

# **Annual General Meeting**

**Monday 29 June 2026 at Marazion Community Centre**

**11:00 AM start**

## **Minutes**

### **1. Attendance and apologies**

#### **Present:**

Susan Pester, Kathy Fairey, John Heath, David Cooper, Clare Bennett, Jill James, Jenny Ranson, John Rogers, Maggy Bashford, Liz Harvey, Dick Belton, Denise Belton, Eric Smith, Judy Knowles, Mike Cox, Lyn Hornblower, Shirley Wainwright, Nicky Smith, Mike Styles, Bella Morgan, Hloy Neofyton, Heidi Hofel-Rymer, Ann Owen, Ginnie Hignett, Diane Baker, John Bennett, Susan Lane, Penny Bowey, John Pestle Jan Williams (non-member), +1 latecomer I didn't catch. Thorold Eddy mandy Eddy

#### **Apologies:**

Colin Vickers, Ruth Towse, David Hignett, Ken Sharp, Geoff Ploughman, Jayne Kenneddy, Dot Davis, Kathy Lewis, Tina Semmens, Zelda..... and Aisla.....

John Rogers, Honorary President, opened the meeting. He explained why he was leading the meeting, Dick (Ex-chair) and Denise (ex-Social Sec) Belton had resigned from the society as they were moving away.

He led a minute's silence to reflect on members no longer with us.

### **2. Election of Chair**

John Rogers introduced Susan Pester and nominated her as the new Chair; this was seconded by Kathy Fairey and unanimously agreed by all present.

A presentation of a bottle of whisky was made to Dick and a bottle of wine to Denise, in recognition of all they had done for the society. Cards and gift vouchers were given to Clare Bennett and Maggy Bashford who had both resigned.

### **3. Chair's Remarks**

#### **Former Chair's Report – Richard Belton**

Denise and I are in the process of selling our house in Penzance and relocating to Dorset, so Denise has relinquished her role as Social Secretary and I am handing over my role as Chairman to Susan Pester, who we very much hope will be appointed at this AGM.

As Chairman I have been involved in several initiatives this year including – Tinnars' Way – we secured funding from St Just Council (£200) and HF Holidays Pathways Fund (£1,000) towards the cost of two bronze plaques mounted at either end of the trail, on the gates of St Just Church and opposite the lifeboat station on St Ives Church wall. Our thanks to David Szlitkus for his efforts in mounting these plaques. We had an unveiling of the St Just plaque on Sunday 10 May by the Deputy Mayor of St Just, Fynn Tucker, at the start of this year's walk.

The funds from HF Holidays were conditional on us erecting handrails on the last 6 stiles going into St Ives where it reaches Burthallen Lane. We agreed to do this, but I must admit I had my doubts that we were capable of doing the work. In the event, we found that driving posts into either side of the stiles was not much different to digging holes for the signposts that we erect. What proved to be easier than expected was the insertion of a post into voids at the top of the Cornish hedges. A bit of gentle persuasion with a sike and heavy hammer did the job surprisingly well. Our thanks to Jill James, Fred Gendall, Geoff Plowman and Clive Duebel for their help.

HF Holidays have also donated towards the cost of 6 gates and stiles on the Paul 35 project that Jill James will report on in her report. We have a Grand Opening of the path at 9.30 on Wednesday 24 June by the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, Sir Edward Bolitho – again more information in Jill's report. We also found a home for one of the benches donated by St Ives Council – it is on the Tinnars' Way at Trevalgan Farm – again thanks to David Szlitkus for erecting the bench.

Walk Book – we need someone to look after the Walk Book. There are two parts to the job -

- Self-guided walk notes that are stored in our archive – these need to be added to every now and then. Jill James adds quite a few new walks to the Ordnance Survey app and these need to be edited and added to the library – also forwarded to John Heath for inclusion with the website walk book.

The Walk Book brochure that we print and give copies to Penzance Tourist Office and St Ives Tourist Office. The brochure is in need of being revised, printed and distributed.

