

Minutes of a meeting of Hamsterley Trailblazers held at 6.30pm on Monday 6 September 2010 at the Cross Keys, Hamsterley.

Trustees Present: Andy Samanjoul (Chairman)
Vicky Chilcott (Secretary)
Mat Clark (Treasurer)
Ollie Graham (Vice Chairman)

Members Present: Marie Brown
Gary Ewing
Kathryn Gander
Neil Gander
Lisa Jobling
Martin Stout

In Attendance: Neil Taylor (FC)

Apologies for absence were received from David Nicholson

1. Minutes of AGM With the transfer of David Nicholson's name to the Committee Member section and the deletion of Neil Gander's name from those present (he sent apologies) the minutes of the AGM held on 19 April 2010 were approved as a correct record.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting With a correction to the naming of the 1-2-1 Race Series, the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2010 were approved as a correct record.

3. Statement of Accounts and Membership The Statement of Accounts to the end of August 2010 was received together with club membership details for the same period. The improvement in club funds was noted although it was AGREED that the Duck Race and BBQ should become annual events for fund raising purposes. It was further AGREED, if BBQs were to be used as fund raising events, that the possibility of qualifying some members with food hygiene certificates be explored, although it was noted Martin Stout did have this qualification. (Action – Ollie.)

4. 1-2-1 Race Series, Hamsterley – 24 & 25 September In the absence of Dave Nicholson, Marie, Andy and Ollie reported on this event and said Dave had called a meeting of volunteers and Trailblazer members at 6pm on Friday 17 September at the Dolphin Centre, Darlington to discuss arrangements for the weekend. More volunteers were needed and it was AGREED a block email be sent to all members seeking assistance. Mat said he felt, in view of the club funding situation, a small loss could be made on the weekend if absolutely necessary (limited to £500 maximum) and this was AGREED. It was AGREED a Trailblazer stand selling mugs, jerseys etc and giving out information about Trailblazers would be desirable and it was AGREED this be discussed with Dave.

5. Trailbuilding It was reported 'Transmission' was now complete and that the next priority was to start marking out the third section of trail. Vicky made a plea for chicken runs be built round the more extreme trail features to ensure the new trails could be ridden by the widest possible number of riders and it was AGREED this be looked at wherever possible.

It was noted funding was still available for a few days of Alan Patterson's time, but more funding was needed for future trailbuilding. Ollie was in discussion with Awards for All and hoped to put in a bid for £10,000 – half of which could be used for youth training and development and half for trailbuilding. It was AGREED this bid form a priority application from Trailblazers.

Another funding possibility was the NatWest Community Funding nomination scheme that had been circulated to members on Lisa Jobling's suggestion (first award of £3000 and secondary awards of £1000.) The Area Action Partnership, Community Spaces and local council awards were other possibilities to explore. (Action – Ollie.) Martin said he had recently received a £5000 award from the Community Chest funding.

6. Signage and Trail Names Mat said he was compiling a list of suggested trail names put forward by members and that he would put these on a map to send to FC. Names included 'Accelerator' or 'XLR8R', 'Pike's Teeth' (after Bill Pike) 'Star Wars' and 'Bellamy's Bottom.'

Neil said trail signs were now available but that help was needed to erect them. It was noted Trailblazers were unable to do this immediately, but could help during October or November providing FC sorted out any necessary paperwork relating to constraint maps, risk assessments etc. Ollie offered to see if the Groundwork Employment Team could assist for a week in November and Neil AGREED to advise Ollie if FC would find this useful.

7. FC Health & Safety Requirements – Hard Hats and Spill Kits

A H&S briefing was received from FC regarding hard hats and spill kits requirements. It was noted trailbuilding risk assessments did not currently identify hard hats as a necessity but that the situation would be kept under review. Spill kits related to forestry machinery – not currently used by volunteers, but again, it was AGREED to keep the situation under review.

8. Bowes 12K Cycle Race – Saturday 11 September It was noted details of an off-road cycle race to be held on Saturday 11 September had been circulated to members. Neil Gander had test ridden the route and it was a one-off chance to ride a trail not normally open to the public.

9. Durham Big Ride – Sunday 12 September It was noted Trailblazers had been offered 10 free places on the Durham Big Ride in return for assisting with the Dirty Big Ride at Hamsterley. Interested members should contact Vicky for details on how to claim a free place.

10. Durham County Council Cycling Strategy Steering Committee

Neil Gander reported he had been nominated as a member of this committee and that he hoped to ensure priority was given in the strategy to the importance of Hamsterley Forest as a cycling venue, particularly in relation to tourism.

11. Halloween Hauntings – Hamsterley - Sunday 31 October 5pm

Neil asked for volunteers from Trailblazers to help guide walks and man car parking at the annual Hamsterley Halloween Hauntings on Sunday 31 October from 5pm. Vicky AGREED to block email all members.

12. Website Updates It was noted website updates were needed and it was AGREED the following action be taken:

- Gary and Ollie to produce photos and article on Transmission
- Ollie to send in AGM report
- Vicky to update minutes and committee members
- Lisa to send in Coast and Castles article.

13. Pub Social Meetings It was AGREED to cancel the October and December pub social meetings and replace them instead with an invitation to members to meet at the Cross Keys at 9pm on a Wednesday night after the weekly Night Ride. It was AGREED in 2011 to look at rotating pub socials around the region, combining them with a short 1 – 1 1/2 hour ride beforehand at eg Guisborough, Darlington etc so that they could be more accessible to a wider number of members.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting It was AGREED the next formal meeting be held at 6.30pm on Monday 1 November 2010 at the Cross Keys, Hamsterley.