



CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB

NO. 5 SOUTH EAST REGION

**Minutes of the South East Region Council Meeting on Thursday 25th January 2024 via
Zoom**

In attendance

Sue Smith (SS)	-	Region Chair
Claire Notley (CN)	-	Region Secretary
Anne Marrett (AM)	-	Region Treasurer
Chris Page (CP)	-	Region Vice – Chair
Stuart Johnson (SJ)	-	Region Web Master
Mark Sinclair-Watson(MSW)	-	CAMC Vice-Chair
Paul Funnell (PF)	-	Nominated Member
Karen Shipper (KS)	-	Nominated Member
Charles Patrick (CPA)	-	Nominated Member
Andy McDonald (AMC)	-	East Kent
Paul Burgin (PB)	-	East Kent
Grahm Milborrow (GM)	-	South London
Nigel Moss (NM)	-	South London
Maisie Bennett (MB)	-	East Sussex
Michelle Weston (MW)	-	East Sussex
Alf Harvey (AF)	-	West Surrey

Dave Clayton (DC)	-	West Surrey
Nick Child (NC)	-	West Sussex
Rob Bayes (RB)	-	West Sussex
Alan Cook (AC)	-	Independent
John Hoy (JH)	-	Independent

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Good evening, everyone and thank you very much for joining us and giving up your time this evening. I will try and keep my bits and pieces short as we have a large Agenda and lots to get through.

2. APOLOGIES

Phil Aldridge and Steve Charnley.

3. MNUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – SATURDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2023

SS asked if everyone has a copy of these minutes and asked if there were any matters arising from these minutes.

4. MATTERS ARISING

AC asked if a date could be put in the Minutes, CN apologised this was not included and will amend.

CN apologised for short Minutes, this was due to an issue with the new Dictaphone not recording.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

We had a very good AGM at Steyning and this year's AGM will be at Steyning again due to a problem with another venue.

I attended a Christmas Rally with East Sussex which was very good, I was unable to attend South London Christmas Rally due to being taken ill.

I then spent Christmas at Blackhouse Club Site, a very nice site and wardens, so much so we are looking to attend this Christmas, the site had very good amenities in walking distance.

I haven't done much else since then; I'm hoping to attend Blue Nose with East Sussex in February and have booked in various rallies and hoping by next meeting I would have attended a few more rallies. Thank you all again for volunteering to be Region Reps. We now have booking form for the Region Wine and Event and this will hopefully go on our website shortly and into Club Magazine. We have a few already booked on and we are planning on a site visit next month and we are hoping to gain some more land if needed.

We have asked Stuart Johnson to be our Webmaster and thank you Stuart for agreeing to take this role on and the Website is looking good.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

As I'm new to the role I have been sorting through paperwork handed over from Sandy and getting my own filing system up and running

Myself and Danny went to West Sussex Christmas Rally, was lovely to meet you all and thank you for making us welcome, we look forward to seeing some of you again soon. We aim to get to at least one of your rallies this year to meet you all and you get to know us.

Emails

From West Surrey Centre regarding this year's AGM, they have a provisional booking for Steyning School.

Governance

Invite to Club Forum which is happening this weekend, this will be my first and I'm sure will be interesting and help with my new role going forward. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone from club and put a face to a name.

Chasing up AGM Returns and pleased to say there was only one of our centres within our region were on the list (West Sussex) but I'm sure this has now been actioned, if they need any help with this, please let me know. Thank you to our centre secretaries.

Governance – Club Committee changes, as most of you know Grenville has retired and Dave Turner has taken over

Christopher Macgowan has also retired and been replaced by Alison Woodhams is now Club Treasurer

Greg Potter has taken on role of Club Vice-Chairman whilst continuing his position of Chairman of the Events Committee

Barry Sharratt has decided to step back from the Executive Committee.

Vince Mott was co-opted on the Club's Executive Committee.

Lord Anthony Cadman has retired.

Peter Miller has left the Club's finance team and now replaced by Sophie Hills. Any finance related inquiries should be directed to them at managementaccounts@camc.com, this email box is constantly monitored.

All VAT returns and account must be sent to the above email.

The deadline for VAT returns is due within the quarter following the VAT quarter and annual audited accounts must be submitted by 31st March.

