

CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB

Home Counties Region

Special General Meeting

Minutes

12 October 2024

CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB

Home Counties Region

Minutes of the Special General Meeting
of the Home Counties Region of the "Caravan and Motorhome Club",
held at Derwent School, Henlow
on Saturday 12th October 2024, starting at 3:00 pm.

PRESENT

Chairman:	David Rickard
Vice Chairman	Vacant
Secretary:	Linda Allen
Treasurer:	Alan Cadman

And 33 Club Members Attended

1.0	<p>WELCOME</p> <p>The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all those present, including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sue Southwell with her husband Frank – Member of the Club Executive Committee, Member of the Sites and Accommodation Committee and Chair of the Regional and Divisional Review Committee. • John Condie with his partner Jo – Chairman, South West Division <p>Past Chairmen of the Region present on the day were also welcomed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackie Lee, Immediate Past Chairman • John Moules <p>Chairman of the Centres constitutionally associated with the Region, in attendance on the day were welcomed as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawrie Coleman and his wife Janet – Bedfordshire Centre • Anne Phillips – North London Centre <p>Thanks were extended to the Bedfordshire Centre for hosting this meeting and the accompanying rally.</p>										
2.0	<p>APOLOGIES:</p> <p>The Secretary advised that apologies had been received from:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Roger & Hilary Clarke</td> <td>Selwyn Cooper</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gerry & Jenny Cox</td> <td>Ann Dunham</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alan & Sandie Evans</td> <td>Wendy Goddard</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alistair Greene</td> <td>David & Joyce Grover</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ian Grover</td> <td>Alison Woodhams</td> </tr> </table>	Roger & Hilary Clarke	Selwyn Cooper	Gerry & Jenny Cox	Ann Dunham	Alan & Sandie Evans	Wendy Goddard	Alistair Greene	David & Joyce Grover	Ian Grover	Alison Woodhams
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3.0

NEW CONSTITUTION:

The Chairman introduced this item:

As most of you will know by now there has been a review process underway with the primary aim of creating a single constitution across all Regions and Divisions. Other aims included making changes to a Region or Division's council structure and more broad changes affecting the Region/Division's role in communicating with and assisting Centres by - helping Centres address any local issues and then attempting to reach some resolution before escalating up to Governance.

Such issues may include promoting Centre Committee recruitment and offering guidance and support should a Centre need to seek a merger with another Centre but, moreover, be proactive in early days if a Centre appears to be having problems getting volunteers to commit.

That, in big brush strokes sums up the new way forward. Not a huge change but a distinctive new approach to the lines of communication between Centre and Club.

Referring back to the creation of one single constitution. Historically, across the whole of the UK, there has been 4 different constitutions in place – in England we have the Regions, then Scotland is a Division with its own constitution and Ireland and Welsh Divisions each had their own. Additionally, some AGM dates were at different times of the year. Now, we have just one constitution for all, and all will be working from the same song sheet with consistency throughout. Change of any kind is seldom universally popular but these changes haven't been imposed on a whim.

The Review group has consulted broadly with much analysis and deliberation. Their findings have been approved by The Club's Executive Committee and it is hoped that this simplified convention will be relevant in today's Club and a clearer structure for all Club members to follow. So, significantly, from today we shall be known as the Home Counties Division. And at all AGMs across Regions and Divisions, the new naming convention will be adopted.

I have outlined how our Division will have a new operating scope but the changes don't stop there. In order to attract volunteers to become active players and to make specific roles more transparent, new titles have been created. Our Regional Council will now be called a Division Team. The Division will still have a Chair, Vice-Chair becomes Deputy Chair, it will obviously still have a Treasurer but the Secretary will now be Divisional Administrator.

These four posts are elected annually, and they have the opportunity for assistance by non-elected support.

A new position, again elected annually, is the Division Digital Champion with up to two deputies, non-elected, who can join the team to help share this work load.

Two further changes in the new Team structure. First, Centre Representatives have previously been two from each Centre and this will become one.

And, another name change, formerly called Independent Members where up to three were allowed, now become Member Representatives, and the new Team can accommodate up to 6. As the name suggests, these Representatives should broaden the Team make up and better assist in representing the views of the general Club Membership who are non Centre Members.

