THE CARAVAN CLUB

Northern Home Counties Region

2011 Annual General Meeting

Minutes & Accounts

November 2012
Minutes of the fifteenth Annual General Meeting of the Northern Home Counties Region of “The Caravan Club”, held at Wheatley Park School, Wheatley, Oxfordshire, OX33 1QH. The meeting was held on Saturday 19th November, starting at 3:00pm.

PRESENT

CHAIRMAN - Mr David Grover  
Regional Vice Chairman – Mr John Moules;  
Regional Honorary Secretary – Mrs Sandra Turner  
Regional Honorary Treasurer – Mrs Diane Cook  
104 Club Members Attended

1.0 NOTICE OF THE MEETING

The Honorary Secretary read out the Notice convening the Meeting.

WELCOME

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all those present, including: -  
§ Rodney Lambert, Vice Chairman of The Caravan Club and Chairman of the Events Sub-Committee, attending today with his wife Diane  
§ Derek Preedy, Nominated Member to the Club Council, also serving on the Finance & Management Sub-Committee. Derek is also a past Chairman of the Region, attending today with his wife Jennifer  
§ Professor Adrian Hobbs, Nominated Member to the Club Council and a Member of the Technical Committee, attending today with his wife Jackie  
§ Dave Rickard, Member of the Events Committee, attending today with his wife Jackie  
§ Joan Leonard, Member of the Grants Committee and immediate past Honorary Secretary of the Northern Home Counties Regional Council, attending today with her husband Terry  
§ Ron Morgan, immediate past Chairman of the Region, attending today with his wife Sue  
§ Other past Chairman, Phil Batchelor with his wife Sue  
§ Chairmen of the Centres constitutionally associated with the Region, in attendance on the day were welcomed as follows: -  
  § Colin Richardson and his wife Diane – Bedfordshire Centre  
  § Steve Moulds and his wife Lesley – Berkshire Centre  
  § Dave Baber and his wife Yvonne – Buckinghamshire Centre  
  § Val Tansley & her husband Brian – Hertfordshire Centre  
  § Dawn Keifer and her husband Jason – North London Centre  
  § Marion Tanner & her husband Dave – Middlesex Centre  
  § Alan Cadman & his wife Audrey – Upper Thames Centre

The Chairman also gave a warm welcome to the Tellers from the West Central Region, Chairman Stephen Holdsworth and his wife June.

The Regional Chairman asked whether there were any objections from the floor to these people acting as Tellers for the AGM? There were no objections.

Members were asked to check the paperwork issued on arrival. This should comprise of an Agenda, set of 2010 AGM Minutes and Annual Accounts. Agreement was given from the floor.

Members were advised that the proceedings were being recorded today for the purpose of accuracy.
2.0 APOLOGIES

The Chairman explained that Mr John Turner, Executive Member who would normally attend our Regional AGM has sent his apologies. He is unable to attend this year due to recent heart-by-pass surgery. We send him our very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

The Secretary advised that apologies have been received from Jean and Eddie Maguire, Jean Hearn and Norman, Jerry & Mo Waite. No other apologies were received from the floor.

3.0 MINUTES OF THE 2010 REGIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chairman asked if there were any objections to the adoption of the 2010 AGM Minutes? No objections were received.

The minutes were then signed.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman then asked whether there were any matters arising from the last minutes? There were no matters arising.

5.0 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Vice Chairman, Nominated Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

My report will cover the period from the 2010 Regional AGM until the present.

At the Regional Council Meeting directly after last year’s AGM I was selected to represent this Region at the Club Council Meetings held in London. I have attended those meetings in January, May and the last meeting after the Annual Members Meeting.

I have given written reports to the Regional Council on all the matters discussed at Club Council Meetings.

A flavour of the interesting items were as follows:-

In January Nick Lomas gave his first report to Club Council in his new position of Director General. He informed Council that his team would undertake a review that would span three years and cover nine major areas. The prime objective is to examine all aspects of Club services so that best value can be afforded to the members in the long term.

At the same meeting we were given a screen presentation of a system that had been developed by e-commerce marketing. This showed all the Centre rallies in one listing that could be sorted by a variety of criteria. The response from the Regional and Divisional Council members was tremendous. Very quickly I secured a date for a presentation at our Regional Council meeting, more of that later.

In the May meeting it was good to hear that the Director General, Nick Lomas and the Director of Marketing, Lawrence Bate had spent time out on the Sites network gaining first hand experience of caravanning and meeting the wardens and field staff and of course the Members. Definitely a worthwhile exercise to gain a feel for the business and some of the situations, as the old adage goes “nothing like walking the job”.

We were advised that the Club Membership is remaining stable around the 380,000 mark.
Another bold statement was made by Executive Secretary, Martin Stringer saying that he would be revising the contents of the Green Book. This has been threatened for some considerable time now so Martin we wish you well!

The Club has seen ongoing phenomenal growth in the e-commerce side of its activities both in members’ contacts and marketing activities. We were advised that some 82% of all members have an e-mail address registered with the Club.

I will now move onto the activities undertaken by the Northern Home Counties Region this current year.

February saw the Region hold a second question time at High Wycombe. Some 112 members attended and asked a wide-ranging quantity of questions. It was a relatively easy afternoon for the Club Vice Chairmen Rodney and Jan Moore as a high percentage of the questions were addressed to the two representatives from the industry, one from the National Caravan Council and the other from Elddis. Certainly the NCC Approved Workshop Scheme Manager welcomed the experience, as the organisation does not generally have dialogue directly with caravan users.

Questions to the trade representatives covered caravan warranty, caravan service item content especially relating to gas items, caravan build quality together with the standards of preparation when new, worries were expressed regarding caravans being built wider than previous and not fitting home parking space. Tyre production age relative to caravan age was another item which was raised.

On the Club front questions were asked on CL pitch pricing, siting of parking pegs on pitches, Centre membership renewal on line and outfit updating on line.

Altogether a very worthwhile question time and time well spent.

Again the Council has invited “guest speakers” to attend our Council Meetings with a view of giving the Delegates an opportunity to gain an insight into the speaker’s function and an appreciation of some of the situations encountered.

To our Council meeting in March I invited Natasha Macdonald, Head of E-Commerce. If you recall earlier I talked of a presentation at the Club Council meeting regarding the rally programme, the invitation was prompted by that production. Also, I extended invitations to the Centre Rally Secretaries to join us at the Council meeting to see first hand the developments that were being made.

It was good to see all Centre representatives were of the same opinion – absolutely fantastic and will give the Centres programmes a tremendous boost being on the Club site. Virtually at the same time the system went live on the Club site under the heading “Local Groups” and has been steadily modified since. It allows members to sort according to four basic search criteria. We were advised that information can be added to this listing at any time and Centres should get into the habit of supplying information at the earliest opportunity and break the habit of only thinking of a calendar year rally programme and think towards a rolling year programme. Centres please submit good appealing and interesting information about your weekend breaks.

After the Club Council meeting in May the Regional and Divisional representatives were invited for an informal discussion on the topic of “how can we improve the quantity of non-rallying Centre members to attend rallies.” In view of this arrangement I asked for ideas from the Centres to take along to the meeting.

As a direct result of that meeting Lawrence Bate – Director of Marketing was invited to our September Council meeting. Apart from Lawrence outlining his function within the Club the object was to create a forum where the Centre Delegates could have an interactive session and put their views and concerns and listen accordingly. Delegates were surprised and impressed with the information given.

You may recall the headlines regarding caravans loosing wheels. May I congratulate Adrian Hobbs, Nominated Member in calling on his past experience within the vehicle industry as being the driving force that got to the root cause of the problem. If nothing else it highlighted the fact
that we should all take time in investing in a torque wrench and checking our caravan wheel fixings at periodic intervals.

Prompted by a question posed at our Open Forum together with another query that was asked, Rodney Lambert, Club Vice Chairman, explained the Club Structure. This covered the topics of Governance of the Club, The Executive, Annual Members Meeting, Nominated Members, Club Council and generally how it all dovetails together. At least we were all informed where we can find the Club Bye Laws and the Rules Governing Centres. He also went onto explain the responsibilities and duties of the Events Sub-Committee that covers not only the Club National but organises the driving and manoeuvring courses, tow car of the year, caravan design competition, temporary sites (of which two at the NEC this year) and a host of other things including motor caravan design and drive which draws some fifty entrants. Altogether a very busy important part of the Clubs activities.

