

**Harrow & Wembley Outdoor Group**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Thursday 19 October 2017**

Our Lady & St Thomas Of Canterbury R C Church Hall, 22 Roxborough Park, Harrow

**Outgoing Committee Members**

Chair	Nick G (NG)	Present
Treasurer	Leo S (LS)	Present
Programme Planner	Brian G (BG)	Present
Information Officer	Rachael G (RG)	Present
Publicity Officer	Nathalie K (NK)	Resigned During Year
Social Secretary	Jan B (JB)	Present
Membership Officer	Mike S (MS)	Present
Secretary	Jeff R (JR)	Present

Item	Subject
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
1.1	The meeting opened at 8:57pm.
1.2	Attendance including committee was 12 when meeting opened, increasing later to 15.
1.3	Apologies received from Nathalie, Lara and Zoë.
1.4	Nick welcomed attendees commenting that it was not a great turnout, but perhaps that was an indicator that members felt things were going well so there was no need to come.
<b>2</b>	<b>Review and Acceptance of Minutes from AGM held on 20 October 2016</b>
2.1	The Minutes were accepted.
<b>3</b>	<b>Report from Committee Members on Previous Year</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
3.2	Nick said he started as chair this time last year. After a slow start getting to know people he now felt we had a competent committee. He felt the group was running well and we know where we are going.
3.3	Membership cards would be coming soon. The aim was to provide more opportunities to go on events and more help to put on events. <b>Action</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
4.1	Jeff reviewed the new points system which was introduced at the AGM last year and was very pleased to report it has been more successful than we could have hoped.
4.2	Reducing the membership fee to £10 has increased the membership to 200 – the highest ever.
4.3	This in combination with event fees has produce a healthy surplus.
4.4	Despite some initial scepticism, 23 people have lead events and earned points. And most have redeemed some of their points.
4.5	The feared dramatic drop in the number of events has not occurred, numbers are quite close to last year.
4.6	The number of points awarded was deliberately set to be conservative because of fears of making a loss. We now know we can recommend an increase to encourage even more events on the programme.
4.7	To help Nathalie with publicity Jeff had produced a poster and distributed many copies in our area. With little response. So at least a learning exercise.
4.8	Jeff had begun reviewing the website content, to tidy up and clarify. He had looked at our home page first, researched the things people are searching for and tried to make sure they find them on our home page.

4.9	As secretary, he produced the regular group newsletter, minutes of the AGM and committee meetings. And was a regular attendee at the hall to welcome and inform potential new members.
4.10	<b>Treasurer</b>
4.11	Leo said that he was unable to produce a full report due to difficulties with the handover of banking details.
4.12	<b>Programme Planner</b>
4.13	Brian outlined activities for the year.
4.14	The number of weekends away had increased and was the highest for several years.
4.15	Marin said he thought that there were fewer walks than ever, especially longer ones. But in fact, numbers had been very similar for the last two or three years.
4.16	Over 100 of our new members are from Meetup. About 20 have re-joined so far, which is good for this time of year.
4.17	Leo had comments about the website. He felt it should be more colourful, people did not understand the word "programme" and "events" should be used instead, the events were not on the front page, tabs should be used rather than the hamburger menu. Although it was pointed out this is a widely used convention for mobile.
4.18	Nick said Phil would do what he was asked and the committee would discuss it. <b>Action</b>
4.19	<b>Information Officer</b>
4.20	Rachael said she had taken over Facebook and Twitter. But she still needed login details so she could post messages as HAWOG rather than as herself.
4.21	She said this works well if people are not checking the website programme regularly. And it is good to have events listed for publicity even if they are sold out. She would like to be emailed when people put on events so she can add them and people can contact the organisers directly.
4.22	Marin said that the Facebook group was a closed group and he thought it should be open. Others said it needs to be closed because people might not be happy having shared pictures open to everyone. Marin said there was no point having it as a closed group because members get emails about events anyway.
4.23	There was concern that if people get too many messages, they will stop looking at them.
4.24	Claire and Marin said that not many people were organising longer walks and that when they organised them, they did not attract many people.
4.25	With 200 members now, it was hoped that some of them would progress to the longer walks.
4.26	Marin said we needed to attract more younger people as they were likely to be fitter and more interested in doing longer walks. Plus, once there are younger people they will attract more younger people. Nick said the trend was away from younger people being in groups, it is older people who tend to be interested.
4.27	Marin complained that the longer walks were not appearing on Meetup. Brian admitted he had removed Marin's walks from Meetup. He said he was only putting walks on Meetup that start at a tube station because ones where a car was needed to reach the start were not attracting the numbers. Leo said he had been on walks where a car was needed that had attracted 25 people. Nick said he would change this. <b>Action</b>
4.28	Rachael said she would look at an open Facebook page for advertising. Leo said he did not like there being any criteria for joining a group and would not join groups if there were. <b>Action</b>
4.29	Matt said that the photos on the Meetup group were not vetted and questioned whether they should be. Brian said no.
4.30	<b>Publicity Officer</b>
4.31	There was not a Publicity Officer report as Nathalie had resigned during the year.
4.32	Matt said that publicity was mostly internet based now, so Rachael had taken on much of the role anyway.
4.33	<b>Social Secretary</b>

