

Report of the Annual General Meeting, 2019

On Sunday 6th October 2019 we held our Annual General Meeting at Horto. All the members of the Administrative Council were present.

The President welcomed those present and expressed the committee's thanks to Mandi Mathews for her invaluable contribution with the website, communication with members through email and the organization of walks and to our two members who produced a calendar.

Path opening and cleaning: The vice president Kyriakos Stathakis reported that volunteer work parties completed opening and signing 3 routes: Horeftra – Propan, Lyri – Katigiorgi and Alogoporos – Trahili. For the coming winter the aim is to work on some or all of the following routes: Propyri – Rodia, Granitsa – Neohori, Ag, Georgios – Ag. Triada, Propan – Lambrinou.

Jan Beugelaar suggested that paths in the area between Milina and Trikeri should be sought and added given its historical importance, especially the area of the ancient settlement of Olizon. There was general agreement with this suggestion, which would require finding people with local knowledge.

Treasurer's report: The treasurer, Liz Avramides, presented the accounts for the previous year. Our income of 6921 euros came from subscriptions (3540 euros), donations (1040 euros) and the proceeds of fund raising events and calendar sales (2341 euro). Thanks were expressed to a few members who have made particularly significant contributions through collecting donations from visitors and acquaintances (Froso Sidiropoulou) or donating their time and expertise producing and promoting a Friends of the Kalderimi calendar (Anny Maurer and Inge Stoll). Our total expenditure of 4832 euros for the year went in large part towards printed materials (promotion leaflets, signs, stickers, calendars, 2 posters for Trikeri) and the change of our constitution, with less than usual being spent on path maintenance and clearing. The committee has been reluctant to commit funds to path clearing without (a) progress on the database of the paths we have adopted which is currently being worked on by Ian Allright and (b) further information concerning the path clearing program to be carried out by the Local Authorities with funding from the EU LEADER program. In regard to the latter, members of the committee are already in contact with the person responsible for the program at the local authority and a meeting between representatives of the committee has already been requested with the new mayor. Spending for the coming year is foreseen to be as in previous years, i.e. directly relating to the objectives of opening, cleaning, maintaining and signing paths and promoting the society's work.

Other business:

Presentation of planned database for paths and maintenance: Ian Allright made a presentation of the work he has begun to create a database of paths adopted by the Friends of the Kalderimi and their maintenance history and requirements. He emphasized the need for members' feedback on the state of the paths, including any maintenance work they themselves have carried out, and announced the creation of the page 'Path Care' on the newly redesigned website through which he will keep people informed of the progress of the project and the state of the paths that have been assessed. Members are encouraged to communicate with him through the email pathcare@friendsofthekalderimi.org.

Chris Wicks proposed that we pressure the South Pelion local authority to protect and keep open the existing paths. This is an ongoing aim, but it was suggested that support will be more likely in the event that alternative tourism that utilizes the paths becomes a reality in the area. Jan Beugelaar suggested that we should also promote feedback on the state of the paths from non members. This was acknowledged as a long-term aim but the fear was expressed that at present it may lead to misunderstandings if a report is made on a path not currently adopted by the society.

Kyriakos Stathakis proposed that we establish an annual 4-day walking event in either October or March beginning at Platania and ending at Kato Gatzea with probable overnight stays at Argalasti, Neohori and Vizitsa.

The committee announced its intention to send 2-4 representatives to the 3rd Greek Paths Meeting in Metsovo the first weekend of November. The committee feels that it is important to keep abreast of the rapidly developing interest in promoting walking in Greece.