I now turn to our Roadshow activity or as is now officially known as “Meet the Members Weekend”.

The Region has held two weekends this year. Firstly, Commons Wood in June followed by Burford in August.

Members on the sites at the respective weekends are truly appreciative of the information both available and given together with the opportunity of being able to talk to like minded people that can offer a wealth of experience and knowledge.

These weekends are viewed by the Members as the Club coming to see them and making available a whole range of information that most are able to benefit from.

My thanks are extended to those Nominated Members and Centre Delegates that help on the two weekends.

The Club National earlier this year was held at Sledmere House in Yorkshire. Again the Regional groupings of the Centres were well received for the second year in succession and will stay that way for future Nationals. Rodney as Chairman of the Events sub-Committee must be congratulated on constantly endeavouring to improve the weekend against all the odds of rising costs, people’s expectations in site facilities, services and entertainment. Truly a juggling act that comes together, works, and is very much appreciated by the vast majority of attendees. Well done and we will look forward to Eastnor Castle, Ledbury in 2012 which is billed as “The National, the caravanning event of the year”.

Roger Hancock who joined the Regional Council as a non-Centre Delegate nearly two years ago has advised that he will not be continuing to attend. He has a financial background and feels that he has not been able to contribute much on this basis.

Personally I am sorry to see him depart because his presence widened the discussion allowing another view to be heard.

The Regional Constitution allows us to appoint up to three non-centre members to join the Council, so if anyone knows of anybody who would be suitable please let me know.

I wish to extend the Regional Officers warmest thanks to John Pearson. It’s due to his efforts that the Regional website is maintained and kept up to date with the latest information. If you have looked at it recently you will see that it has had a makeover. Thanks John.

The last subject to inform about is Events. May I thank the Centres for organising and holding their Events, there were some of the old favourites and good thinking, produced new venues. Sandie Evans very kindly volunteered and took on the mantle of Events Co-ordinator for the Region and has done a sterling job through the year organising Centre Event Co-ordinators meetings, getting the information in the Magazine and general promotional literature. There is a report to come as a later Agenda item so I will say no more on this year’s activities. As you can see the 2012 Rally programme sheet and the “What’s On?” brochure is all printed up and available for this weekend. Sandie, on behalf of the Officers may I pass on to you our extreme thanks for your work through the year.

As in previous years 2011 has been busy for Joyce and myself. April saw us at Naas Racecourse, Ireland attending their National Rally and the very next weekend in Scotland at Kelso in the Scottish Borders country, enjoying their National weekend. Both countries afforded
a great welcome and provided superb venues together with the hospitality and friendship they are renowned for.

In early May we attended a House of Commons Dinner staged by Anglia Region, the chance to dine in opulence in the Palace of Westminster. The National at Sledmere House was obviously on our agenda, set in the heart of Yorkshire. August Bank Holiday saw us at the Welsh National near Portcawl, enjoying their company and savouring their welsh cakes. In September we were at Stratford Racecourse Telling for the East Warwickshire Centre and last weekend we were invited to attend the South East Region AGM, again acting as Tellers. A busy and enjoyable year but does allow Regional and Divisional people to meet and talk in an informal atmosphere.

At this time last year I was very apprehensive as I was about to lose a Regional Secretary and a Regional Treasurer, two new people were to be voted in and the work would start. I am extremely happy that the new team formed and has gelled together well.

To John, Vice Chairman together with Cora have supported throughout the year at all our various functions.

To Di, coming into the Treasurers role, she has picked up with the accounting format and has grown into the understanding of making the finance requests together with handling the everyday money situation. Also, thanks go to Steve for his help. Can I also pass my thanks onto the previous incumbent, Mike Pope, on two counts, firstly for a very smooth and orderly changeover after last AGM and secondly for his work during his time in Office designing the Regions expense claim forms. Recently the Region was highly commended, by East Grinstead, in its high quality of systems and safeguards in place allowing good controls of the finances to be exercised.

To Sandra, who took on the “little just job” of Secretary. After the first meeting with Joan, Sandra wondered what she had let herself in for, the files, the notes, the information appeared to be endless. I have to say, much to my delight, that the changeover was seamless. Sandra has worked extremely hard to understand all the aspects and implications of the position and has excelled in the sheer hard work that it has presented. Maybe the term “learning curve” was a bit of an understatement. To husband Robin again thanks for his work. I am also indebted to Sandra & Robin for allowing their home to be used for our Officers’ meetings.

My thanks and appreciation go to Joan Leonard for the very tidy and organised manner that all the Secretaries information was kept and administered, making the hand over relatively easy.

My last round of thanks go to my wife Joyce, she puts up with me and gives me great support in all the activities.

In the last subject of my report I am talking to Centres.

It seems for years the Centres have appeared to have a minority voice and have been given to understand that with around 52,000 members they were just a small insignificant minority. Let me tell you that times are a changing and thoughts are changing. Remember earlier in my report I spoke of a meeting after the May meeting of Club Council. Obviously things were noted. I have to say that I have detected different thinking within the Club and their willingness to recognise that Centres are the active part of the membership. New ideas are becoming available and are being progressed.

I am delighted to report that four full pages in the centre of the Magazine will be devoted to Centre activities only and the mock ups shown have it presented in full colour. The idea is that Centres submit news on rallies that have happened and use it to present promotional material for future rallies. These four pages are in addition to the space already afforded to the Centre Events.
I say to Centre Chairmen, Centre Officers and Centre Committees, this change of thinking and style in the Club is unique and I cannot remember anything that has got the potential to aid the Centres promotional aspects more than this. Please take the enthusiastic route and submit well written articles and good photographs to stand every chance of having your items included. If you take the route of sitting back and seeing how it goes, there is every chance that the world will pass you by.

The Northern Home Counties Region, over the years, has built the reputation and remains in the forefront in its innovative thinking; in its superior functions and in the high quality way it presents the Club to its members.

Now I would like to see the seven constituent Centres encompass that mantle and show themselves to be the best on these four centrefold pages.

Centres, I leave you your challenge for the next twelve months.

Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen, that concludes my Chairman’s report.

The Chairman asked if anybody was against the adoption of his report. There being no objections, the report was adopted.

The Chairman asked if there were any discussion points. There being none, he moved on.

6.0 HONORARY SECRETARY’S REPORT

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

As most of you are probably aware, this is my first report and I would like to personally thank all the members who voted for me during last year’s AGM. I would also especially like to give a very big “thank you” to my predecessor, Joan Leonard for giving me an extremely efficient and comprehensive handover. Joan, I know it was a lot of extra work for you, but it was very much appreciated and it has definitely made my first year far easier than it could have been…………and it has also kept me out of trouble……..as far as I know! So thank you very much for all your help and guidance.

During last year’s AGM evening social, someone came up to me and said, “I hope you realise what you have taken on – it is an extremely demanding and busy role”. Good Luck! Well, I have to say, it has been very busy; it’s also been very demanding and challenging at times, BUT it has also been very rewarding. I have met a lot of nice people from all different levels; gained a valuable insight into how the Caravan Club works; attended and enjoyed a lot of events and visited places that I wouldn’t have seen had I not been elected, and above all I’ve had lots of fun whilst doing so. Also, having had just taken early retirement, it helped me to settle into being at home full time and definitely stopped me from becoming bored. I thought I was going to be a ‘lady of leisure’ but I think I will have to wait a bit longer for that bit!

Now onto my report.

During the past year, the Regional Council has met on 6 separate occasions, 5 of these meetings have been at the Watermill Best Western Hotel in Hemel Hempstead. This was a new venue for our 2011 meetings and has proved to be very favourable. The meetings have been regularly attended by all Centre representatives, plus our two nominated members, Derek Preedy, and Adrian Hobbs, Roger Hancock, our non-centre member and of course not forgetting Rodney here, our Club Vice Chairman! We consider ourselves very fortunate to have them at our meetings to give us their expert knowledge and guidance.

A lot of interesting and important information is discussed during these meetings, and we often hear first hand, of new initiatives that the Club are about to launch. After each Regional meeting I write up the minutes and they are always sent out within one week of the meeting. I
do hope that the Centre delegates are cascading relevant information down to all the Centre members, so that you are also aware of what is happening, and more importantly that you feel part of the Region!