Club Fest Advert

Finally, if you send me an email and I don't reply please just send me a text or call as I have found some emails are going into SPAM, I do monitor this on a regular basis, but if it is urgent let me know. I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

Thank you, Stuart, for spending a whole day with me to finalise the Accounts, these are now ready to go to the accountants, and I'm just waiting on the VAT letters from Sue to be able to send them off. The accounts did balance with Stuart's help. I can't thank you enough for your time. We have monies from Club for last quarters VAT. We have the money for last year's question time and Club Fest, this will show in this year's accounts and not last years. We have a healthy balance of just over £11,500.00 when I last did the accounts. My next job is to get the paperwork to the accountants.

SJ has asked do we know how much we were getting from Club Fest and how it's worked out. Does it go on number of units sited on your region lines. SS agreed it's a very good question. AM advised the money the club sent was what we spent on expenses. MSW referred the question KS or PF s they would be best to answer this question. KS said its now expenses, MSW advised this changed and it used to be per unit in your region lines. AM confirmed the club has paid expenses.

8. CAMC VICE-CHAIRMAN REPORT

Following on from CN's update of Executive Committee, this has since changed as the Club has co-opted Phil Aldridge and Helen Drew to the Executive Committee.

There is a new type of membership this is Experience Freedom Membership which gives everyone the same benefits of Club Membership and this is designed for people without Caravans or Motorhomes but want to use our Experience Freedom Units which is getting popular, they will still have all the same membership benefits, i.e. discounts on days out and shopping.

Kevin & Sue Barden have now stood down as coordinates, the new coordinates for Slinfold are Steve & Jan Jenkins they are now known as Assistant Manager. Some of you may already know them as they have been at Slinfold on several occasions and bring a lot of experience to the role as they have been Warden's before.

MSW asked for a show of hands of who received an email from Nick Lomas this afternoon, this showed most of us did. This is an update on the Website outage, the Club was informed on Saturday by leading Forensic experts that the Club had been a victim on Cyber Security Incident, once detected the club took all the appropriate actions, the Club staff have been working tirelessly and working overtime and staying overnight at Club HQ to ensure our members best interest were taken care off. They have not been made aware of any breach of Members Data, if they are made aware they will obviously make members aware.

PF advised most club websites are down however if we need to contact the Club regarding Insurance etc, they will contact you back as soon as they can.

SJ asked what Phil Aldridge title is? Mark confirmed his is an Executive Committee Member.

JH asked if there is an update on the electrical trial, MSW advised they are trialling non electric pitches however these are not popular at this present time as we are in the Winter months, this may change as the months go on. MSW confirmed that the reduction in electricity for EHU is 30 – 40% for metered EHU's in some cases this up to 50% but the majority is 30-40%. This is something SER can help promote how we can survive without

EHU and survive on Leisure Batteries, Solar Panels and Inverters. SS told us she has purchased a power pack and they hardly used any Gas by using a Power Pack and even run an Air Fryer on the power pack.

PF confirmed the most popular pitches for Club Fest was the pitches with toilets and shower blocks also pitches with EHU.

9. 2024 REGION EVENT (WINE AND DINE)

SS advised we have finalised the Booking Form and will be on our website shortly. The Bluebell Vineyard are doing a Wine Tasting we will coach people to the Vineyard so there will be no Driving for safety reasons. You will also have access to the Gardens and House Tours at Penshurst Place. SS asked all Centres to put on their websites, she is aware this does clash with East Kent's Birthday Rally but we would appreciate that every centre help promote the Event.

CP has confirmed we have had a lot uptake on our Region Facebook page we now have 800 + members so if any centres want to advertise their rallies, please add these to the Facebook page.

PF asked for costings of Wine & Dine, CN shared screen of Booking Form so everyone could see the costings.

PF voiced his concerns that this is straight after Club Fest, SS advised we understand this and we had to try and fit this in with South London who are hosting the Wine & Dine.

PF asked if we know the ages of the people using the Facebook, CP confirmed the following

18–24-year-olds .03%

25–34-year-olds .09%

35–44-year-olds 8.2%

45–54-year-olds 7.8%

The above is according to Facebook Stats, PF said it's interesting that we have 25 + looking at our Facebook page and that is where we want to be.

KS asked if Club Fest is on the Facebook page and that there are limited EHU pitches available, CP confirmed this will be added PF asked that we add we are still looking for Volunteers for Club Fest.

NM asked that their Treasurer has asked who will be receiving money for Wine & Dine, SS confirmed South London will receive Rally Fee and the Tour and Coach Fees will be sent direct to SER. SS confirmed that she is in the process of sending Val Mitchell an email.

