



Nottinghamshire Area
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MINUTES OF THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT PAPPLEWICK VILLAGE HALL ON
SUNDAY 3RD FEBRUARY 2019 AT 2.00 PM

The record of attendance shows 70 members were present at the Annual General Meeting, see Appendix I.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF THE AREA OFFICERS

James welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for being Ramblers members. Gedling Group was thanked for hosting the 2019 AGM and particularly the walks leaders, to the ladies who had served the refreshments and the cake bakers. The British Red Cross had provided the First Aid Course in the morning. James gave particular thanks to Alex Staniforth who had made all the arrangements for the Area AGM.

The current Area Council members were introduced to the meeting and Kate Ashbrook, Chair of the Board of Trustees was welcomed. James stressed that Area was short of Officers with several taking more than one role. Members were encouraged to come forward for Area Council as an Officer without portfolio or to shadow one of the Officers with a view to taking the role.

2. OVERVIEW FROM THE AREA PRESIDENT

Paddy Tipping, Area President thanked the Area Officers for their work during the year. Steve Parkhouse had recently appeared on the Sunday Politics Show with Paddy to discuss lost ways. Paddy thanked both Steve and Chris Thompson for their work of identifying paths ahead of the 2026 deadline. Looking nationally, an opportunity of Brexit was the demise of the Central Agricultural Policy. Landowners receive £4b a year because of the size of their land holdings, rather than for their actions. The Government was proposing to switch funds and the Agriculture Bill was currently in the Commons. This £4bn was only guaranteed to 2022 but it was needed to protect the countryside for future generations. Landowners would be expected to meet environmental standards and allow public access to the countryside. Natural England funding had been reduced to £100m (from £220m in 2010) and had lost experienced staff. Those interested in the countryside needed to work together. Paddy welcomed Kate Ashbrook and reminded members of her influence in making Ramblers what it is. Kate had also been involved with the Open Spaces Society for 35 years. Paddy confirmed he was willing to stay on as President for another year.

3. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM were passed as a true record subject to the correct of the correct spelling of Pam Duesbury. .

Proposed: Chris Thompson

Seconded Susan Page

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

There were no matters arising.

6. REPORT ON MOTIONS PASSED AT THE PREVIOUS AGM

There were no motions last year.

7. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS (2017 – 2018)

The Area Officers Annual Reports and Accounts covering the period 1st October 2017 – 31st September 2018 had been published on the Notts Area website.

- 7.1 Area Treasurer – unfortunately Jack Prust had been ill during the year and had resigned in October 2018. James thanked Keith Coxon and Jeremy Pratt who had stepped in and had worked hard to produce the accounts. Area was grateful. Chris Thompson added that the new format of presenting the accounts was easy to understand. Jeremy had been working directly with Group Treasurers on the annual returns.

The Report and Accounts were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Alan Wilson

Seconded: Susan Page

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

John Chambers commented that several Officers were doing more than one role and asked members to come forward to take office.

11 Officers and 2 Council Members were elected. See Appendix II.

Proposed en bloc: John Crofts

Seconded: Alan Wilson

9. RAMBLERS' GENERAL COUNCIL 2019

This will take place at the Mercure Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester Saturday 13th April to Sunday 14th April 2019. Nottinghamshire sends two Delegates (paid for by Ramblers' Central Office) and two visitors (paid for by Area). One of the Delegates is Area Secretary.

It was agreed that the following members would go to General Council:

Delegates - Judith Anson, Secretary and Jim Norris, Chair

Visitors - Chris Thompson and Heather Ingram

10. MOTIONS

- 10.1 Motions relating to Nottinghamshire Area – none received.

- 10.2 Motions to go to General Council 2019 – none received.

11. SPEAKER – KATE ASHBROOK, CHAIR OF RAMBLERS' BOARD OF TRUSTEES

James introduced Kate and reminded members about Kate's role in the van Hoogstraten case. Kate stated she "is a volunteer just like the rest of you" and it was good to meet members. The report on the changes made at Central Office was lively and uplifting – the Ramblers was one team from Groups up to the Board of Trustees. The last 10 years had been spent looking inwards but it was important to now look outwards and ensure this is the best country in the world for walking. The aim is for everyone to enjoy the countryside and walking in it.

Ramblers want to ensure the Agriculture Bill is amended so that public access is included in the benefits that farmers will have to deliver in return for public subsidies. This could be to improve access, improvements to existing paths and legal access points to 'public access land'. A better regulatory system will be needed to ensure the money going to farmers for these projects is adequately monitored. This is an exciting opportunity. There is also compulsory consultation with Ramblers on all major planning applications such as HS2 to ensure rights of way are kept open.