The Chairman has already mentioned the new on-line Centre and Events Search facility and the new Centre News magazine pages; I would now like to report on another new initiative that Lawrence Bate and his team are working on:-

Lawrence Bate, the Club’s Director of Marketing was our 2nd guest speaker. He attended the September Council meeting. His department underwent a restructuring exercise earlier this year and he talked through the changes and reported on who was responsible for each section within his team and what their responsibilities are. He also shared with us details of a new exciting initiative that is going to be launched at the beginning of next year.

He talked about the new on-line Community Discussion Forum. This will be free to all Caravan Club members and will cover many topics. The Club have appointed 10 members of their staff to become Community Champions and were looking for another 10 ‘external’ people to help support this new venture and to become the “eyes and ears” of The Club. The key task for these people will be to keep track of what questions or comments the members are raising online. In doing so, they will assist with ensuring their questions or concerns are answered in a timely, professional and correct manner. The Club also plan to have a ‘monthly specialist’ who will be invited to answer questions. I understand all members will be receiving notification of this new facility, early next year. As of this week, The Club are still looking for another 2 Champions, and would like at least one ideally from our Region. If anyone is interested in becoming a Community Champion, please come and speak to me during the course of this weekend and I will be able to give you some further information. The Club will be giving you a lot of support and guidance and will help you to understand the “Community Forum” and how to deal with certain situations. So an exciting and interesting opportunity for someone who has the time to commit to this new initiative!

During the course of the year, the Officers of the Region have had 7 ‘Officers’ meetings’ whereby we have prepared for Regional meetings, discussed potential Speakers and organised our Events such as Question Time, the Chairman’s National reception, and the 2 Road Shows. In response to the Council representatives asking for an insight to what we discuss during these informal Officers’ meetings, as of this year, it is now an agenda item on all Regional Council meetings.

My first main event this year was to organise Question Time. During the Q&A session, over 25 questions were asked and these have been posted onto the Regional website for all members to view. I also sent a copy to The Club for their information and to all the Regional Centre Representatives. The Club have since forwarded these onto the most appropriate department.

As I didn’t make too bad a job of organising Question Time, I was then ‘volunteered’ to co-ordinate the Chairman’s reception invites for the National. This was the first time the invites had been coordinated by one person and proved to be a fairly large task. It involved 4 Regions and encompassed approximately 22 Centres. Over 200 people attended. As many of you know, this is a good opportunity for the Regional Chairman to say “Thank you” to all the people who have helped and supported him over the past year.

Following the National, my next task was to organise 2 Road Shows for the Region. The first being held at Commons Wood Club Site and the second at Burford. Over 180 people attended and asked a variety of questions. After the two events, I prepared a report, for The Club, which also included all the questions that were asked by the members. This was sent to Martin Stringer, Executive Secretary of The Club. Martin very kindly sent me an email thanking me for the information and advised me that he had passed all the questions to the relevant departments within The Club. He felt quite strongly, that they should be aware of what the Members needs were and indeed what their concerns were. Again all this information has been added to the Regional website. Martin also asked that I share best practice with all the other Regions and Divisions within the UK. As I had said I would like to do this on my voting form last year, I thought this was an ideal opportunity to fulfil this promise. I duly sent all my documents
to other Regional Secretaries and have discovered recently, whilst attending the AMM, that some of the Regions did in fact take note of what we had done and have since adopted some of our ideas and used our document ‘templates’ for their own events. I haven’t as yet seen this ‘sharing’ reciprocated, but maybe next year! I think this is another example of the Northern Home Counties being recognised as one of the leaders in the organising of such events to a high standard and in a professional and efficient manner.

During the course of the year, I have also ensured that the Regional activities have been promoted in the Club’s magazine and I do feel this has helped to make our activities more of a success. As many of you know it is very difficult to get advertising space but I do think that the new Centre News pages will make this a less onerous task in the future.

I would now like to end my report by thanking my fellow officers for their support and patience throughout my first year as Regional Secretary. Thank you also to John Pearson for all his help in keeping the website up to date and answering to my every whim at a super fast pace and last, but certainly not least, to my husband Robin, who without his help and support ….and his culinary skills, we would have starved on many occasions!

This concludes my report for 2011.

The Chairman asked if anybody was against the adoption of the Secretary’s report. There being no objections, the report was adopted.

The Chairman asked if there were any discussion points. There being none the meeting continued.

7.0 HONORARY TREASURER’S REPORT FOR 2010 FINANCIAL YEAR

This being my first year in the ‘job’ I would like to say please bear with me while I try to explain 2010 accounts for you. Firstly though I would like to say a very big thank you to Mike Pope for all his help and understanding in doing the accounts and the very successful hand over.

So thank you Mike…

Please turn to Page 2

Cash in bank at end of 2010 was £6232. But this figure included the 2011 grant of £ 5000 . We accrued the auditors fees of £1020 as this is shown as in /out figure on balance sheet as these fees are paid for by the Caravan club.

The Vat element for Oct – Dec 2010 is shown as sundry debtors as the Vat was paid to Region in Jan 2011.

Turn to Page 3

We received the 6.2 grant for Question time, which we felt, was a very informative & good day. The two 6.2 road show grants received resulted in very constructive feedback from the members on the 2 sites we attended.

Expenditure

The room hire & catering for meetings in 2010 was higher than 2009 we have changed to a different hotel venue The Watermill, which will decrease these costs in 2011.

Fuel costs did increase in 2010 due to the rise in prices but we have keep abreast and amended the fuel replacement forms several times to cover this in 2011.

Hopefully all the figures on Page 3 are self- explanatory. The auditor amended the prepayment web site figure to be shown as a one-month prepayment and next year you will see the year’s prepayment figure added until the 3 years are completed.

End of the 2010 Accounts report
The Chairman asked if anybody was against the adoption of the Treasurer’s Report. There being no objections, the Report was adopted.

The Chairman asked for any questions. There were none he asked the Treasurer to give a résumé of the current year but informed the meeting that it was not for discussion at this time.

2011 Résumé

Expenditure will be less for Regional council meetings due to the change of venue.

As fuel costs did increase in 2010 hopefully 2011 there will not be too much of an increase as we amended fuel replacement forms accordingly.

Postage has increased in 2011 due to the cost of stamps but this should be a minimal charge as purchasing stamps before the increase has saved the Region money.

Slight increase in 2011 for secretarial costs, but yet again postage and price rises are responsible for this.

Question Time

There has been a slight rise in 2011 compared to 2010 but we have not exceeded the grant figure.

As we are nearing the end of year and only the AGM costs to be accepted I am confident that we are in a position to satisfy all our expenditure.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer.

8.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

FINAL NOMINATIONS FOR 2011/12

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<th>Nomination</th>
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<td>CHAIRMAN</td>
<td>David Grover</td>
<td>Jane Tuthill</td>
<td>Gerry Cox</td>
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<tr>
<td>VICE CHAIRMAN</td>
<td>John Moules</td>
<td>Peter Smith</td>
<td>Sandie Evans</td>
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<tr>
<td>HON SECRETARY</td>
<td>Sandra Turner</td>
<td>Gordon Taylor</td>
<td>Val Tansley</td>
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<td>HON TREASURER</td>
<td>Diane Cook</td>
<td>Steve Moulds</td>
<td>Mick Hubbocks</td>
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The Chairman thanked the retiring Council representatives for their support and time – and their spouses for allowing them the time to attend the meetings etc.

The Chairman also thanked his fellow Officers for all their hard work over the year and for the spouses for allowing them the time to undertake their duties.

He then temporarily passed control of the meeting to Club Vice Chairman, Rodney Lambert, who explained that only one nomination had been received by the required date for the position of Chairman, that of David Grover. He advised that in the past the Vice Chairman has re-elected the Chairman back onto the Council. However, if the Vice Chairman is standing for re-election, then this role falls to the most senior independent person in the room, if there is not a retiring officer on the platform. This process should also be adopted at all Centre AGMs. Therefore, being the most senior person, Rodney asked the meeting to approve David Grover’s re-election by acclaim.
David Grover then reassumed control of the meeting and continued by advising that only one Nomination for each Regional Officer position had been received by the required date. The Regional Chairman asked the meeting to approve these elections by acclaim.

9.0 EVENTS COORDINATOR’S REPORT

The Chairman advised that Sandie Evans had undertaken the volunteer position of Regional Events Coordinator for the past year and he invited her to come forward and read her report for 2011.

Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Centre Events Officers for supporting me this year, as well as Sandra Turner Hon Sec for the Region.

Having taken on this post from March this year many Events have taken place within our Centres. There has been good attendance for most of them, with a lot more than last year on a whole, especially with the current financial trend in the world.