#### **My thanks**

May I thank you all as members of WCFPS for the tremendous support you have given me as Chairman in all the projects, big and small, we have undertaken – it has been good fun!

#### **Introduction Message from Susan Morris Pester**

I've been a member for about twenty years but it wasn't until my husband died in 2010 that I became an active member. I found WCFPS to be a very welcoming society and walking became a therapy as well as a physical and social activity. I started with the long walks but, like many of us, I gradually preferred the shorter walks and also welcomed the introduction of leisure walks. And now I would like to see an increase in the number of visits and walks with lunch like the recent one in St Ives. I know many members are in favour of this initiative so, if anyone has any ideas, please let the committee know. But of course we also need to encourage younger members and to this end weekend walks have been introduced.

## **4. Approval of Minutes of AGM Held 14th July 2025**

The minutes were available to read by the membership on the website but not many were aware of this. They were approved; nominated by John Heath, seconded by Mike Styles.

## **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

## **6. Election of committee members for 2026/2027**

Existing Officers will continue in roles

### **Executive Officers**

Chairman      Susan Pester

Secretary      Liz Harvey

Treasurer      Kathy Fairey

### **Committee Members with roles**

Membership secretary      Kathy Fairey

Social Secretary      Jenny Ranson

DMMO Officer      David Cooper

### **Committee members without portfolio**

John Rogers      President

David Zlitzus

Existing Officers will continue in roles

Proposed by Penny Bowey      Seconded by Ann Owen

There were no volunteers for the post of Walks Secretary

There were no volunteers for the post of Rights of Way Officer

Susan asked if anyone was interested to let us know.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

I have now been undertaking the role of Treasurer for 11 years and have decided that it is time to pass the role on to someone else, therefore 2026/2027 will be my final year.

The membership subscriptions have come in with the majority reaching the bank account on the 1st June. There are, however, 72 subscriptions still outstanding. I have an up-to-date list of non-payments if you are not sure and would like clarification.

At the start of the financial year, we carried forward a bank balance of £6,609.69. Our annual income amounted to £3,274.25 made up of subscriptions of £1,169.00 and collections from AGM and Members Day of £174.00, Ramblers Walking Partnership referrals of £60.00, and Camel Trail Coach payments of £445.00, and £311.00 donation from supporters. The payments for the Xmas dinner came to £1,090.00. Interest from the Deposit Account was £25.25.

The expenditure for this year was £3,366.44 - this was made up from Hall Hire of £105.00, Markel Sports Insurance of £123.20, path clearing equipment and materials £247.81, Tinnars Way expenses £635.16, delivery charge for bench £30.00, Hi Vis vests for Walk Leaders of £75.41, expenses for tea, coffee, cakes, pasties etc of £163.06, expenses for stamps for mailing out walking lists and other office type expenses of £91.06, Laser Printer Toner £73.33, bank charges £52.84, payment to Wheal Dream for Xmas dinner of £1,090.00, Marketing material (Leaflets) of £13.57, Ramblers Affiliation fee of £81.00, annual hosting of website £50.00 and Williams Coach Hire for Camel Trail trip of £535.00.

A Savings Account was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 transferring £6,000.00 from the current account.

A full list of expenses is available.

We ended the financial year down by £92.19 leaving us with a total bank balance of £6,517.50.

## **8. Membership Secretary's Report**

During the membership year 2025/2026 we have taken on 43 new members, 31 members were removed from the list. At the end of the Membership year we had 406 members.

## **9. Walk Secretary's report.**

Clare reported that there were 33 Long Walks 33, 47 Short Walks, 14 Leisure Walks a total of 94 walks this year.

She listed 20 walk leaders, although she would love more people to lead, and some of the leaders to lead more often.

There were also joint walks with the Ramblers.

She thanked Roy Blewett for his history walk, Fred Gendall for the New Year walk and Paul Miller of National Trust.

She thanked Lynn Hornblower for this year's innovation of the hoppers, a bus users WhatsApp group.