4.34	Jan reported that there had been a number of events designed to attract new members. The number of hall nights had been reduced to seven, in order to focus on a smaller number of really good events.
4.35	Jan had done posters in Sainsburys, libraries, coffee shops and sports clubs. They had not been successful, but Meetup had attracted new members.
4.36	To widen the net, recent focus had been on social events in Ealing rather than Harrow and pub meetings had seen 10 to 15 people attending.
4.37	The Christmas buffet was coming up at the hall soon. Jan said she was open to any other suggestions.
4.38	<b>Membership Officer</b>
4.39	Mike worked from a spreadsheet showing how many new members and how many re-joiners we had. Membership was now up to 203.
4.40	Rolling membership had now been adopted, with renewal being due a year after people joined.
4.41	Membership cards were coming soon. This would make it easier for people running walks as people could simply show their membership cards.
4.42	Membership cards also meant people could easily see their expiry date, which should save on reminders.
4.43	The committee had agreed on standard emails which included information about the group and the benefits, including cheap YHA membership and shop discounts.
4.44	Mike keep logs of people who had provided event reports and lists of attendees.
4.45	In the past, HAWOG had discounts for members under 30. This was discussed, as well as a suggestion that members should get a discount after two or three years. It was felt there was no need now that the membership fee was £10 for everyone.
4.46	Claire asked about setting up standing orders for automatic membership renewal. Matt said if people knew they were still members, they might be more inclined to go on events. The committee had looked into it, but there were drawbacks which made it difficult.
4.47	HAWOG had got some Honorary Life Members from a long time ago. It was not known if they were still around.
5	<b>Review and Acceptance of Accounts</b>
5.1	Leo said that accounts were not available yet, due to difficulties getting access to all of the banking information.
5.2	There was an issue because two signatories are required to the bank account. Leo felt this was an anomaly as it was only him on PayPal.
5.3	Electronic access to the bank account was not possible. Matt said that an arrangement where two people are required to authorise online transactions was possible.
5.4	Nick said that it was too difficult to change the signatories to the bank account and it was better to just empty it and leave it dormant.
5.5	Nick said that pending opening of a new bank account, all of the funds would be transferred into PayPal. The net worth of the group was about £8,000.
5.6	There was concern that PayPal was less secure than the bank account. Matt pointed out that PayPal was not a bank and did not offer a guarantee and said that he would not be happy with a club keeping the majority of its assets in PayPal.
5.7	Leo would produce the accounts when these issues were resolved. <b>Action</b>
6	<b>Election of Committee Members</b>
6.1	Chair Nick G, nominated Brian G, seconded Mike D
6.2	Secretary Jeff R, nominated Claire, seconded Mike D
6.3	Treasurer Leo S, nominated Jan, seconded Brian G
6.4	Programme Planner Brian G, nominated Claire, seconded Mike D