The Club magazine has promoted our events every month giving us their support, other than the earlier events before I took over this job this has proved that without these entries in the magazine each month our events would not be worth doing. I am keeping them informed of all events on a monthly basis.

During this last year, 15 events have been held in the region. The figures are a total of 667 outfits attended overall, this is 80 units more than 2010, giving just over 1900 van nights. Most impressively the number of non-centre members joining events has gone up greatly to just over a third of those attending events.

262 non-centre member units enjoyed something a little more relaxed than a Club Site and seeing they can use their outfits with just basic facilities on offer.

Still noting that events that take place with caravan parking on the same site always works better. Also we have to find events and occasions for all kinds of tastes to attract the largest audience.

Once again centres have looked into possibly putting on the electric pitches at some events, but with the lateness of some booking this is still a worrying point due to the high costs.

The Windsor event, that took place in May has always had a good up take, with the electric pitches selling out within a few days of offering them. This may be because this event has a good following as this has been put on now for some years, with great success.

I have been told recently, now that the electric pods have been used much more, the club can gives us a better deal on prices. This is mostly due to having a depot of Newburn’s in Baldock, which cuts the transportation down for our Region greatly.

During this year we have had three events meetings to keep a check on what’s going on in the Region.

Since June this year all Centres have put in place their events for 2012 with a greater number being planned. To date we have across the region 20 booked in already. I hope The Club Magazine can stand this volume as I would not like to see all this hard work of planning booking etc, not to have promotion in the magazine due to lack of space.

This is something we have been working on all year, trying to make The Club and other Regions understand the difference between an event and a rally, as much space in the Club magazine was taken up with rallies this year. We have addressed one or two points during this year. The way the entries are put in the monthly magazine seemed to have changed over the last year, with only some getting one mention per event, and this was set up to have two shots and a reminder, so we as Centres would get as many bookings as possible. The Editor has assured us that from 2012 this will be reinstated, but we will wait and see. I would like to thank Gordon Taylor for his help he has given me on the matter.

In the new year, The Club have announced the changes within the Magazine to try to make the members more aware of rallying and going on events, this in time will prove one thing or another.

It all looks very exciting, as anything to bring attention to the way you can enjoy our hobby and how to get the best out of caravanning would always be a bonus.
Also I have put together the Regional Rally spreadsheet and an Events List for 2012. I would like to thank all the Centre’s Rally Sec for getting all their information to me in good time, to have them printed off for today. Also I would like to thank Martin Findlay for all his help on this.

Many of you may not know The Club have changed the way that they present events and rallies on their website, more details and information is readily available, all Centre committees have been forwarding this over the last few months instead of once a year, so the details can be updated on a rolling basis. This should prove a much better system for all Centres.

We have our What’s On leaflet designed and printed for all the Centres to use to promote all Regional Events, this should be of help to get more bookings in throughout the year. Kate Walters at the Club Head quarters has helped to get this ready for you. I have managed to get 4 extra pages put in next year as we have extra events to cater for.

Lastly, Please find time to look at What’s On next year, all Centres have displayed their events and bigger rallies planned for 2012, there are flyers and booking forms available to you and for your Centre members. Take a look.

I hope to continue with this post into 2012, so if that is the case I look forward to working with all Centre Event Liaison Officers in the coming year, and working towards better events for all members.

Many thanks again for your patience.

The Chairman thanked Sandie for her report and work over the year and asked whether there were any objections to the adoption of this report? There were no objections and the report was adopted.

He asked whether there were any observations? There were no observations.

10.0 TO APPOINT AN AUDITOR

The Chairman thanked the Auditor David Webb of PKB UK LLP Tilehurst, Reading, for his services in the auditing of the Regions’ 2010 Accounts.

The Treasurer was called upon to nominate the Auditors for 2011.

The Treasurer wished to nominate Mr Stephen Greehy of PKB UK LLP Tilehurst, Reading. She stated that Stephen Greehy has been approached and has agreed to continue in this role to audit the 2011 accounts.

11.0 PROPOSITIONS

The Chairman stated that the Honorary Secretary had not received any propositions by the closing date of 18th August 2011 as required by the Regional Constitution.

12.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sandie Evans advised that she had copies of a “mock up” of the new Centre News pages if anyone wanted to take a look. Any feedback will be sent back to The Club.

There was no other business.

The Chairman then invited Rodney Lambert to say a few words. Rodney advised that John Turner underwent his triple heart bypass surgery 5 weeks ago. He is making very good
progress but is unable to drive for 6 weeks. He is looking forward to attending our AGM next year.

**Club Update**

Just over 3 years ago The Club set out to upgrade the old computer system. This was completed on 30th June and all the old systems have been turned off. The Club are also working on 9 work streams to move the Club forward. The new computer system will help to progress this and establish how we can do things better and to the advantage of the Club Members e.g., insurance, sites or training courses.

This last year we developed a new site at Bridlington on Flamborough Head, which opened on 1st August. It has been more or less full ever since. Another success story and we were amazed to get planning permission, as it is a National Heritage area.

We recently got the go ahead to take over the Strathclyde Country Park site which is just off the A74 close to Glasgow. It is being developed now and will have around 100 Touring pitches and facilities for storing over 180 caravans/motorhomes.

The Event Concept started in Northern Home Counties Region and we were the first to offer electric hook up on temporary Club sites. We need to be mindful that with all the new technology, electricity is something that the younger members cannot do without. Some electricity pods are now stored at Baldock, so that we have easier access and travel costs are less expensive.

This year at the AMM the Director General mentioned “Centres” for the first time in many years. This, together with the new on-line search engine for rallies and events plus the new 4 page Centre News about to be launched, things are progressing in the right direction. However, we must ensure we use them or we will loose them! They are designed with us in mind, so it is most important that we make use of them on a regular basis.

Last year a comment was made at the AMM regarding the high price of attending the National. The National costs over half a million pounds to put on. If everyone was to pay £100 and we have 3,000 vans we are running at a loss and we rely on our sponsors to help support us. It should be noted that we still don’t break even. It is such a good and enjoyable event for the Members and that is why The Club continue to put it on.

This year a family of 4 will pay £1 more than last year but will be able to stay for an extra night. So we are trying hard to keep costs down. Visitors can enjoy matinee and evening shows including Abba Forever, Tribute to Lady Ga Ga, The Glee Experience and Killer Queen and Martin Daniels. Truma have also expressed an interest in holding an Oktoberfest on the Monday evening. More details to come via the Events committee.

Next year is a unique year for The Club. The Club will be 105 years old, we have the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Olympics. The Club decided to cancel the temporary site at Chigwell due to local opposition and have now secured a far better site in the north-east of London. The site will be called Barleylands Temporary Site and will be at Barleylands Farm Park & Craft Village. It will have room for approximately 400 outfits and will be open from Friday 27th July 2012 to 12 August 2012 inclusive. Cost will be £18 and £22 for electric hook up. Pitches are being booked quite quickly.

Also next year The Club will be running temporary sites for the NCC Caravan Show at Excel in London. Advertisements will be out soon and the tickets will be very reasonable. During the October NCC Caravan Show the most expensive ticket was £10 which resulted in 93,000 tickets being sold as opposed to 57,000 tickets when Warners were running this event.

On 15th June there will be a Diamond Jubilee Ball at Grosvenor House Hotel and the Club will provide 3 temporary Club Sites. Tickets at £85 will be on sale in the January Magazine and will include coach travel, pre-dinner drinks, a meal and wine on the table, entertainment and return travel to the temporary site. The sites will be at Knebworth, Windsor and Apps Court.
Martin Stringer is currently looking at providing a new “Green book” which will be in a different format and will be up to date and will provide all Centres with a good working reference document.

Mike Pope gave thanks to the Chairman for the excellent way in which he conducted the AGM.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked the Upper Thames Centre Chairman, Officers and Committee for their help with today’s arrangements and for organising the weekend rally, plus tonight’s social activities.

He also expressed thanks of the Region to the Tellers, Stephen and June Holdsworth, to Martin Findlay for providing a professional and organised PA system; and to Mrs Jennifer Preedy for making and providing the beautiful floral arrangements for us all to enjoy throughout the weekend.

Presentations were made to the Tellers and Mrs Diane Lambert.

The Chairman also thanked all the Members for coming along to the Regional AGM this weekend.

The Chairman then reminded the Regional Council Members that a post AGM meeting would take place following the closure of the AGM, at 4:45pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 4:20pm.

