

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Hamsterley Trailblazers held on Monday 6 April 2009 at 6.30pm in Hamsterley Village Hall.

PRESENT

Trustees

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

Others

Neil Taylor (FC)
David Blackie (Teesdale Marketing)
Graham Gill (Teesdale Marketing)
John Wearmouth (CDENT)

Committee Members

Ash Scott
Chris Goldsworthy
Michael Chilcott
Gary Ewing
Jamie Butcher
Kath Gander
Marie Brown
Mat Clark
Neil Gander
Peter Watson

Carla Reid (Deaconstar)
Maureen Jordan (Deaconstar)
Catherine Tinkler (Deaconstar)
Lorraine Young (Deaconstar)
Lorraine Taylor (Deaconstar)
Melanie Bishop Thompson (Deaconstar)
Brian Batey (Deaconstar)
Hazel Robinson (Deaconstar)
Michael Robson (Deaconstar)
Emma Cawkwell (Deaconstar)
Elaine Lonsborough (Deaconstar)
Susan Cowan (Deaconstar)

Members

Cheryl Armstrong
Richard Bower
Natasha Davis
Stephen Davis
Jeremy Glennon
D Nicholson
F Simpson
K Graham
Alison Park
Lynne Wilkinson

1. Welcome

Andy Samanjoul welcomed everyone to Trailblazers Annual General Meeting. Members particularly welcomed John Wearmouth, Chairman of CDENT to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Were received from Owen Broadhead, James and Simon Chilcott, Mark Coward, Andrew Frankcom, Bill Grigg, Alan Hazlett, Simon Holguin, Lisa Jobling, Mark and Adrea Lowery, Tracey Wond, Paddy Harrop (IMBA,) Ted Liddle (IMBA,) Alex MacLennan (FC,) Neil Mitchell (Sustrans.)

3. Annual Report

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

- **Fantastic News!** £130,000 funding secured to start the new Red Route!! Many thanks in particular to CDENT for £50,000 and Teesdale Council £40,000. Work had already started and was expected to finish by August 2009.
- **Volunteer trailbuilding** – After the success of 2007's 'Brain Freeze' section of trail, volunteers spent 2008 building 'Special K' – a short fun, challenging section of Red Trail. Trailbuilding sessions continue on the 3rd Saturday of each month, with all members being encouraged to attend.
- **New Trail Name** – names were invited for the next new section of trail being created with suggestions including 'El Diablo', 'Pete's Dragon', 'Vertical Limit', 'Smugglers Bolt', 'Moonshine Run', and 'Shotgun.' After discussion, however, it was AGREED to call it 'Section13' which is how Pete Laing, trail designer had described it on the plan.
- **Coaching and Training** – Beginner and Intermediated Female and Male Coaching Sessions had been held during 2008 led by Ollie Graham and assisted by Dave Church, Jamie Butcher, Marie Brown and Andy Samanjoul. Further female sessions had been arranged for March and June 2009.
- **GO Ride Club** – Trailblazers had now been registered with British Cycling as a Go Ride Club. This is a national youth coaching and development programme and any members interested in helping to develop a Kids Club were asked to put their names forward.
- **6th GMSR** – September 08 saw us holding another highly successful Great Milk Stout Ride for Macmillan Cancer Support – over 80 riders and walkers braved the pouring rain and horrendous weather to take part and raise nearly £3000 for Macmillan. Trailblazer Peter Watson again raised the most individual sponsorship (£1K)and once again received the Glenwood Trophy (presented at the meeting) whilst Team Deaconstar raised the most team sponsorship (£500) and were presented with the Team trophy at the meeting.