That then is a brief summary of the key changes being made in changing Region to Division. The second phase for the Review Group is to see how Centre activity and operations can be updated. Again the primary objective will be to simplify, unify and make more accessible the Centre's committee roles so that their existence can be safeguarded in the future.

Following this meeting any questions, offers from volunteers or, dare I say it, criticisms can be directed to any of our Team, and all contact details are already available and will be on the updated Website shortly.

As previously stated, the change to our constitution has been approved by the Club Executive Committee but we need to see, by a show of hands that it has been endorsed by this meeting.

The number of members endorsing the adoption of the new Constitution was 14, with 22 abstaining. All present were invited to raise any questions.

The change of the role title from Secretary to Administrator was questioned. Secretary was a traditional title and it was felt that Administrator was not a suitable alternative, and appeared to be a "demotion".

Sue explained that all roles were looked at during the review, with the aim of looking for less formal titles, as it was felt this potentially put people off volunteering. It was hoped that the roles were simplified, and the opportunity of having non-elected assistants would also encourage more volunteers.

There was concern that many had only just seen the new Constitution and role descriptions (they had been circulated with the agenda), and so had not had an opportunity to digest the changes in more depth. It was explained that the proposals had been discussed with Centre representatives at regional meetings during the year, plus a full copy of the changes had been circulated to Centre Secretaries in July, both via Governance and by the Regional Secretary. They had also been posted on the regional website.

The changes had been approved by the Club Executive Committee, and so members present were not being asked to vote on them, but adopted formally during the meeting.

4.0

THE FUTURE OF THE DIVISION:

It was explained that as of the date of the meeting, the only nomination received was that of Wendy Goddard as Digital Champion (previously known as Social Media Champion).

David had already completed 4 years as Chairman and was obliged to stand down, whilst Alan was retiring as Treasurer after 9 years in post. Linda had been planning to retire as well after 6 years in post.

The main problem was there were no volunteers to take on the roles of Chair and Deputy Chair, and without at least a Chair in post, the Division could not continue.

The formal AGM would take place in three months' time – i.e. 18 January 2025 by which time, nominations for the roles would be needed to ensure the Division could continue. Sue added that the Review Committee was currently discussing what would then happen as this was the first time a Region / Division had been unable to form a committee; Centres would still continue and may be reallocated to other Divisions.

It was emphasised that it was very important that the Division continued to enable the new process of Centres discussing issues with their Division to be in place.

It was explained that because of the geographic spread of the Division, the meetings had been held via Zoom for the last 4 years, although it was hoped that one meeting a year would be face-to-face going forward.

There would be an article in the Nov / Dec edition of the Club magazine to advertise the various volunteering opportunities and hopefully encourage more volunteers to come forward. One of the reasons why there were now assistants in the new structure was to make the roles easier and less time consuming and to help by training other volunteers, hopefully ensuring better continuity and succession planning.

Linda explained that a poster had been designed earlier in the year, regarding the changes and asking for members to volunteer for the new roles. This had been sent to all Centre representatives with a request to place it on Centre noticeboards, websites and FaceBook pages. It had also been posted on the regional website. In addition, Dave had personally written to each Chairman, explaining the changes and asking them for support by circulating the poster.

Many present stated they had never seen the poster and sadly it appeared it had not been used as requested.

It was pointed out that Centres had difficulties recruiting volunteers as well, and often the volunteers they did recruit felt their loyalty was to their Centre, rather than the Region / Division.

The elected roles on the Divisional team could be undertaken by a Member Representative, and one of the reasons the number on the Divisional team had been increased from three to six was to try to increase participation by non-Centre members to improve greater representation.

	<p>John Condie added that as regions, there was no direct way of communicating with other members, as traditionally with very few exceptions, communication etc was via centre members. The new constitutions, both regional / divisional and Club will increase the scope of communication across the full membership. The planned advertising campaign should help.</p> <p>It was clarified that members who were Centre Committee members could not take on a divisional role – ie they could not hold two roles.</p> <p>All were asked to think carefully about taking on a Divisional role, and were asked to talk to any of the current elected officers if they wanted further information.</p>
<p>5.0 5.1</p>	<p>OTHER BUSINESS:</p> <p>Jackie Lee wished to place on record her thanks to Dave, Alan and Linda for their hard work and support to the region over several years.</p>
	<p>The meeting was closed at 15:46.</p>

Linda Allen
Regional Secretary

David Rickard
Regional Chairman