Sandra Turner  
Honorary Secretary  

David Grover  
Regional Chairman
THE CARAVAN CLUB

Northern Home Counties Region

2011 Annual General Meeting

Minutes & Accounts

November 2012
THE CARAVAN CLUB
Northern Home Counties Region

Minutes of the fifteenth Annual General Meeting of the Northern Home Counties Region of “The Caravan Club”, held at Wheatley Park School, Wheatley, Oxfordshire, OX33 1QH. The meeting was held on Saturday 19th November, starting at 3:00pm.

PRESENT

CHAIRMAN - Mr David Grover
Regional Vice Chairman – Mr John Moules;
Regional Honorary Secretary – Mrs Sandra Turner
Regional Honorary Treasurer – Mrs Diane Cook

104 Club Members Attended

1.0 NOTICE OF THE MEETING

The Honorary Secretary read out the Notice convening the Meeting.

WELCOME

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all those present, including:

♫ Rodney Lambert, Vice Chairman of The Caravan Club and Chairman of the Events Sub-Committee, attending today with his wife Diane
♫ Derek Preedy, Nominated Member to the Club Council, also serving on the Finance & Management Sub-Committee. Derek is also a past Chairman of the Region, attending today with his wife Jennifer
♫ Professor Adrian Hobbs, Nominated Member to the Club Council and a Member of the Technical Committee, attending today with his wife Jackie
♫ Dave Rickard, Member of the Events Committee, attending today with his wife Jackie
♫ Joan Leonard, Member of the Grants Committee and immediate past Honorary Secretary of the Northern Home Counties Regional Council, attending today with her husband Terry
♫ Ron Morgan, immediate past Chairman of the Region, attending today with his wife Sue
♫ Other past Chairman, Phil Batchelor with his wife Sue
♫ Chairmen of the Centres constitutionally associated with the Region, in attendance on the day were welcomed as follows: -

♫ Colin Richardson and his wife Diane – Bedfordshire Centre
♫ Steve Moulds and his wife Lesley – Berkshire Centre
♫ Dave Baber and his wife Yvonne – Buckinghamshire Centre
♫ Val Tansley & her husband Brian – Hertfordshire Centre
♫ Dawn Keifer and her husband Jason – North London Centre
♫ Marion Tanner & her husband Dave – Middlesex Centre
♫ Alan Cadman & his wife Audrey – Upper Thames Centre

The Chairman also gave a warm welcome to the Tellers from the West Central Region, Chairman Stephen Holdsworth and his wife June.

The Regional Chairman asked whether there were any objections from the floor to these people acting as Tellers for the AGM? There were no objections.

Members were asked to check the paperwork issued on arrival. This should comprise of an Agenda, set of 2010 AGM Minutes and Annual Accounts. Agreement was given from the floor.

Members were advised that the proceedings were being recorded today for the purpose of accuracy.
2.0 APOLOGIES

The Chairman explained that Mr John Turner, Executive Member who would normally attend our Regional AGM has sent his apologies. He is unable to attend this year due to recent heart-by-pass surgery. We send him our very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

The Secretary advised that apologies have been received from Jean and Eddie Maguire, Jean Hearn and Norman, Jerry & Mo Waite. No other apologies were received from the floor.

3.0 MINUTES OF THE 2010 REGIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chairman asked if there were any objections to the adoption of the 2010 AGM Minutes? No objections were received.

The minutes were then signed.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman then asked whether there were any matters arising from the last minutes? There were no matters arising.

5.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vice Chairman, Nominated Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

My report will cover the period from the 2010 Regional AGM until the present.

At the Regional Council Meeting directly after last year’s AGM I was selected to represent this Region at the Club Council Meetings held in London. I have attended those meetings in January, May and the last meeting after the Annual Members Meeting.

I have given written reports to the Regional Council on all the matters discussed at Club Council Meetings.

A flavour of the interesting items were as follows:-

In January Nick Lomas gave his first report to Club Council in his new position of Director General.
He informed Council that his team would undertake a review that would span three years and cover nine major areas. The prime objective is to examine all aspects of Club services so that best value can be afforded to the members in the long term.

At the same meeting we were given a screen presentation of a system that had been developed by e-commerce marketing. This showed all the Centre rallies in one listing that could be sorted by a variety of criteria. The response from the Regional and Divisional Council members was tremendous. Very quickly I secured a date for a presentation at our Regional Council meeting, more of that later.

In the May meeting it was good to hear that the Director General, Nick Lomas and the Director of Marketing, Lawrence Bate had spent time out on the Sites network gaining first hand experience of caravanning and meeting the wardens and field staff and of course the Members. Definitely a worthwhile exercise to gain a feel for the business and some of the situations, as the old adage goes “nothing like walking the job”.

We were advised that the Club Membership is remaining stable around the 380,000 mark.
Another bold statement was made by Executive Secretary, Martin Stringer saying that he would be revising the contents of the Green Book. This has been threatened for some considerable time now so Martin we wish you well!

The Club has seen ongoing phenomenal growth in the e-commerce side of its activities both in members’ contacts and marketing activities. We were advised that some 82% of all members have an e-mail address registered with the Club.

I will now move onto the activities undertaken by the Northern Home Counties Region this current year.

February saw the Region hold a second question time at High Wycombe. Some 112 members attended and asked a wide-ranging quantity of questions. It was a relatively easy afternoon for the Club Vice Chairmen Rodney and Jan Moore as a high percentage of the questions were addressed to the two representatives from the industry, one from the National Caravan Council and the other from Elddis. Certainly the NCC Approved Workshop Scheme Manager welcomed the experience, as the organisation does not generally have dialogue directly with caravan users.

Questions to the trade representatives covered caravan warranty, caravan service item content especially relating to gas items, caravan build quality together with the standards of preparation when new, worries were expressed regarding caravans being built wider than previous and not fitting home parking space. Tyre production age relative to caravan age was another item which was raised.

On the Club front questions were asked on CL pitch pricing, siting of parking pegs on pitches, Centre membership renewal on line and outfit updating on line.

Altogether a very worthwhile question time and time well spent.

Again the Council has invited “guest speakers” to attend our Council Meetings with a view of giving the Delegates an opportunity to gain an insight into the speaker’s function and an appreciation of some of the situations encountered.

To our Council meeting in March I invited Natasha Macdonald, Head of E-Commerce. If you recall earlier I talked of a presentation at the Club Council meeting regarding the rally programme, the invitation was prompted by that production. Also, I extended invitations to the Centre Rally Secretaries to join us at the Council meeting to see first hand the developments that were being made.

It was good to see all Centre representatives were of the same opinion – absolutely fantastic and will give the Centres programmes a tremendous boost being on the Club site. Virtually at the same time the system went live on the Club site under the heading “Local Groups” and has been steadily modified since. It allows members to sort according to four basic search criteria. We were advised that information can be added to this listing at any time and Centres should get into the habit of supplying information at the earliest opportunity and break the habit of only thinking of a calendar year rally programme and think towards a rolling year programme. Centres please submit good appealing and interesting information about your weekend breaks.

After the Club Council meeting in May the Regional and Divisional representatives were invited for an informal discussion on the topic of “how can we improve the quantity of non-rallying Centre members to attend rallies.” In view of this arrangement I asked for ideas from the Centres to take along to the meeting.

As a direct result of that meeting Lawrence Bate – Director of Marketing was invited to our September Council meeting. Apart from Lawrence outlining his function within the Club the object was to create a forum where the Centre Delegates could have an interactive session and put their views and concerns and listen accordingly. Delegates were surprised and impressed with the information given.

You may recall the headlines regarding caravans loosing wheels. May I congratulate Adrian Hobbs, Nominated Member in calling on his past experience within the vehicle industry as being the driving force that got to the root cause of the problem. If nothing else it highlighted the fact...
that we should all take time in investing in a torque wrench and checking our caravan wheel fixings at periodic intervals.

Prompted by a question posed at our Open Forum together with another query that was asked, Rodney Lambert, Club Vice Chairman, explained the Club Structure. This covered the topics of Governance of the Club, The Executive, Annual Members Meeting, Nominated Members, Club Council and generally how it all dovetails together. At least we were all informed where we can find the Club Bye Laws and the Rules Governing Centres. He also went on to explain the responsibilities and duties of the Events Sub-Committee that covers not only the Club National but organises the driving and manoeuvring courses, tow car of the year, caravan design competition, temporary sites (of which two at the NEC this year) and a host of other things including motor caravan design and drive which draws some fifty entrants. Altogether a very busy important part of the Club’s activities.