- **Female Evening Club Rides** – were held once a fortnight from Easter to September 08 and were starting again on Tuesday 14 April (6.30pm – 8pm.) The rides would run through fortnightly until September 09.
- **Wednesday Night Club Rides** – continued to be held, courtesy of Mat and Gary.
- **Club BBQ, Group Ride and Camp Out Weekend** – took place in August 08.
- **Monthly Sunday Club Rides** – continued to be held and were planned for 2009.
- **Social Meetings** – were held bi-monthly in the Cross Keys Pub, Hamsterley
- **Formal Meetings** – were held bi-monthly in the Forest Classroom. These had now been moved to the Cross Keys Pub, Hamsterley for 2009.
- **Trailblazer members** – had again been doing their bit for biking with Bill Pike completing the Lands End to John O’Groats ride, Mat and Olly completing the Selkirk Merida 100 and James Chilcott the Rob Roy Challenge.
- **Trailblazer visits** – had been organised to France, Spain, the MTB World Cup, Wales and Scotland (particularly Glentress.)
- **Trailblazers have been promoted** – at various events including Sustrans MIMA Cycling Event (Gary Ewing and Fiona Simpson.) Trailblazer members assisted FC at the popular Halloween Hauntings.
- **Darlington West Park 4X Track** – Trailblazer members have played a key role in the development of this track and have held coaching sessions here.

3.Member Benefits

- Help design and build England’s best mtb trails
- Reduced annual parking permit at hamsterley (£27 instead of £35) or free annual permit for 4 trailbuilding sessions per annum or other voluntary help.
- Membership of an on-line discussion forum.
- Fully maintained website containing a wealth of biking information
- Free coaching
- Discount on holidays, skills courses, weekend breaks, instructor courses, cycle shops and food at Cross Keys Pub, Hamsterley
- Opportunity to be part of a social group of like-minded riders on organised rides and social activities.

4.Future Plans

- Build the Red Route! Trailbuilding every 3rd Saturday 10am
- Club Rides every 2nd Sunday 10.30am start
- Coast to Coast Club Ride – 29 to 31 May 2009
- Female Specific Coaching sessions on 14 and 28 June 2009
- Female Evening Bike Rides from Tuesday 14 April at 6.30pm and fortnightly until September 09.
- Club BBQ, Group Ride and Camp Out – Saturday 20 June to Sunday 21 June 09.
- Enduro Race Weekend, Camp Out and BBQ – Saturday 15 August to Sunday 16 August 09.
- 7th GMSR – 13 September 2009 to raise more funds for Macmillan.
- We will continue to promote responsible cycling by working with other organisations to enable everyone to enjoy the forest.
- We will continue to develop our volunteer coaches and group leaders.
- We will look to secure more funding to develop more trails.
- We will look to secure funding to develop coaching and training as part of the 2012 Olympic Games.

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 including Groundwork, CDENT, Teesdale Council, County Durham Council, Durham Primary Care Trust, Forestry Commission, Co Durham Tourism Partnership, ONE, WoodNWheels, Cross Keys Pub, Cummins, Pete Laing Cycle Trail Designer, Craig Cummings (Rifty) Web Meister, Radius Pipe Line Systems and A D Engineering.

5. Annual Accounts 2008/09 and Independent Examiners Report

Bill Pike presented the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 2008/09. It was noted membership numbers had continued to grow. Mat Clark proposed the accounts be adopted. This was seconded by Andy Samanjoul and AGREED by members.

5. Election of Officers

The following appointments were made:

- Chair – Andy Samanjoul (proposed by Mat Clark and seconded by Chris Goldsworthy)
- Vice Chair – Olly Graham (proposed by Andy Samanjoul and seconded by Marie Brown.)
- Secretary – Vicky Chilcott (proposed by Bill Pike and seconded by Olly Graham)
- Treasurer – Bill Pike (proposed by Peter Watson and seconded by David Nicholson)
- Assistant Treasurer – Mat Clark (proposed by Kathryn Gander and seconded by Vicky Chilcott.)

6. Election of Committee Members

The following members were elected to the Committee: Marie Brown, Jamie Butcher, Mat Clark, Chris Goldsworth, Gary Ewing, Neil Gander, Kath Gander, Lisa Jobling, David Nicholson, Alison Park. Craig Cummings was nominated Web Master, assisted by Chris Briers and Mike MacTimney.

7. Neil and Kath Gander – 5,343 km Tandem Ride from the North Cape, Norway to Innsbruck

Neil and Kath gave an amusing talk and film on their 5,343 km tandem ride in 2008 that took them from the North Cape of Norway to Innsbruck. Weather temporarily stopped them reaching Malta, their ultimate goal, but they were resuming the ride in a couple of week's time and hoped to complete it by July 2009.

8. Close of Meeting

Andy Samanjoul thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.