



WYE VALLEY RETRIEVER CLUB AGM MINUTES 7th APRIL 2015

The meeting opened at 7.12pm

Morton Redpath, our Chairman, welcomed everyone to The Plough and thanked them for coming to the AGM. He also welcomed Kerry Flamank from Bromyard Veterinary Practice. Kerry was accompanied by Matilda and Caroline from the practice, who would be giving a talk on new and emerging diseases in dogs after the official business of the AGM was finished.

1. **Apologies**

Bella Brown, Steve Prosser, Frank Wright, Peter Vanderstegan-Drake, Claire Raymond, Mick Downes, Shelley Basford, Ruth Thomas. There was also an apology from Sara Bowie, the Secretary, who was stuck in Chepstow and unable to get to the meeting on time.

2. **Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting**

The meeting agreed and adopted the Minutes from the last AGM (with a corrected start time of 7pm), proposed by Anna Yates and seconded by Jean Tidmarsh, and the Chairman then signed them.

3. **Chairman's Report**

"This year we have had letters, emails and telephone calls to congratulate us on our events. These kind words and messages are most welcome and I would like to thank you all very much for them.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee who have kindly given up their time to make all these events possible. I would like to thank Luke Thompson Coon (Westhide), Clive and Sylvia Richards (Lower Hope), and Claire and Roger Raymond (New House Farm) for allowing us all to come on to their land and train our dogs. This has provided a sociable opportunity for us to see old friends and make new ones and for all of this we are very grateful.

Thanks must also go to those members not on the committee who have helped at our events throughout the year. As I have said before, your help along with your successes and enjoyment is what gives us the incentive to carry on and sustain the values of the Wye Valley Retriever Club.

We are all very proud of the Club and this is due to the commitment and the friendship that the trainers, members and the committee all put in.

Please keep an eye on the website for dates of tests, events and trials. You will also find some of this information in your newsletter. Our committee

are here for you and your club and we welcome all of you to join us at all our events.

So finally I would like to say what a good year we have had and I would like to welcome you all and wish every member a successful and pleasurable training year ahead.

Thank you."

The meeting accepted the Chairman's report on the proposal of Bernard Pound, seconded by Jean Tidmarsh.

Morton then handed our President, Luke Thompson Coon a small gift for his new baby daughter and invited him to say a few words. Luke thanked everyone and said how glad he was that we enjoy ourselves at Westhide. He explained that they are currently doing some work in the woods which hopefully will be a help not a hindrance!

Morton thanked Luke and handed over to Anna Yates to give the secretary's report for Sara.

4. Secretary's Report

In the absence of the Secretary, Anna Yates informed members that Sara's full report would be published separately but that she had wanted to express her thanks to the committee for their dedication and everyone who helped in whatever way to make our events a success. She also wanted to encourage more members to come to the end of term dinner, which was a really enjoyable evening. It would be really nice to see a lot more members there, especially those who took part in the training – come and cheer those who have won awards, and make new friends!

5. Financial Report

"The club has had good year, enabling us to add just over £1300 to our reserves, but, as you can see from the accounts, £534 of this is allocated to our defibrillator fund so the useable addition to reserves is £781.

This addition to reserves is due to members supporting our events in such good numbers and everyone on the committee, plus our other helpers, our sponsors and our landowners, who ensure our costs are kept to the minimum.

Our biggest outlay, our two field trials, came in at a total cost of under £700 this year. I know this cost is always contentious, field trials being something not everyone can aspire to, for whatever reason, but I did some analysis on our membership recently and found that roughly a third of our membership are only members because we run field trials and hope to get a run in one – around 100 members. What they contribute, at £10 a year, more than covers the net cost of the trials.

We are of course indebted to our two hosts, who donate the birds.

Costs continue to rise. Our insurance, for example, will almost double this next year due to the Kennel Club's decision to now sub contract it out, but we have plans to run a few more of our more profitable types of events in this coming year to try to offset this, and generally be very careful of our resources wherever we can.

That said, if anyone does have any ideas for something worthwhile, to benefit all members, that we can use some of our resources for, the committee would be pleased to hear.

Does anyone have any questions on the accounts?"

A number of questions were raised by Gordon Hughes. He queried the cost of the annual dinner. Anna explained that this was because a number of people were invited to the dinner and the club paid for their meal, as a thank you for what they had done for the club in the previous year. He queried the cost of our training. Morton and others explained that the cost per lesson was still very much well below any 'private' training so represented very good value. In addition our class numbers are a lot smaller than other clubs that offer training at lower rates. Mr Hughes also queried the cost of the newsletter and the postage to send it out. There was robust defence of the newsletter from the floor, people really like it – the stories from the past year plus information about what is coming up this year. Morton explained that we will continue to seek to cover the cost with sponsorship and adverts. Richard Price pointed out that his son takes each new newsletter into school assembly to talk about his gundog exploits, and Richard felt that if the newsletter even encouraged one more young person into our sport it was worth it as without the young coming in our sport would die.

Mr Hughes queried the cost to members of the field trial training day and said another club he knew offered a similar day for £5. Roger pointed out that our day was a full day of training, including all refreshments and lunch for attendees, and was run using cold game instead of dummies. The committee therefore felt the cost at £35 was appropriate.

Mr Hughes also criticised the lack of schedules being posted to those members not on email. Anna accepted that this had been an issue but it was being addressed for this year.