2019 is the 70th anniversary of the creation of the National Parks. Kate thanked all those members involved in claiming and monitoring paths. Ramblers Worldwide Holidays have funded an Officer to work on this and the 2026 Lost Ways campaign. This will work with other groups involved in rights of way. The costs of identifying landowners and the historical research to claim paths had not been properly funded. In some cases Ramblers are going to court for claims. Towns and cities are also important for walkers and Ramblers needs to influence new Mayors and other decision makers. Publicity was important and emphasising the work done locally e.g. surveying walks in a parish. Ramblers needs to work with other rights of way users and locally with organisations such as The Women's Institute and historical societies.

The Area Support Team was now in place and it was important to strengthen Areas as Central Office could not interact directly with over 500 Groups. Kate asked all members to check and update their personal profile, including opting in to email contact. The £5m Postcode Lottery Grant is transforming the Central Office IT systems (including the Insight Hub) and funding walk leader training. The importance of Walking for Health was recognised but funding was necessary. A Membership and Fundraising department had been established. The recent survey had shown over two thirds of those replying walk with a Group, a higher than expected level. The next task was to survey walkers who did not belong to Ramblers.

James thanked Kate and invited questions and comments.

- a question was asked about Local Organisers and support for them. Kate replied the appointment of Local Organisers had been an experiment and they worked outside the established Ramblers structure. Kate also explained the Area support structure which was working well.
- Chris Sweetman stated Area and Groups had problems attracting volunteers; roles were duplicated e.g. 14 Membership Secretaries; do all Areas have similar problems? Kate responded that the Board of Trustees had focussed on supporting Areas. Diane Simcoe, Area Support Officer (North) had success with re-establishing those Areas in abeyance. Most Areas and Groups had problems attracting volunteers.
- why is membership falling and how is that being tackled; the National Trust has 5 million members and a number of them are also walkers. Other organisations have a large number of members – RSPB, Woodland Trust. Kate stated membership is being treated as a top priority by Vanessa Griffiths, Ramblers CEO and Senior Management Team. The organisations mentioned were of a different nature; they were land and property owning with tangible assets i.e.

historical houses, buildings, visitors centres and even birds and trees! Ramblers are different – we are a campaigning organisation representing walkers' interests. The assets we are interested in are the Rights of Way network and access to hills, mountains, moors and downs. The latter was achieved by the successful campaign to make the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 a reality. Paddy Tipping had been in the forefront to pursue this through parliament and onto the statute book.

- Susan Page said there are a lot of staff at Central Office while volunteers keep everything running locally and are struggling; is there scope for devolution of paid staff to assist Areas and Groups? Kate replied Ramblers must live within its means and the bigger charities had more scope for marketing and publicity. The lease on Camelford House (London office) was running out and a decision would be needed. Paddy added the Wildlife Trusts were all cash poor but land rich. All voluntary organisations had the same problems of recruitment and fund raising. It was essential to ensure Ramblers was fit for the future.
- Steve Parkhouse commented it was helpful that advice was available from one Ramblers office. The central location helped access. It was essential to reach out to other organisations such as the British Horse Society, cycling organisations who also use rights of way. The Ramblers marketing should focus on that.
- John Crofts felt leadership and support was not available from Central Office and gave the introduction of GDPR as an example. Kate agreed that the GDPR communications had been involved in detail rather than taking a wider view. The impact on members and Groups could have been handled better. Central Office was introducing walk leader training which would support Groups.
- Jenny Fillingham asked why there was no longer any publicity material available to support Areas and Groups in recruitment. Kate replied she was unaware of that and would follow it up.
- Felicity Crofts said crossing main roads with a number of walkers was often dangerous as there were not always refuges. Central Office could take this up with the Highways Agency to ensure this was taken into account when new roads crossed existing rights of way. Kate agreed and Ramblers had campaigned for road safety in the past e.g. 'quick or dead'. It was difficult to have this included in legislation. Allan Rogers commended the HS2 work where account had been taken of rights of way. Chris Thompson added that highways agencies did not want to build refuges as it slowed traffic down.
- Brian O'Neill commented that U3A walking groups and others such as MeetUp groups benefited from Ramblers work in keeping the rights of way open and path clearance but made no contribution. Kate was aware of the situation but there was currently no rights of way support from other walking groups. There were links with the BHS and cycling groups as already mentioned.

James brought the question and answer session to a close and thanked members and Kate for her clear responses.

12. TRENT BRIDGE AND WILFORD EMBANKMENT

Steve Parkhouse asked any members who used the embankment between Trent Bridge and Wilford to complete the user evidence forms.

13. CLOSING REMARKS FROM AREA CHAIR

James invited Jim Norris as new Chair to make the closing remarks. Jim said his appointment as Area Chair was a privilege. Jim regarded Ramblers as a radical organisation. Everyone using rights of way can see the signs – the evidence of work

of Ramblers and often a result of putting pressure on local politicians. Jim encouraged all Groups to come to Area Council – Area functions for local Groups. Rather than ‘chunter’ behind the scenes, Groups should come and address Area Officers directly.

Jim also volunteered with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust which was also struggling with getting enough volunteers. Area particularly needed Officers as people were doing several jobs. The most important post to be filled is Treasurer as Area cannot function without a Treasurer. Members were asked to ask other members who might be willing to help.

