

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on
Sunday 9th June 2019
at
The Forest Hills Hotel, Frodsham, Cheshire

Tony Paul welcomed everyone to the Meeting, and thanked the Cheshire Group for a 'marvellous weekend'.

Guest speaker - Stephanie Tickle, Cancer Research UK.

Stephanie thanked Sue H for inviting her to the AGM. She works for CRUK in the northwest; her research had been based at Christie's Hospital in Manchester, but the laboratories had been destroyed by a fire. They are hoping to have a new building at Christie's Hospital within the next five years to continue research into cancer; there is a lot of research going on in the north west, which could not be done without donations, and she gave a massive thank you to Country Link for the monies raised this weekend.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Valda Gazzard, Martin Wayman, Gill Tweddle, Iain Dingle, Edward and Helen Houldcroft, Dorothy and Simon Haskins.

The Minutes of the AGM held on Sunday 13th May 2018

It was pointed out that Peter Hurt had been nominated as a Vice President and seconded by Peter Hunt; with this amendment, the Minutes were signed as a true record of the Meeting.

Matters arising if not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising

Chairman's Report - Tony Paul

Tony explained this would be his last report as Chairman.

He explained about the Standing Orders and how they stand alongside the Constitution whilst it is being updated; they will then be included in the new Constitution. Also, there will be no voting for the President or Vice President at this AGM. Valda has stood down as a Vice President; she will be sorely missed, and Tony thanked her for her invaluable help.

Tony asked for members to come forward to be on the Committee, and pointed out that without a Committee, Country Link would not exist; he thanked the Treasurer and Secretary for doing a wonderful job.

He asked members to think about doing a weekend as it is up to members to organise these events. He closed by thanking everyone for their support during his Chairmanship.

Treasurer's Report - Lesley Sheaf

2017 - 485 members; 2018 - 455 members

Lesley said everyone needs find a way to increase membership; only three groups had increased their membership in 2018.

There had been no national advertising because there had been no suggestions from members; Lesley said the National Committee would welcome suggestions.

In 2018, only five groups had applied for the advertising refund.

Expenses: Public Liability Insurance with the NFU; there are very few organisations willing to do insurance for organisations like Country Link. George G asked why the costs had been reduced; Lesley explained it was because there were less clubs and Country Link had received a bonus.

Website - the website is important in this day and age, but it is only as good as your input; she thanked Maria for managing the website.

Income: Spring Weekend 2018 - £500 to Emmaus Charity
Autumn Weekend 2018 - £600 to Cancer Research UK (included money from the sale of items by Cornwall Country Link, and a £15 donation from National Country Link)

Publicity - Rodney R asked why this was zero; Lesley explained that members were not coming forward with ideas. Kate G said that the Staffordshire group had used and appreciated the £300 refund they had received.

Maria proposed the adoption of the accounts; seconded by Peter Hunt; carried.

Lesley thanked Kate G for auditing the accounts.

Lesley proposed the 2020 subscriptions remain at £10; seconded by Wendy S; carried.

Lesley proposed the refund for advertising in 2020 remain at £300; seconded by Kate G; carried.

Lesley explained how the National Committee had subsidised the clothing. Members had ordered 51 zoodies and 16 hoodies; the cost had been £642 plus delivery charges, which had been paid by the National Committee. Lesley offered to do a re-order, and members were asked to let her know by 15th July; the garments would be subsidised as before. Tony asked the organisers to pass on this information/asked members to pass this information on to the organisers. Lesley is willing to order other clothing, but this will not be subsidised.

Clair A thanked Lesley for ordering the clothing, and said it was good to see so many people wearing it.

Secretary's report - Liz Goodwin

Liz G thanked Sue H and the Cheshire organisers for photocopying the Minutes/Agenda, and for putting them in the welcome packs

She reminded members that communication is still an issue within the organisation as a whole, and quickly went through the groups to check the names of the organiser and the email contact.

With regard to promoting the groups, she showed a sample letter from Martin W and said she would forward it to the groups to use.

She thanked Lesley for ordering the clothing, and finished by asking members to check that they had added their names to the attendance register.

President's comments - Nigel Swain

Nigel said the National Committee needs the Regional Representatives; there are some vacancies and some do not take part in the process. He pointed out that the website contact does not have to be the organiser. Country Link is **your** group and it is what you make it; the number of people in the room showed that they had some commitment to the organisation.

Election of Officers to the National Committee

Position	Nominee	Nominated by	Carried
Chairman	Charles Humby	Andy Elvin/Margit Whittick George Greaves/Edward Houldcroft	Yes
Vice Chairman	Peter Hunt	Pat Bosworth/Maria Guest	Yes
Secretary	Liz Goodwin	Maria Guest/Jerry White (from the floor)	Yes
Treasurer	Lesley Sheaf	Maria Guest/John Rowland (from the floor)	Yes

President/Vice Presidents

It was confirmed that Nigel Swain is the President, and Phil Charles, George Greaves, Maria Guest, Peter Hunt and Jerry White are Vice Presidents.

Charles took over as Chair of the Meeting

Forthcoming weekends

Charles made a request for groups to come forward to organise the weekends in 2020. Nigel told members about the weekend in October 2019 which would be organised by Dorset/Somerset/Wiltshire Country Link groups, and would be at the Prince Regent Hotel in Weymouth. It is a Victorian hotel; the hotel does not have a car park - the railway station is nearby, there is a long stay car park nearby, or members could car share. There is a rail link from Bournemouth and Southampton airports, and trains from London or Bristol Temple Meads. Possible trips include a visit to an open air dairy, Dorchester, Isle of Purbeck nature reserve, Corfe. Nigel requested full payment on booking; single rooms are single rooms and there are a limited number; a number of rooms have a sea view. The cost is £180.

President's Cup

The President's Cup was presented to Avon Country Link; Jerry W said he would deliver it.

Any other business

Charles pointed out the suggestions box - the Committee need information for the future of Country Link; he thanked Tony for the last three years, and said the AGM would be at the next Spring weekend. Kirsteen H agreed with Kate G regarding adverts in local papers; Charles said it was important to drip feed the advertising, and change the colour of the background. Tony pointed out that Vicky H is the advertising co-ordinator. John R suggested the Farmers Weekly and Farmers Guardian; Charles said he would think about them. Clair A suggested the Meet Up website.

George G asked about the Regional Representatives; Charles explained that they were all in place, but that the response was poor.

Wendy S pointed out that guidelines for organising a weekend are in the handbook; any changes to the handbook need to be made through the National Committee.

Sue H handed the key to Linda P and she thanked everyone for coming to the weekend; Janet W thanked those who had given raffle prizes.

Date of the next AGM - at the Spring 2020 weekend