Julia Redpath asked Mr Hughes to please actually come along to some of our events and see how we do it, and then he would see what good value we offer.

Morton thanked Mr Hughes for the points he had raised.

Richard Price said it was excellent we have made a profit and just goes to show what tight controls there are in place.

Julia asked about the defibrillator fund and Anna explained we had decided to raise money to have one in our first aid kit due to a number of recent instances of heart attacks on shoots witnessed by members.

Brian Lambert asked about the poor interest on the deposit account and Anna explained that this was the best rate possible – being a club we are not in a position to take advantage of the better rates offered to both private and corporate investors.

The meeting accepted the treasurer's report on the proposal of Brian Lambert, seconded by Iris Wright.

6. Field Trial/Working Test Secretary's Report

"We held 3 working tests in 2014, all were very successful save to say we were down on entries compared to 2013. Possibly this is due to the cost of fuel as other clubs are finding the same.

Firstly I must thank Margaret Owers for all her help in dealing with the working test entries and sorting the help out for each day, and a big thank you to all the helpers. We have around 300 members and yet it is the same 10-12 that help at everything. To all our members I ask please do help if you can, make it easier for everyone.

We held a field trial training day in September, which went very well. Cold game was supplied by Matthew Farmer. Thank you again to all the helpers and thanks too to Ian Sparey for the use of his land at short notice.

We held two field trials in 2014. The first was a novice field trial, held by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Michael Gough at their shoot at Dunclent. The second was held at Batsford Park, by kind permission of Lord and Lady Dulverton, and his keeper Matthew Farmer. This was our first ever All Aged trial. Matthew was instrumental in getting Lord Dulverton to donate a trial to our club. Once again thank you to all the helpers.

In 2015 we intend to hold 3 working test days, a novice field trial, an all aged trial and two field trial training days, one in September and hopefully a second one in October, both with cold game.

Many thanks to my assistants, Margaret Owers for the working tests and Kelly Stringfellow for the field trials."

The meeting accepted the field trial/working test secretary's report on the proposal of Julia Redpath, seconded by Bernard Pound.

Some members raised some queries.

Charlotte Drake asked why we didn't introduce some compulsion into helping, as riding clubs are now doing – 3 or 4 runs and then a member has to help at the next event. The committee can consider this at a future meeting. Tony Dowdeswell suggested different entry fees for helpers and non-helpers. Again the committee can consider this, but it was pointed out that we already provide lunch for all helpers.

Iris Wright asked about the Invitation Working Test. Roger explained this had not run in 2014 due to lack of teams being put forward once we put in some rules about fairer selection, future winners to host the event and so on. The invited clubs were then trying to dictate the rules, and since it is our invitation test, our trophy, we didn't think this was appropriate. There is now not enough ground made available at the Hereford Country Fair to run it on that day either, which is a shame. Everyone agrees it is a good day, especially with the juniors taking part too, so the committee decided to leave it a year and have a rethink, and that is what will happen.

7. Election of Committee Members

The Chairman informed the meeting that Bernard Pound, Jean Tidmarsh, Kelly Stringfellow and Anna Yates were all due to retire by rotation. All except Bernard were willing to stand again. Morton thanked Bernard very much on behalf of the Club for his help, hard work and the support he had given and presented a small gift. Bernard expressed his thanks but wished to reassure the club that he will continue to provide all the help he does now, he just doesn't want to attend meetings!

Tony Griffiths had been proposed and seconded as new committee members. The Chairman pointed out that there was still a vacancy for another committee member and invited anyone interested in joining the committee to come forward. Unfortunately no-one did.

The Chairman then proposed that there was a vote to welcome Tony onto the committee and Anna, Kelly and Jean to stay on the committee. This was seconded by Bernard Pound. The vote was in favour.

Richard Price suggested that the spare committee place could be filled by a junior representative, who might submit questions and suggestions to the meetings in written form, to get over the problem of the meetings being held in the evening. This suggestion will be taken back to committee.

8. Election of Auditor

The Treasurer, Anna Yates, proposed Vanda Williams to continue as Auditor. This was seconded Charlotte Vanderstegan-Drake and agreed by the meeting. The meeting also expressed its thanks to Vanda for her work in auditing the accounts.

9. AGM

The Treasurer explained, just out of courtesy, that the committee wished to inform members that future AGMs will be held a little later in the year, in May, because the current time period between the end of the financial year and the AGM was too short to get the accounts reviewed by the auditor.

10. Newsletter

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Sara Bowie and everyone who had helped put together another excellent newsletter, which gives such a huge amount of enjoyment, and proposed a vote of thanks. This was seconded by Bernard Pound. The meeting agreed this vote of thanks.

11. Any Other Business

The Chairman opened up the meeting to any other business.

Chris Peers suggested that newsletters were only sent to those that actually wanted them. The committee will consider adding a tick box to future membership forms.

Nick Swan suggested that the balance of the defibrillator's cost was paid for out of the profits from the last year, allowing future raffles to go to local charities as previously. The committee will take this popular suggestion to its next meeting. He also asked what the reserves could be spent on – the treasurer reminded members that all suggestions would be welcomed and considered, although they were also needed to replace existing equipment as it reached end of life.

The Chairman had not received notice of any other business.

The chairman closed the meeting at 8.12pm