Jim thanked Kate for her inspirational talk and all those who had contributed to the success of the day. Gedling Group was thanked for hosting the AGM and Jim asked another Group to volunteer to host the 2020 AGM.

14. DATE OF NEXT AREA AGM SUNDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2020

The next Area Annual General Meeting would be held on Sunday, 2nd February 2020 and a Group is asked to volunteer to organise it.

APPENDIX I

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SUNDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY 2019

ATTENDANCE LIST

Ankers	Jonathan	Gedling
Anson	Judith	Area Secretary
Aplin	Helen	Notts Local Organiser
Bramley	Stephen	Mansfield & Sherwood
Chambers	John	Broxtowe
Clarke	Lynn	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Cook	Aileen	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Coxon	Keith	Rushcliffe
Coxon	Claire	Rushcliffe
Crofts	Felicity	Gedling
Crofts	John	Gedling
Culpin	Brian	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Culpin	Wendy	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Darwent	Heather	Gedling
Dobie	Angela	Rushcliffe
Dobson	Barbara	Nottingham
Dobson	David	Nottingham
Draper	Brenda	Gedling
Drewery	Rachael	Notts & Derbys Group
Duesbury	Pam	Rushcliffe
Fenton	Paul	Vale of Belvoir
Fillingham	Jenny	Gedling
Fillingham	Rod	Robin Hood Way
Ford	Kath	Gedling
Fowler	David	Sutton Ramblers
Hervey	Sarah	Gedling
Hill	Kevin	Nottingham
Hobson	Elaine	Vale of Belvoir
Hobson	Dave	Vale of Belvoir
Hunt	David	Area
Ingram	Heather	One Step Walkers
Ingram	Bob	One Step Walkers
Johnson	Polly	Gedling
Johnson	David	Southwell
Large	Chris	Gedling
Lewis	Karen	Rushcliffe
Lewis	Peter	Rushcliffe
Maloney	Dianne	Gedling
Matthews	Lesley	Rushcliffe
McGill	James	Area Chair

Mitchell	Brenda	Vale of Belvoir
Munro	Diana	Worksop
Musson	Paul	Gedling
Norris	Jim	Area Vice Chair
Northhall	Dinah	Broxtowe
O'Neill	Brian	Gedling
Page	Susan	Broxtowe
Parkhouse	Steve	RoW Secretary
Pederson	Joyce	Newark
Price	John	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Pritchett	Liz	Gedling
Rawdin	Mick	Gedling
Rick	Susan	Mansfield & Sherwood
Rogers	Allan	Robin Hood Way
Rogers	Kath	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Rogers	Pat	Gedling
Ross	Janet	Worksop
Ross	Keith	Worksop
Staniforth	Alex	Mansfield & Sherwood
Stock	Mike	Rushcliffe
Sweetman	Chris	Rushcliffe
Taylor	Chris	Mansfield & Sherwood
Thompson	Chris	Area Tourism & Heritage Officer
Tipping	Paddy	Area President
Tuffnell	Brian	Mansfield & Sherwood
Wilkinson	Carol	Newark
Wilson	Alan	Rushcliffe
Woolley	Val	Mansfield & Sherwood
Young	John	Vale of Belvoir
Young	Kim	Vale of Belvoir

APPENDIX II

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SUNDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY 2019

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Paddy Tipping

The following Area Officers were elected:

AREA CHAIR

Nominator: David Hunt

Jim Norris

Seconded: Allan Rogers

AREA VICE CHAIR

Nominator: Jeremy Pratt

James McGill

Seconded: Alex Staniforth

SECRETARY

Nominator: Jeremy Pratt

Judith Anson

Seconded: Keith Coxon

TREASURER

Vacant

Jeremy Pratt to stand in

RIGHTS OF WAY SECRETARY

Nominator: Steve Parkhouse

Nominator: Allan Rogers

Job Share:

Allan Rogers

Seconded: Kath Rogers

Steve Parkhouse

Seconded: David Hunt

TOURISM & HERITAGE PATHS OFFICER

Nominator: Rod Fillingham

Chris Thompson

Seconded: Jenny Fillingham

COUNTRYSIDE OFFICER

Vacant

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Nominator: Jeremy Pratt

Judith Anson

Seconded: Keith Coxon

PRESS & PUBLICITY OFFICER

Nominator: Richard Lord

Alex Staniforth

Seconded: Mary Hind

GROUPS OFFICER

Vacant

AREA WEBMASTER

Nominator: Sue Rick

Chris Taylor

Seconded: Alex Staniforth

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Nominator: Rod Fillingham

Steve Parkhouse

Seconded: David Hunt

MINUTES SECRETARY

Nominator: Rod Fillingham

Steve Parkhouse

Seconded: John Chambers

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Nominator: Allan Rogers

David Hunt

Seconded: Alex Staniforth

Nominator: Jim Norris

Susan Page

Seconded: Rod Fillingham