10. FAMILY WEEKEND

SS asked RB for more information, RB the Family Rally was planned for Littlehampton they are now suggesting we use the Rally at Bell View Farm starting 9th August as this venue has more space especially for a Family Weekend, we may need volunteers from all SER centres to help with various activities for all age ranges. SER will meet with West Sussex for planning and then we can update all Region Centres in due course. KS asked if Region are in a

position to help the Centre financially with the Rally as we have a healthy account balance, this is something we will be looking at and discussing with the Centre directly.

11. VAT & RALLIES

SS confirmed that we do need to charge VAT on rallies and we can't get away without charging VAT as we are providing a Service and if you are providing a service you need to charge VAT and by charging VAT we are covered by the Club's Public Liability unless anyone else has their own public liability. CN advised there is a whole section on VAT in Centre Guidance Section 5, CN confirmed she raised this earlier with Governance and they replied with "The Club hold public liability insurance which covers Centre's activities should the centre be liable." CN explained she also asked about if Marshall's bought in Fish and Chips from an outside sources the Club's response was "I can't see why the second scenario wouldn't be permitted, as you say the shop will hold public liability insurance and our public liability insurance would cover the Marshall's actives should the centre be liable.

CN confirmed that we need to charge VAT to be covered by the Club's Public Liability, CN confirmed this can be found in Centre Guidance Finance Section and this can be found in Box.

GM asked if a group of members went out and bought back Fish and Chips for friends, CN confirmed they can as the Chip Shop would be charging VAT and have their own Public Liability and you don't need to charge VAT on top and if this is a group of friends collecting for everyone, this has nothing to do with the centre.

12. WEBSITE REPORT

Phill Aldridge sent over the following report which CN read out.

21st October 2023 – 23rd January 2024

On the website since the last meeting, there have been 484 site sessions, 363 of these were unique visitors. Of the 363 visitors, 327 were new.

There was a spike in site sessions around Halloween, which may be attributed to the AGM?

Most of the website traffic comes from Google and the next big hitter is people coming to the site directly using the address.

Of the 484 sessions, 296 (61%) were from a mobile device, 179 (37%) were from a desktop and just 9 from a tablet.

This data shows we must ensure the website remains mobile friendly when it is updated or changed.

I have enjoyed rebuilding and looking after the website for the past 2 years (time flies!) but am pleased to be handing over to Stuart to look after as I focus on my new role on the Club's Exectuive Committee and spending time with my new baby boy!

SJ, firstly I would like to Thank Phil Aldridge for the great job he has done in the last 2 years for completely revamping the Website and updating as its was required. I'm pleased to be taking over as Webmaster for South East Region as you have noticed Chris and Claire will be dealing with the Facebook pages. I have added photos of all officers and other pictures and

2024 Rally guide and you can download if needed. I have also added the all the Centre Representatives, Club Executive committee for the coming year.

I have do have some requests if anyone has any pictures of Club Fest 2023 and forward them to me at southeastregionwebmaster@gmail.com this will be the email address for any updates etc to the Website. Do we know who the Slinfold Coordinators are as this has been advised earlier, I will update the website. MSW will contact Steve and ask him to send over a picture and forward it over to Stuart so this can be added to Website. When the 2024 Book is done this will be updated as well. It was agreed that we will put 2024 coming soon on this section of the website.

Lastly if you have any special rallies that you would like to be added please email me so I can add them to the Events section.

13. CENTRE REPORTS

SS asked if the centres are happy for us to add all centre rallies to the 2024 programme. No objections were raised.

SOUTH LONDON

GM we are now doing similar adverts to East Kent and I will arrange for them to be sent over to SJ to be added to the Website.

WEST SUSSEX

RB - We have picked up the New Year booking from West Surrey, they have done this for the last 6 years and this demonstrates centres working together to keep something going. We have done some web changes and now have online booking so this is like a reservation and this goes onto a booking form and you don't need to complete and booking form this will help keep control of numbers and easier to cancel and is a positive way forward.

Unfortunately, we have had two fields taken away from us since we have published our rally book as the farms are no longer accepting rallies, these are Orchard Farm and Pontail Farm so this will affect the Bonfire Rally and unfortunately, we might see more of this.

SJ asked RB what the reasons for Orchard Farm cancelling, RB confirmed they obtained planning permission and will no longer be accepting caravans.

AC, Rob you mentioned that a couple of sites have stopped rallies, do we know where we can get new rally sites from? Also, the Forestry Commission in the New Forest at Brockenhurst at Round Hill has a big rally field that is open on occasions. SS said this is good to be forwarded over our Rally Secretary's, AF mentioned they have looked it to this before it's just as cheap to go on to the Club Site.