I now turn to our Roadshow activity or as is now officially known as “Meet the Members Weekend”.

The Region has held two weekends this year. Firstly, Commons Wood in June followed by Burford in August. Members on the sites at the respective weekends are truly appreciative of the information both available and given together with the opportunity of being able to talk to like minded people that can offer a wealth of experience and knowledge. These weekends are viewed by the Members as the Club coming to see them and making available a whole range of information that most are able to benefit from.

My thanks are extended to those Nominated Members and Centre Delegates that help on the two weekends.

The Club National earlier this year was held at Sledmere House in Yorkshire. Again the Regional groupings of the Centres were well received for the second year in succession and will stay that way for future Nationals. Rodney as Chairman of the Events sub-Committee must be congratulated on constantly endeavouring to improve the weekend against all the odds of rising costs, people’s expectations in site facilities, services and entertainment. Truly a juggling act that comes together, works, and is very much appreciated by the vast majority of attendees. Well done and we will look forward to Eastnor Castle, Ledbury in 2012 which is billed as “The National, the caravanning event of the year”.

Roger Hancock who joined the Regional Council as a non-Centre Delegate nearly two years ago has advised that he will not be continuing to attend. He has a financial background and feels that he has not been able to contribute much on this basis. Personally I am sorry to see him depart because his presence widened the discussion allowing another view to be heard.

The Regional Constitution allows us to appoint up to three non-centre members to join the Council, so if anyone knows of anybody who would be suitable please let me know.

I wish to extend the Regional Officers warmest thanks to John Pearson. It’s due to his efforts that the Regional website is maintained and kept up to date with the latest information. If you have looked at it recently you will see that it has had a makeover. Thanks John.

The last subject to inform about is Events. May I thank the Centres for organising and holding their Events, there were some of the old favourites and good thinking, produced new venues. Sandie Evans very kindly volunteered and took on the mantle of Events Co-ordinator for the Region and has done a sterling job through the year organising Centre Event Co-ordinators meetings, getting the information in the Magazine and general promotional literature. There is a report to come as a later Agenda item so I will say no more on this year’s activities. As you can see the 2012 Rally programme sheet and the “What’s On?” brochure is all printed up and available for this weekend. Sandie, on behalf of the Officers may I pass on to you our extreme thanks for your work through the year.

As in previous years 2011 has been busy for Joyce and myself. April saw us at Naas Racecourse, Ireland attending their National Rally and the very next weekend in Scotland at Kelso in the Scottish Borders country, enjoying their National weekend. Both countries afforded
a great welcome and provided superb venues together with the hospitality and friendship they are renowned for.

In early May we attended a House of Commons Dinner staged by Anglia Region, the chance to dine in opulence in the Palace of Westminster. The National at Sledmere House was obviously on our agenda, set in the heart of Yorkshire. August Bank Holiday saw us at the Welsh National near Portcawl, enjoying their company and savouring their welsh cakes. In September we were at Stratford Racecourse Telling for the East Warwickshire Centre and last weekend we were invited to attend the South East Region AGM, again acting as Tellers. A busy and enjoyable year but does allow Regional and Divisional people to meet and talk in an informal atmosphere.

At this time last year I was very apprehensive as I was about to lose a Regional Secretary and a Regional Treasurer, two new people were to be voted in and the work would start. I am extremely happy that the new team formed and has gelled together well.

To John, Vice Chairman together with Cora have supported throughout the year at all our various functions.

To Di, coming into the Treasurers role, she has picked up with the accounting format and has grown into the understanding of making the finance requests together with handling the everyday money situation. Also, thanks go to Steve for his help. Can I also pass my thanks onto the previous incumbent, Mike Pope, on two counts, firstly for a very smooth and orderly changeover after last AGM and secondly for his work during his time in Office designing the Regions expense claim forms. Recently the Region was highly commended, by East Grinstead, in its high quality of systems and safeguards in place allowing good controls of the finances to be exercised.

To Sandra, who took on the “little just job” of Secretary. After the first meeting with Joan, Sandra wondered what she had let herself in for, the files, the notes, the information appeared to be endless. I have to say, much to my delight, that the changeover was seamless. Sandra has worked extremely hard to understand all the aspects and implications of the position and has excelled in the sheer hard work that it has presented. Maybe the term “learning curve” was a bit of an understatement. To husband Robin again thanks for his work. I am also indebted to Sandra & Robin for allowing their home to be used for our Officers’ meetings. My thanks and appreciation go to Joan Leonard for the very tidy and organised manner that all the Secretaries information was kept and administered, making the hand over relatively easy.

My last round of thanks go to my wife Joyce, she puts up with me and gives me great support in all the activities.

In the last subject of my report I am talking to Centres.

It seems for years the Centres have appeared to have a minority voice and have been given to understand that with around 52,000 members they were just a small insignificant minority. Let me tell you that times are a changing and thoughts are changing. Remember earlier in my report I spoke of a meeting after the May meeting of Club Council. Obviously things were noted. I have to say that I have detected different thinking within the Club and their willingness to recognise that Centres are the active part of the membership. New ideas are becoming available and are being progressed.

I am delighted to report that four full pages in the centre of the Magazine will be devoted to Centre activities only and the mock ups shown have it presented in full colour. The idea is that Centres submit news on rallies that have happened and use it to present promotional material for future rallies. These four pages are in addition to the space already afforded to the Centre Events.
I say to Centre Chairmen, Centre Officers and Centre Committees, this change of thinking and style in the Club is unique and I cannot remember anything that has got the potential to aid the Centres promotional aspects more than this. Please take the enthusiastic route and submit well written articles and good photographs to stand every chance of having your items included. If you take the route of sitting back and seeing how it goes, there is every chance that the world will pass you by.

The Northern Home Counties Region, over the years, has built the reputation and remains in the forefront in its innovative thinking; in its superior functions and in the high quality way it presents the Club to its members.

Now I would like to see the seven constituent Centres encompass that mantle and show themselves to be the best on these four centrefold pages.

Centres, I leave you your challenge for the next twelve months.

Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen, that concludes my Chairman’s report.

The Chairman asked if anybody was against the adoption of his report. There being no objections, the report was adopted.

The Chairman asked if there were any discussion points. There being none, he moved on.

6.0 HONORARY SECRETARY’S REPORT

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

As most of you are probably aware, this is my first report and I would like to personally thank all the members who voted for me during last year’s AGM. I would also especially like to give a very big “thank you” to my predecessor, Joan Leonard for giving me an extremely efficient and comprehensive handover. Joan, I know it was a lot of extra work for you, but it was very much appreciated and it has definitely made my first year far easier than it could have been……………and it has also kept me out of trouble………as far as I know! So thank you very much for all your help and guidance.

During last year’s AGM evening social, someone came up to me and said, “I hope you realise what you have taken on – it is an extremely demanding and busy role”. Good Luck! Well, I have to say, it has been very busy; it’s also been very demanding and challenging at times, BUT it has also been very rewarding. I have met a lot of nice people from all different levels; gained a valuable insight into how the Caravan Club works; attended and enjoyed a lot of events and visited places that I wouldn’t have seen had I not been elected, and above all I’ve had lots of fun whilst doing so. Also, having had just taken early retirement, it helped me to settle into being at home full time and definitely stopped me from becoming bored. I thought I was going to be a ‘lady of leisure’ but I think I will have to wait a bit longer for that bit!

Now onto my report.

During the past year, the Regional Council has met on 6 separate occasions, 5 of these meetings have been at the Watermill Best Western Hotel in Hemel Hempstead. This was a new venue for our 2011 meetings and has proved to be very favourable. The meetings have been regularly attended by all Centre representatives, plus our two nominated members, Derek Preedy, and Adrian Hobbs, Roger Hancock, our non-centre member and of course not forgetting Rodney here, our Club Vice Chairman! We consider ourselves very fortunate to have them at our meetings to give us their expert knowledge and guidance.

A lot of interesting and important information is discussed during these meetings, and we often hear first hand, of new initiatives that the Club are about to launch. After each Regional meeting I write up the minutes and they are always sent out within one week of the meeting. I
do hope that the Centre delegates are cascading relevant information down to all the Centre members, so that you are also aware of what is happening, and more importantly that you feel part of the Region!

