENT

Trustees

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

Committee Members

Chris Goldsworthy
Gary Ewing
Kath Gander
Mat Clark
Neil Gander

Members

M Coward
A D Frith
C Whitlock
F Simpson
J Chilcott
M Chilcott
M Stout
P Walton
R Bell
R Bower
S P Chilcott
E Vallance

Others

Neil Taylor (FC)
Sue Berresford (TDC)
Chris Davy (CDTP)
Simon Owens (Chr, Tsdale Partnership)
Caroline Peacock, GMSR
Jonathan Peacock, GMSR
Mike Roff, Visitor
Maureen Jordan (Deaconstar)
J Smith (Deaconstar)
Pauline Simpson (Deaconstar)
N Cook (Deaconstar)
Team Deaconstar x 9

APOLOGIES

Kaye Graham
Bruce Wilkinson
Andrew Frankcom
Peter Watson
Anton Barrington
Marie Brown
Allen Hazlett
Mark Knighton
Victoria Lloyd
Dave Church
Jamie Butcher
Davinia Ward

1. Welcome Andy Samanjoul welcomed everyone to Trailblazers' 4th Annual General Meeting.

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

- Construction of short, fun and challenging section of Red Trail called 'Brain Freeze' using volunteer trailbuilders. Celebration opening with BBQ and ride in August 07.
- Regular volunteer trailbuilding sessions on 3rd Saturday of each month.

- Identification and commencement of next volunteer trail section – named ‘Special K’ by members during the meeting.
- Ollie Graham led mountain bike coaching sessions for female beginner and intermediate riders in April and September 2007 followed by male beginner and intermediate sessions in February, March and April 2008.
- The 5th GMSR was held in September 2007 in which over 150 cyclists, walkers, runners and horse riders took part, raising nearly £5,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Peter Watson raised the single most sponsorship money and was again presented with the Glenwood Trophy whilst Team Deaconstar raised the most team sponsorship and received the Glenwood Team Trophy.
- Night rides have continued to be held each Wednesday, courtesy of Gary and Mat.
- Monthly club rides have been held on the second Sunday of each month.
- Pub social meetings have been held every other month at the Cross Keys, Hamsterley.
- Bi-monthly formal meetings have been held at Hamsterley Forest.
- Trailblazer members have participated in a number of events across the world including Ollie Graham riding the Scottish Coast to Coast; Ash Scott and Nigel Wilkinson competing in the 2007 Trans Rockies; Gary Ewing and Fiona Simpson cycling at Whistler, Bill Pike completing the Sustrans 30th Birthday Party Ride and Neil and Kath Gander taking a Tandem across Ireland.
- Trailblazer visits have been organised to France, Spain, the MTB World Cup and 7 Stanes.
- Trailblazer members have played a key role in the development of the new Darlington West Park 4X Track.
- Members have assisted FC at various events including the Halloween Hauntings and Specialized Challenge Series and Giant Demo Day.
- Trailblazers guided reporters from ‘What Mountain Bike’ through the forest – a 2 page feature on Hamsterley followed this visit.
- CDENT invited Vicky Chilcott to address its 10th Anniversary Birthday Party to talk about cycling development.
- Trailblazer members assisted ONE and FC in the creation of a promotional North East England Mountain Biking DVD.
- After many years of working with FC, ONE, Groundwork, Teesdale and Durham Councils and other partners, we have finally seen ONE approve the proposal for a £5.5 million development of Hamsterley Forest. If all goes to plan building work on the new Red Route should start in November 2008.

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.

3.Future Plans

- Build the Red Route!
- 6th GMSR – 7 September 2008 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 in May and August 2008.
- Fortnightly female evening rides from 8 April 2008.
- Glentress weekend away 23 – 26 May 2008.
- Neil and Kath Gander to ride tandem 7000 km from North Cape Norway to Malta in aid of Huntingdon's Disease Association and SOS Children's Villages.

4. Annual Accounts 2007/08 and Independent Examiners Report

Bill Pike presented the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 2007/08.

Janine Lee Shield presented the Independent Examiners Report. It was noted with pleasure that membership numbers had continued to grow. Chris Goldsworthy proposed the accounts be adopted. This was seconded by Neil Gander and AGREED by members.

5. Election of Officers

The following appointments were made:

- Chair – Andy Samanjoul (proposed by Ollie Graham and seconded by Mat Clark)
- Vice Chair – Ollie Graham (proposed by Mat Clark and seconded by Bill Pike)
- Secretary – Vicky Chilcott (proposed by Ollie Graham and seconded by Andy Samanjoul)
- Treasurer – Bill Pike (proposed by Mat Clark and seconded by Andy Samanjoul)
- Assistant Treasurer – Mat Clark (proposed by Vicky Chilcott and seconded by Ollie Graham)

6. Election of Committee Members

The following members were elected to the Committee: Marie Brown, Jamie Butcher, Michael Chilcott, Andrew Frith, Chris Goldsworthy, Neil Gander and Kath Gander. Gary Ewing was elected Publicity Officer.

7. Film – “Some Kids Have All The Luck – Others Just Learn To Conquer Mountains”

Ollie Graham presented an inspirational film showing the progress and challenge faced by 5 youngsters who, after learning to mountain bike at Hamsterley with Ollie, successfully cycled the Sustrans C2C route. The youngsters were led by Ollie, assisted by Janine Lee Shield and others.

8. Close of Meeting

Andy Samanjoul thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