EAST SUSSEX

MB advised New Year was a bit a quiet and we have just had our Noggin and Natter this was well supported; our next two rallies are fully booked.

WEST SURREY

AF have advised they are still trying to gain contact with Steyning School for SER AGM they have been advised they have opened up their Diary yet and will contact them again next week.

New Year was well attended and good time was had by all our next rally is Valentines and fully booked. AF confirmed he is running a Rally at Apps Court Farm which coincides with the Hampton Court Flower show and asked SJ if this could be added to the website, SJ asked AF to send over information and this can be added to website. AF asked if our website links into other regional websites, SJ advised AF would be best to contact each individual region and ask them to add to their website. JH mentioned that the Flower South has previously been well attended by other centres outside of our Region so they must have found out about it. AF confirmed there is no electric, however there is some EHU and Showers but this is not part of the rally and they would need to book separately.

EAST KENT

PB Our Christmas and New Year were well attended and fun was had by all. The rally book is available on the website our next rally is our Valentine's at Hawkinge and St Patrick's Day and Easter are both fully booked. Our Germany rally still has spaces and please get in contact with Paul Dean who is the marshall and everyone is welcome to join us on any of our rallies. We have recently had interest from new ralliers and we hope to see them on a rally field soon.

14. SLINFOLD REPORT

NC advised he was Steve and Sue Jenkins at Slinfold yesterday and have cleared all the leaves on the grass pitches to help protect the grass. They will be going again on 6th March to get the site ready for opening. Steve and Jan who have taken over are really experienced coordinators. All volunteers will need to complete First Aid Training as well. The Rosta is fully manned for Summer. Steve sent his apologies.

MSW every year they hold a meeting to thank the coordinators and MSW was present and its clear that what a great job Slinfold is doing, there net promotor scores are always excellent and have a lot of competition with the bigger sites in the area.

15. INDEPENDENT/NOMINATED MEMBERS REPORTS

PF – I would like to give you an update on Club Fest, we have 2358 members booked in as of today. Last years bookings were 2307 for the whole event and 1882 the previous year so this so we are growing year on year. We are still looking for volunteers and we are changing things and trying new things, this year we are having Zumba, Paddle Boarding, Kayaking these will be on a trial basis and needs to be booked when you arrive. We are also having a Wellness Tent and Outdoor Adventure area for the younger members. We are also introducing a coloured wrist bands. This just gives you a brief insight. Next years Club Fest will be at Holcombe Hall, we are not keeping the venue a surprise anymore, the only thing that will be kept under wraps is the entertainment for next year. Every year the quality of entertainment is going up we are spending more and more money on entertainment. SS asked if there is a theme for the Garden Fete, KS advised there isn't a Garden Fete this year.

KS – Following on from PF update on Club Fest the 2358 bookings does not include Admin Lines or Chairman's Lines so we looking more about 2500 booked in so far. We are low on

EHU pitches, so if you are thinking of attending, please book in sooner rather than later to avoid disappointment. We have more Trade Stands this year we have between 28-30 Traders booked in. We also have 14 catering vans booked, we have selection of 2 coffee vans, Carvery, Pizza, Wagyu Burgers, Greek, Jamaican, Fish & Chips, Churros, Doughnuts, Crepes and Vegan & Vegetarian, so we have wide selection. It's a big venue with lots of space and two stages, KS reiterated we are still desperate for Volunteers especially block marshals.

JH – Just picking up on Club Fest, he knows it's a big event and its increasing year on year is there anything we can learn from this for our smaller local events as its clear people want to get together or is it the EHU. PF advised Entertainment is key, KS confirmed we have Jason Donovan, Top Loader and Scouting for the Girls, we have gone for headline acts and this will be the way forward for our Entertainment for Club Fest. KS advised Club Fest is good value for money compared to other Music Festivals. JH said that the Caravan and Camping Club do a similar event and always have good turnout, KS confirmed ours is one price and the Caravan and Camping Club Event charges individually for different parts i.e. EHU etc.

I'm really impressed with the Overseas and UK Touring and this is excellent and the club should be applauded.

One area I do have a bit of a problem with, I meet up with a group of people about 3 times a year we originally meet up on America and one of the main things that comes out from this is how unfriendly the club and to expensive club sites are and you can't pitch a small group of people together. I don't know if I necessarily agree with this but this is just some feedback for MSW. I think its more that the staff have so much to do and don't necessarily have the time to spend with members when they arrive. Especially wit the new approach where you don't have to go into reception you can go in and out without having any contact with site staff. I do understand about the not pitching together but I do feel we are losing bookings from this.