6.5	Information Officer Rachael, nominated Mike S, seconded Cathy
6.6	Publicity Officer No nominations
6.7	Social Secretary Jan, nominated Mike S, seconded Marin
6.8	Membership Officer Mike S, nominated Jeff R, seconded Nick G
6.9	Nick said that Phil J had confirmed he was willing to continue to maintain the website.
7	<b>Discussion and Voting on Motions before the AGM</b>
7.1	Two motions had been proposed -
7.2	<b>Motion Regarding YHA Membership</b>
7.3	“This motion is about the requirement that members of HAWOG must also be members of the YHA. The committee is in favour of supporting the YHA and encouraging all HAWOG members to join the YHA and will continue to promote reduced price membership of the YHA as a benefit of joining HAWOG. But the requirement for members of HAWOG to be members of the YHA should be removed from the constitution because it is not practical to enforce it for all members and it takes up an excessive amount of committee time trying to do so.”
7.4	<b>Change to the Constitution -</b> <b>Amend:</b> “All members of more than 12 months at renewal time must also be current members of the YHA.” <b>To read:</b> “All members of HAWOG will be encouraged to become members of the YHA.”
7.5	This motion was passed unanimously.
7.6	<b>Motion Regarding Potential New Members (PNMs)</b>
7.7	“At present the constitution states that potential new members (PNMs) may attend three events over a period of two months before they decide whether to join. Now that the membership fee has been reduced to £10 this is too generous and unnecessary. It also creates an anomaly because people who have come to HAWOG via Meetup have to pay £5 per day event until they join.”
7.8	“The policy should be that PNMs could attend one outdoors event (hall events would remain free for all). The contact details collected by the organiser would then be used to contact them to invite them to join. Some flexibility should be retained for the committee to make special offers where appropriate.”
7.9	Proposed Change to the Constitution - Amend: “Prospective members may attend up to 3 events within 2 months of attending their first event, with no requirement to pay a membership fee during this period.” To read: “Prospective new members may attend one outdoor event with no requirement to pay a membership fee. The committee may at their discretion allow prospective new members to attend more than one event, up to a maximum of 3 events within 2 months of attending their first event.”
7.10	Brian proposed an amendment to remove all reference to 3 events. He said it encouraged unscrupulous people. He proposed the second sentence should be removed.
7.11	This was debated. Some people thought that the committee needed to continue to have discretion.
7.12	There was a vote on the amended motion and it was carried with 8 votes from a voting strength of 15.
7.13	<b>Agreed Change to the Constitution -</b> <b>Amend:</b> “Prospective members may attend up to 3 events within 2 months of attending their first event, with no requirement to pay a membership fee during this period.” <b>To read:</b> “Prospective new members may attend one outdoor event with no requirement to pay a membership fee.”
8	<b>Discussion and Voting on Points and Membership Fees</b>

8.1	After a year of the new points system, the group was in a strong financial position and the committee was able to recommend an increase in points awarded in order to encourage more events. The recommendations are set out in the table at the end.
8.2	There was discussion about the number of points being related to the length of time the event lasted. Claire again suggested people could organise a short walk with a long lunch and claim more points.
8.3	It was explained that the points system was intended to reward the amount of effort required by the organisers. Which was related to the length of time organisers were responsible for providing an activity.
8.4	And that it was impossible to design a system where it was not possible to cheat. But organisers were responsible people with an interest in the group who would not try to circumvent the system in this way. If there was evidence of abuse the committee had discretion to take action in any case.
8.5	Also a shorter distance walk with inexperienced walkers was likely to require more input from the organiser than a longer walk with experienced walkers who knew what to do, had the right equipment and were well capable of looking after themselves.
8.6	Nonetheless Marin still wanted points awarded on the basis of distance, with support from Claire. Marin proposed three categories – under 6 miles, 6 to 12 miles, and over 12 miles. He thought that this would encourage people to move up to longer walks.
8.7	There was concern that points awarded by length of time benefited geocaching events.
8.8	There was concern that for the fastest walkers, a 12 mile walk could be an event of less than 4 hours, requiring little effort from the organiser, yet still earning maximum points.
8.9	There was concern this would discourage mountain walks which could be very short in miles, but extremely demanding and last all day. Committee could exercise discretion on this.
8.10	There was not time to consider all the options and make a decision at the meeting. Nick said the committee would come up with a proposal.
8.11	There was a vote on the proposal that the committee should come up with a system with three levels. This was carried with 14 votes from a voting strength of 15. <b>Action</b>
8.12	<b>Appointment of Auditor</b>
8.13	There were no nominations for auditor at the meeting. It was left to the committee to find and appoint an auditor. <b>Action</b>
9	<b>Nomination and Voting on Donation(s) to Charity</b>
9.1	As it was getting late, it was decided to carry this item forward. The committee to nominate charity or charities. No amount was set. <b>Action</b>
10	<b>Any Other Business</b>
10.1	There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10:22pm

### Changes to Points Recommended by the Committee

Type of Event	Points Awarded – Event not on Meetup		Points Awarded – Event on Meetup	
	Old	New	Old	New
Short walk or evening event - less than 6 hours	0	0	5	10
Day walk or event – 6 hours or more	10	10	15	20
Weekend break – 2 or 3 nights away	20	20	30	50