## 10. Rights of Way Officer's Report

Jill opened her report by showing us photographs of the original constitution by Winifred white stating the aims of the society; preserving footpaths and bridleways, reporting anything which might hinder footpaths and bridleways, creating new rights of way and promoting the use of footpaths.

She then detailed her work in each area:

### 1. Preserving footpaths and bridleways

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Planning      | Trevarthian Farm- 6 RoW, deferred<br>St Buryan, 37 huises affecting 2 RoW, pending<br>St Erth, stable conversion 2 RoW, refused<br>St Hilary, factory conversion, 1 RoW, just submitted. |
| Signing       | sign posts 27<br>Waymarkers 4<br>Discs c.20<br>Route signs; Tinnors and Paul35                                                                                                           |
| Path Clearing | Cleared 4.25 miles mostly by Jill or Jill and Nicky, 25% by volunteers.                                                                                                                  |
| Improving     | Make more paths available to more people<br>Stile improvements<br>Addition of steps<br>Handrails<br>Benches                                                                              |

### 2. Reporting anything which may hinder use of FPs and BWs

Invasive species; knotweed is a serious problem; 17 reports; 2 paths lost.  
Animals; 2 horse, 2 cattle  
Fences 3, blockages/misc 5, flooding 7, damage/collapse 6  
Blocked stiles 7, fallen trees 11  
Misleading signs 2

### 3. Creating new rights of way

Path diversion orders; advisory (Trgenhoe) and consultative various  
DMMOS 135 pending, 136 not yet applied for  
Dedications – via partnerships (PLR). 6 projects identified.

### 4. Promoting use of footpaths

Recceing for walk leaders  
Jill said that walk reports should be available to the public.

She has added walks to The OS App.  
She asked the meeting how we reach the public.

She told the meeting that she couldn't continue to be the RoW Officer because she thinks that the society now acts as a walking group, not for the benefit of the footpaths.

## **11. DMMO Officer's Report**

The cut-off date for DMMO Applications to be registered was January 1, 2031; this deadline has been scrapped, but still hasn't been enshrined in law.

The DMMO has responded to Cornwall Council (CC) on over 30 DMMO cases. Also attended 3 PINS Inquiries. There have been some successes - e.g. Tregenhoe Farm, but an increasing number of failures, e.g. Falmouth Middle Point, Choone Farm.

The current process is

The CC make an Order based on Evidence. It is publicised, giving an opportunity for the "public" to Comment or Object. If an objection is made and not withdrawn, it has to go to PINS. PINS then decides whether to Confirm or hold Inquiry.

Current Situation:

Landowners increasingly Object to Orders and refuse to withdraw, so the CC submit the Case to PINS. As part of the Submission CC decides whether to Support the order or to take a Neutral Stance. Then PINS decides to hold an Inquiry to take Evidence. PINS determinations seem to be giving more weight to Landowner Evidence and thereafter not confirming the Order .

There are over 3,000 gaps in the Cornish footpath network. The expectation was that regulations would allow the county to use their judgement to clear them. Jill has tried to use this method but was told to make a DMMO.

This means that the CC, having lost a number of Inquiries, will be increasingly reluctant to support their own orders, driven by cost and so will adopt a Neutral Stance. The onus for preparing and presenting cases that go to inquiry will fall on applicants, presenting them with a significant commitment and potentially a liability as to costs

DMMO Applications will need to be more robust as we can't rely on CC, this involves a lot of work which can come to nothing.

## **12. Motions; Proposals:**

### **Reinstate in Item 8 of the Constitution: Vice Chair**

It was proposed that we reinstate the role of Vice Chair in the constitution so that there would be someone in place to support the Chair and stand in in case the current Chair needs to resign. Proposed by the committee, seconded by Shirley Wainwright, carried unanimously.

## **13. Any Other Business**

The trophies for wettest and muddiest walks will be looked after by Kathy as there were no nominations.

## **14. Date of next meeting**

The provisional date of the next AGM was set for 28/06/26

The meeting closed at 12.07. Members were invited on a walk with John Rogers and around Trenow Cove, Marazion

Chair..... Date.....