



Nottinghamshire Area
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MINUTES OF THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT BOTTESFORD VICTORY
COMMEMORATION HALL ON
SUNDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2020 AT 2.00 PM

The record of attendance shows 66 members were present at the Annual General Meeting, see Appendix I.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF THE AREA OFFICERS

Jim welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Vale of Belvoir Group for hosting the 2020 AGM; particularly the walk leaders who had coped admirably with rearranging planned walks so walkers were not having to wade or swim. The historical walk had been particularly interesting. The arrangements in the Hall had been excellent and everyone had enjoyed the refreshments and cakes. Jim particularly thanked Alex Staniforth who had made the arrangements for the Area AGM.

The current Area Council members were introduced to the meeting and Michael Penny, Member of the Board of Trustees and Ramblers Treasurer was welcomed. Diane Simcoe, Ramblers Area Liaison Officer was introduced. Jim particularly thanked Jeremy Pratt who had been the Acting Treasurer until Neil Stafford had been co-opted in year.

2. OVERVIEW FROM THE AREA PRESIDENT

Paddy Tipping, Area President thanked the Area Committee emphasising Ramblers is a voluntary organisation with everyone doing what they could. 2020 was a palindrome and it was 20 years since the Countryside & Rights of Way Act (CROW). This was the culmination of a century of campaigning for access to previously forbidden land. 2020 was also the year the UK's arrangements with the EU would change. The £3 billion allocated to landowners under the Common Agricultural Policy would change and the proposed Agricultural Bill would give new opportunities. Where public money was being used there should be public access to land and improvements to walking in the countryside. Paddy suggested Ramblers could join the campaign for the new Environmental Bill which could give a focus for Ramblers work. The Deregulation Bill was still in abeyance but when eventually passed into law would help in our claims for lost ways. The 2026 deadline was coming closer.

Paddy confirmed he was willing to stay on as President for another year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Susan Page, Bob and Heather Ingram.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 3rd February 2019 were passed as a true record. .

Proposed: Tom Munro

Seconded: Alan Wilson

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 (2018 – 2019)

The Area Officers Annual Reports and Accounts covering the period 1st October 2018 – 31st September 2019 had been published on the Notts Area website.

- 7.1 Chair's Report – Jim explained the successful discussions with HS2 about rights of way (ROW) but the Hub at Toton, which would affect ROW, was being planned separately. Another important issue in Notts was gravel extraction and a new Countryside Officer would be needed as Jim had not been able to do both roles. Discussions had been held with Nottinghamshire County Council on a joint approach to the maintenance of ROW. This would be taken forward with Groups at Area Council. The Agriculture Bill would have an impact and moving trespass into criminal, rather than civil, law was a concern. Jim emphasised that volunteers were needed in Groups as well at Area and succession planning was particularly important. Jim thanked all Officers and particularly James for the last 2 years as Chair and Vice-Chair. Chris Thompson had continued to develop his new post. Jim also thanked Judith for “keeping the show on the road”. Members present were encouraged to come forward to join Area as Council members even if they did not want to take on a specific role.
- 7.2 Area Membership Secretary's Report – since the report had been written, Central Office had clarified that Area and Groups could continue to use generic email addresses. The change to allow a single log in to all Central Office accounts would mean the log in needed to be personal, rather than generic. This meant if a person changed role, their access would be changed. This was sensible and if it had been stated in those terms an objection would not have been raised.
- 7.3 Area Treasurer's Report – Jeremy presented the accounts as he had been Acting Treasurer for the year. The accounts had not been shown correctly on the website and copies were circulated to the meeting. The external examiner's report was available for members to see. Jeremy encouraged Groups to use the Ramblers report forms for their accounts. The Area reserve had been reduced in line with CO recommendations. Jeremy stated he had enjoyed his time as Acting Treasurer, particularly the time working with Group Treasurers.
- 7.4 Area Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer's Report – in answer to a question, Chris confirmed the proposed Mayflower Pilgrim Trail did not have the support of Lincolnshire Area Ramblers or Lincolnshire County Council. Chris asked members to support him with the production of a new Nottinghamshire Walks book.
- 7.5 Area Publicity Officer's Report – Alex encouraged Groups to make use of the new eventing tent. Broxtowe Group had used it and Newark Group had also used the

7.6 Group Reports – Ravenshead & Hucknall – Alan Rogers added the Group had recruited 3 new members under 40. Vale of Belvoir - John Young thanked members for undertaking all the work necessary for the AGM. Robin Hood Way – James McGill asked for clarification on a flexi-group. Allan explained CO had set up flexi-groups on a trial basis to allow a group of people with a special interest to come together. The flexi-group did not hold funds but had a Committee and could request Area support if required. Allan added the flexi-group was completely separate from the Robin Hood Way Association which had its own constitution budget, etc. James suggested a flexi-group was a way of attracting new members with common interest to be linked to Ramblers but without the need for paperwork and formal meetings.