The Chairman has already mentioned the new on-line Centre and Events Search facility and the new Centre News magazine pages; I would now like to report on another new initiative that Lawrence Bate and his team are working on:-

Lawrence Bate, the Club’s Director of Marketing was our 2nd guest speaker. He attended the September Council meeting. His department underwent a restructuring exercise earlier this year and he talked through the changes and reported on who was responsible for each section within his team and what their responsibilities are. He also shared with us details of a new exciting initiative that is going to be launched at the beginning of next year.

He talked about the new on-line Community Discussion Forum. This will be free to all Caravan Club members and will cover many topics. The Club have appointed 10 members of their staff to become Community Champions and were looking for another 10 ‘external’ people to help support this new venture and to become the “eyes and ears” of The Club. The key task for these people will be to keep track of what questions or comments the members are raising online. In doing so, they will assist with ensuring their questions or concerns are answered in a timely, professional and correct manner. The Club also plan to have a ‘monthly specialist’ who will be invited to answer questions. I understand all members will be receiving notification of this new facility, early next year. As of this week, The Club are still looking for another 2 Champions, and would like at least one ideally from our Region. If anyone is interested in becoming a Community Champion, please come and speak to me during the course of this weekend and I will be able to give you some further information. The Club will be giving you a lot of support and guidance and will help you to understand the “Community Forum” and how to deal with certain situations. So an exciting and interesting opportunity for someone who has the time to commit to this new initiative!

During the course of the year, the Officers of the Region have had 7 ‘Officers’ meetings’ whereby we have prepared for Regional meetings, discussed potential Speakers and organised our Events such as Question Time, the Chairman’s National reception, and the 2 Road Shows. In response to the Council representatives asking for an insight to what we discuss during these informal Officers’ meetings, as of this year, it is now an agenda item on all Regional Council meetings.

My first main event this year was to organise Question Time. During the Q&A session, over 25 questions were asked and these have been posted onto the Regional website for all members to view. I also sent a copy to The Club for their information and to all the Regional Centre Representatives. The Club have since forwarded these onto the most appropriate department.

As I didn’t make too bad a job of organising Question Time, I was then ‘volunteered’ to coordinate the Chairman’s reception invites for the National. This was the first time the invites had been coordinated by one person and proved to be a fairly large task. It involved 4 Regions and encompassed approximately 22 Centres. Over 200 people attended. As many of you know, this is a good opportunity for the Regional Chairman to say “Thank you” to all the people who have helped and supported him over the past year.

Following the National, my next task was to organise 2 Road Shows for the Region. The first being held at Commons Wood Club Site and the second at Burford. Over 180 people attended and asked a variety of questions. After the two events, I prepared a report, for The Club, which also included all the questions that were asked by the members. This was sent to Martin Stringer, Executive Secretary of The Club. Martin very kindly sent me an email thanking me for the information and advised me that he had passed all the questions to the relevant departments within The Club. He felt quite strongly, that they should be aware of what the Members needs were and indeed what their concerns were. Again all this information has been added to the Regional website. Martin also asked that I share best practice with all the other Regions and Divisions within the UK. As I had said I would like to do this on my voting form last year, I thought this was an ideal opportunity to fulfil this promise. I duly sent all my documents
to other Regional Secretaries and have discovered recently, whilst attending the AMM, that some of the Regions did in fact take note of what we had done and have since adopted some of our ideas and used our document ‘templates’ for their own events. I haven’t as yet seen this ‘sharing’ reciprocated, but maybe next year! I think this is another example of the Northern Home Counties being recognised as one of the leaders in the organising of such events to a high standard and in a professional and efficient manner.

During the course of the year, I have also ensured that the Regional activities have been promoted in the Club’s magazine and I do feel this has helped to make our activities more of a success. As many of you know it is very difficult to get advertising space but I do think that the new Centre News pages will make this a less onerous task in the future.

I would now like to end my report by thanking my fellow officers for their support and patience throughout my first year as Regional Secretary. Thank you also to John Pearson for all his help in keeping the website up to date and answering to my every whim at a super fast pace and last, but certainly not least, to my husband Robin, who without his help and support ….and his culinary skills, we would have starved on many occasions!

This concludes my report for 2011.

The Chairman asked if anybody was against the adoption of the Secretary’s report. There being no objections, the report was adopted.

The Chairman asked if there were any discussion points. There being none the meeting continued.

7.0 HONORARY TREASURER’S REPORT FOR 2010 FINANCIAL YEAR

This being my first year in the ‘job’ I would like to say please bear with me while I try to explain 2010 accounts for you.
Firstly though I would like to say a very big thank you to Mike Pope for all his help and understanding in doing the accounts and the very successful hand over.
So thank you Mike…

Please turn to Page 2

Cash in bank at end of 2010 was £6232. But this figure included the 2011 grant of £ 5000 . We accrued the auditors fees of £1020 as this is shown as in /out figure on balance sheet as these fees are paid for by the Caravan club.
The Vat element for Oct – Dec 2010 is shown as sundry debtors as the Vat was paid to Region in Jan 2011.

Turn to Page 3

We received the 6.2 grant for Question time, which we felt, was a very informative & good day. The two 6.2 road show grants received resulted in very constructive feedback from the members on the 2 sites we attended.

Expenditure
The room hire & catering for meetings in 2010 was higher than 2009 we have changed to a different hotel venue The Watermill, which will decrease these costs in 2011.
Fuel costs did increase in 2010 due to the rise in prices but we have keep abreast and amended the fuel replacement forms several times to cover this in 2011.
Hopefully all the figures on Page 3 are self- explanatory. The auditor amended the prepayment web site figure to be shown as a one-month prepayment and next year you will see the year’s prepayment figure added until the 3 years are completed.

End of the 2010 Accounts report
The Chairman asked if anybody was against the adoption of the Treasurer’s Report. There being no objections, the Report was adopted.

The Chairman asked for any questions. There were none he asked the Treasurer to give a résumé of the current year but informed the meeting that it was not for discussion at this time.

2011 Résumé

Expenditure will be less for Regional council meetings due to the change of venue.

As fuel costs did increase in 2010 hopefully 2011 there will not be too much of an increase as we amended fuel replacement forms accordingly.

Postage has increased in 2011 due to the cost of stamps but this should be a minimal charge as purchasing stamps before the increase has saved the Region money.

Slight increase in 2011 for secretarial costs, but yet again postage and price rises are responsible for this.

Question Time

There has been a slight rise in 2011 compared to 2010 but we have not exceed the grant figure.

As we are nearing the end of year and only the AGM costs to be accepted I am confident that we are in a position to satisfy all our expenditure.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer.

8.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

FINAL NOMINATIONS FOR 2011/12

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<th>Position</th>
<th>Nomination</th>
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<td>CHAIRMAN</td>
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<td>Jane Tuthill</td>
<td>Gerry Cox</td>
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<td>VICE CHAIRMAN</td>
<td>John Moules</td>
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<tr>
<td>HON SECRETARY</td>
<td>Sandra Turner</td>
<td>Gordon Taylor</td>
<td>Val Tansley</td>
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<tr>
<td>HON TREASURER</td>
<td>Diane Cook</td>
<td>Steve Moulds</td>
<td>Mick Hubbocks</td>
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The Chairman thanked the retiring Council representatives for their support and time – and their spouses for allowing them the time to attend the meetings etc.

The Chairman also thanked his fellow Officers for all their hard work over the year and for the spouses for allowing them the time to undertake their duties.

He then temporarily passed control of the meeting to Club Vice Chairman, Rodney Lambert, who explained that only one nomination had been received by the required date for the position of Chairman, that of David Grover. He advised that in the past the Vice Chairman has re-elected the Chairman back onto the Council. However, if the Vice Chairman is standing for re-election, then this role falls to the most senior independent person in the room, if there is not a retiring officer on the platform. This process should also be adopted at all Centre AGMs. Therefore, being the most senior person, Rodney asked the meeting to approve David Grover’s re-election by acclaim.
David Grover then reassumed control of the meeting and continued by advising that only one Nomination for each Regional Officer position had been received by the required date. The Regional Chairman asked the meeting to approve these elections by acclaim.

9.0 EVENTS COORDINATOR’S REPORT

The Chairman advised that Sandie Evans had undertaken the volunteer position of Regional Events Coordinator for the past year and he invited her to come forward and read her report for 2011.

Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Centre Events Officers for supporting me this year, as well as Sandra Turner Hon Sec for the Region. Having taken on this post from March this year many Events have taken place within our Centres. There has been good attendance for most of them, with a lot more than last year on a whole, especially with the current financial trend in the world. The Club magazine has promoted our events every month giving us their support, other than the earlier events before I took over this job this has proved that without these entries in the magazine each month our events would not be worth doing. I am keeping them informed of all events on a monthly basis.