MSW replied, thank you for the Travel side we have been working hard and spending lots of money on this behind the scenes so this is good hear.

MSW asked about the unfriendly aspects is it from the sites? JH replied that it tends to be on the sites. MSW replied we often hear how friendly our site staff we have even had one complaint that we are too friendly. Some members want to just arrive set and relax especially if they are working. Some of the bigger sites where we are 100 plus units arriving it can sometimes be hard to manage and this is why we have implemented the pre booking system where you don't have to go into reception. We won't take away the reception option. This also frees up time for site staff to do maintenance. Regarding the pitching together its best to always arrive together, this is also on the agenda for a meeting with Club we don't know if this can be implemented but it will certainly be looked into.

MSW asked JH if he has answered all this questions, JH confirmed he has.

GM said he can understand the unfriendly side as he has been on a few sites this year and comes across site staff being rude and mini-Hitler's and not very professional and I have been told I can't park here, and was asked to move over a few inches and be straight. Also, the booking together with friends, The Camping and Carvan Club will accommodate pitching together. He said he doesn't want to go any Club Sites due to the attitude and costs. MSW

asked where he has experienced this; GM confirmed it was last year when he was touring. MSW asked for feedback on Sites so this can be looked into and feedback given. GM confirmed he does not want to take this any further as he doesn't want to get anyone into trouble. GM said the sites are nice and have amenities, he just doesn't like the strict rules and attitude.

PF & NC confirmed that the spacing and straight sighting is in place for reason for safety and fire regulations and safety is paramount. Also, in every Club site there is a feedback book for all comments good or bad and they are read on a monthly basis and this is a good way of passing on feedback.

SJ also advised he visited a Club Site which has been recently refurbished he thought it was absolutely fantastic and the club have done an amazing job and the staff were really helpful. MSW confirmed that all sites that are being refurbished will be of a similar standard.

AC – I full support JH's comments about pitching together and pleased that MSW will be bringing this up. I can only say we have only ever experienced friendless from the sites. AC strongly advised GM to pass over the details to MSW to help if you have any negative feedback as we can never improve if we don't have the feedback.

AC also confirmed that the deposit system seems to be working well since it was introduced. And its good to see more CL's opening than closing. The Free WIFI is a good step as well, MSW advised this has been a tricky process but hopefully the Club is getting is right now. MSW advised he has an Exec meeting on Monday and will forward over the feedback.

AC mentioned about the article in the January Magazine "Meter matters" and though it was very informative and very well written and good to see the club is giving the members options.

The free night offer was a good offer and asked if it has had a good take up? MSW confirmed the first night of bookings we had over 1,000 bookings a lot of members have taken up the however we have received some negative feedback about the time constraints of booking but we can't please everyone all the time. Most members booked 3 nights instead of 2 nights.

CPA – I have technical meeting on 5th March week and we are looking at promoting off grind and we will be having a stand at Club Fest to promote this, we won't be selling we will be explaining more about solar panels, gas and lithium batteries so members are educated and can make their own decisions. SS confirmed this will help promote rallying.

16. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 21st March 2024. (Post meeting note this will be via Zoom due to circumstances beyond our control)

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SS - MSW did we get anywhere with a question time for this year, MSW confirmed this looks like it's been shelved for 2025. Is there any reason why we can't put a promotional leaflet into Club Sites and CL's? MSW said in theory there isn't any reason why we can't but it would

be best to check with Governance first as this could be seen to be taking trade away from them especially if it's in the area.

GM – Can I have SJ's email address, southeastregionwebmaster@gmail.com CN will forward this over to all reps.

We are running a European Rally this year in Holland and will forward this over to SJ to add on website.

NC – none

PF – advised there is nothing to stop us putting promotional leaflets into local dealers.

KS – None

MSW – It's good to see some new and old faces and we have had some very good discussions, Thank you.

AF – None

DC – None

CN – Asked everyone to let her have their mobile numbers in case we need to contact you quickly instead of email.

SJ – None

NM – None

RB – None

CPA – None

AMC – None

PB – None

MB – I haven't got anyone emails address and where does she find them, CN will send our email address out to all reps. This can also be found in Box.

MW – None

CP – Club Fest if any of the centre members are booked in and can help with centres lines as it was really manic last year and all help is gratefully appreciated.

AM – As next meeting is a physical, please don't forget your fuel receipts for travelling expenses.

SS closed the meeting at 21.31 and thanked everyone for their time and hope they found the meeting informative.