During this last year, 15 events have been held in the region. The figures are a total of 667 outfits attended overall, this is 80 units more than 2010, giving just over 1900 van nights. Most impressively the number of non-centre members joining events has gone up greatly to just over a third of those attending events. 262 non-centre member units enjoyed something a little more relaxed than a Club Site and seeing they can use their outfits with just basic facilities on offer. Still noting that events that take place with caravan parking on the same site always works better. Also we have to find events and occasions for all kinds of tastes to attract the largest audience.

Once again centres have looked into possibly putting on the electric pitches at some events, but with the lateness of some booking this is still a worrying point due to the high costs. The Windsor event, that took place in May has always had a good up take, with the electric pitches selling out within a few days of offering them. This may be because this event has a good following as this has been put on now for some years, with great success. I have been told recently, now that the electric pods have been used much more, the club can gives us a better deal on prices. This is mostly due to having a depot of Newburn’s in Baldock, which cuts the transportation down for our Region greatly.

During this year we have had three events meetings to keep a check on what’s going on in the Region. Since June this year all Centres have put in place their events for 2012 with a greater number being planned. To date we have across the region 20 booked in already. I hope The Club Magazine can stand this volume as I would not like to see all this hard work of planning booking etc, not to have promotion in the magazine due to lack of space.

This is something we have been working on all year, trying to make The Club and other Regions understand the difference between an event and a rally, as much space in the Club magazine was taken up with rallies this year. We have addressed one or two points during this year. The way the entries are put in the monthly magazine seemed to have changed over the last year, with only some getting one mention per event, and this was set up to have two shots and a reminder, so we as Centres would get as many bookings as possible. The Editor has assured us that from 2012 this will be reinstated, but we will wait and see. I would like to thank Gordon Taylor for his help he has given me on the matter.

In the new year, The Club have announced the changes within the Magazine to try to make the members more aware of rallying and going on events, this in time will prove one thing or another. It all looks very exciting, as anything to bring attention to the way you can enjoy our hobby and how to get the best out of caravanning would always be a bonus.
Also I have put together the Regional Rally spreadsheet and an Events List for 2012. I would like to thank all the Centre’s Rally Sec for getting all their information to me in good time, to have them printed off for today. Also I would like to thank Martin Findlay for all his help on this.

Many of you may not know The Club have changed the way that they present events and rallies on their website, more details and information is readily available, all Centre committees have been forwarding this over the last few months instead of once a year, so the details can be updated on a rolling basis. This should prove a much better system for all Centres.

We have our What’s On leaflet designed and printed for all the Centres to use to promote all Regional Events, this should be of help to get more bookings in throughout the year. Kate Walters at the Club Head quarters has helped to get this ready for you. I have managed to get 4 extra pages put in next year as we have extra events to cater for.

Lastly,
Please find time to look at What’s On next year, all Centres have displayed their events and bigger rallies planned for 2012, there are flyers and booking forms available to you and for your Centre members. Take a look.

I hope to continue with this post into 2012, so if that is the case I look forward to working with all Centre Event Liaison Officers in the coming year, and working towards better events for all members.

Many thanks again for your patience.

The Chairman thanked Sandie for her report and work over the year and asked whether there were any objections to the adoption of this report? There were no objections and the report was adopted.

He asked whether there were any observations? There were no observations.

10.0 TO APPOINT AN AUDITOR

The Chairman thanked the Auditor David Webb of PKB UK LLP Tilehurst, Reading, for his services in the auditing of the Regions’ 2010 Accounts.

The Treasurer was called upon to nominate the Auditors for 2011.

The Treasurer wished to nominate Mr Stephen Greehy of PKB UK LLP Tilehurst, Reading. She stated that Stephen Greehy has been approached and has agreed to continue in this role to audit the 2011 accounts.

11.0 PROPOSITIONS

The Chairman stated that the Honorary Secretary had not received any propositions by the closing date of 18th August 2011 as required by the Regional Constitution.

12.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sandie Evans advised that she had copies of a “mock up” of the new Centre News pages if anyone wanted to take a look. Any feedback will be sent back to The Club.

There was no other business.

The Chairman then invited Rodney Lambert to say a few words. Rodney advised that John Turner underwent his triple heart bypass surgery 5 weeks ago. He is making very good
progress but is unable to drive for 6 weeks. He is looking forward to attending our AGM next year.

Club Update

Just over 3 years ago The Club set out to upgrade the old computer system. This was completed on 30th June and all the old systems have been turned off. The Club are also working on 9 work streams to move the Club forward. The new computer system will help to progress this and establish how we can do things better and to the advantage of the Club Members e.g., insurance, sites or training courses.

This last year we developed a new site at Bridlington on Flamborough Head, which opened on 1st August. It has been more or less full ever since. Another success story and we were amazed to get planning permission, as it is a National Heritage area.

We recently got the go ahead to take over the Strathclyde Country Park site which is just off the A74 close to Glasgow. It is being developed now and will have around 100 Touring pitches and facilities for storing over 180 caravans/motorhomes.

The Event Concept started in Northern Home Counties Region and we were the first to offer electric hook up on temporary Club sites. We need to be mindful that with all the new technology, electricity is something that the younger members cannot do without. Some electricity pods are now stored at Baldock, so that we have easier access and travel costs are less expensive.

This year at the AMM the Director General mentioned “Centres” for the first time in many years. This, together with the new on-line search engine for rallies and events plus the new 4 page Centre News about to be launched, things are progressing in the right direction. However, we must ensure we use them or we will loose them! They are designed with us in mind, so it is most important that we make use of them on a regular basis.

Last year a comment was made at the AMM regarding the high price of attending the National. The National costs over half a million pounds to put on. If everyone was to pay £100 and we have 3,000 vans we are running at a loss and we rely on our sponsors to help support us. It should be noted that we still don’t break even. It is such a good and enjoyable event for the Members and that is why The Club continue to put it on.

This year a family of 4 will pay £1 more than last year but will be able to stay for an extra night. So we are trying hard to keep costs down. Visitors can enjoy matinee and evening shows including Abba Forever, Tribute to Lady Ga Ga, The Glee Experience and Killer Queen and Martin Daniels. Truma have also expressed an interest in holding an Oktoberfest on the Monday evening. More details to come via the Events committee.

Next year is a unique year for The Club. The Club will be 105 years old, we have the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Olympics. The Club decided to cancel the temporary site at Chigwell due to local opposition and have now secured a far better site in the north-east of London. The site will be called Barleylands Temporary Site and will be at Barleylands Farm Park & Craft Village. It will have room for approximately 400 outfits and will be open from Friday 27th July 2012 to 12 August 2012 inclusive. Cost will be £18 and £22 for electric hook up. Pitches are being booked quite quickly.

Also next year The Club will be running temporary sites for the NCC Caravan Show at Excel in London. Advertisements will be out soon and the tickets will be very reasonable. During the October NCC Caravan Show the most expensive ticket was £10 which resulted in 93,000 tickets being sold as opposed to 57,000 tickets when Warners were running this event.

On 15th June there will be a Diamond Jubilee Ball at Grosvenor House Hotel and the Club will provide 3 temporary Club Sites. Tickets at £85 will be on sale in the January Magazine and will include coach travel, pre-dinner drinks, a meal and wine on the table, entertainment and return travel to the temporary site. The sites will be at Knebworth, Windsor and Apps Court.
Martin Stringer is currently looking at providing a new “Green book” which will be in a different format and will be up to date and will provide all Centres with a good working reference document.

Mike Pope gave thanks to the Chairman for the excellent way in which he conducted the AGM.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked the Upper Thames Centre Chairman, Officers and Committee for their help with today’s arrangements and for organising the weekend rally, plus tonight’s social activities.

He also expressed thanks of the Region to the Tellers, Stephen and June Holdsworth, to Martin Findlay for providing a professional and organised PA system; and to Mrs Jennifer Preedy for making and providing the beautiful floral arrangements for us all to enjoy throughout the weekend.

Presentations were made to the Tellers and Mrs Diane Lambert.

The Chairman also thanked all the Members for coming along to the Regional AGM this weekend.

The Chairman then reminded the Regional Council Members that a post AGM meeting would take place following the closure of the AGM, at 4:45pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 4:20pm.