7.7 The Report and Accounts were accepted as a true record.
Proposed: Rod Fillingham Seconded: John Chambers

10 Officers and 2 Council Members were elected. See Appendix II for the proposer and seconder. Judith Anson had agreed to stand again as Area Membership Secretary but Rod Fillingham came forward in the meeting. Judith withdrew and Rod was nominated by Jim Norris and seconded by Steve Parkhouse.

This will take place at the Bristol Marriott Hotel, Bristol Saturday 4th April to Sunday 5th April 2020. Nottinghamshire sends two Delegates (paid for by Ramblers' Central Office) and two visitors (paid for by Area). One of the Delegates is Area Secretary.

10. MOTIONS

- 11. SPEAKER – MICHAEL PENNY, RAMBLERS' TREASURER**

The resignation of Vanessa Griffiths as CEO had been a loss as she had begun transforming the organisation. Van had created a very strong leadership team and had left Ramblers in good shape. It was hoped to have an interim CEO in place by the end of February with a permanent CEO by the end of the year. Membership was a key issue and it needed to increase. Although there had been growth for one quarter, the numbers had fallen again. Nottinghamshire had a good record on membership and new members were younger than elsewhere. Central Office was

using Facebook and social media to encourage new members. There was ongoing work on profiling new members and establishing why they had joined. There was no one answer as different recruitment methods worked in different areas. Michael said he welcomed ideas and asked for comments from the floor on recruitment and membership.

- Rod Fillingham said that interests needed to be targeted separately i.e. people join to walk socially with a group, to protect the environment and paths. James McGill added that Ramblers marketing was poor. Michael said a brand manager was being appointed. Their remit was to produce a clear message, understand your audience and how to recruit people.
- Tom Munro referred to the number of walkers in the Peak District and how publicity could encourage these people to join Ramblers. Michael replied that Ramblers was considering how to target hot spots.
- Jenny Fillingham referred to the lack of publicity leaflets to hand out to prospective members and Notts Area had produced its own leaflets. Diane Simcoe replied that a new leaflet was being printed and that pens and badges could be handed out.
- John Young said the Vale of Belvoir Group spoke to any other walkers they met on walks to point out the advantages of walking with Ramblers particularly that you could walk with any other Ramblers Group.
- Allan Rogers gave his experience of members resigning due to problems with renewing their membership. Jeremy Pratt commented that two members had recently joined Rushcliffe without a problem. Michael replied that in any organisation there would always be problems.
- Janet Ross questioned why people should join Ramblers. What was in it for them? Alex Staniforth added that people often said why should they join Ramblers when they could walk with the U3A or other walking groups much cheaper. Michael replied that up to two thirds of Ramblers members never joined Group walks and joined for the campaigning side or because it was a charity. If Ramblers could increase membership it would have greater lobby power with government. The government had a large majority and would be able to push legislation through.
- Michael referred to the Isle of Wight where Ramblers worked to keep the ROW open as it was a popular walking destination. The question was whether those who walked these paths then joined Ramblers in appreciation of the work done.
- Jeremy Pratt asked whether CO had considered incentives for people to join e.g. a lower fee for the first year. Jeremy also asked for the retention rate of members. Diane replied that 50% did not renew their membership after the first year. The Membership Team followed up all these and some did re-join.
- The Brexit campaign had been built round 3 words. What was a 3 word slogan that could be used by Ramblers? The audience suggested “walk this way”, “pointing the way”.
- In response to a question about Walking for Health and its links to Ramblers, Michael replied CO was working on the future arrangements. Sponsorship had been obtained from Sport England for 12 – 15 months.

The discussion was then thrown open to other topics. Dave Hobson asked about Ramblers attitude to mountain biking and cycling. Michael replied there should be room for all the non-mechanised users of the countryside – walkers, cyclists and horse riders. These groups needed to work together but were sometimes intolerant of each other. Nottinghamshire’s record in claiming rights of way was to be commended. Two walk leader training courses in Nottinghamshire in February were fully booked and an additional course was being organised in August.

Michael closed by referring to the Data and Digital Transformation Project. Assemble was the latest phase and was being trialled in Norfolk before being rolled out to other Areas. Allan Rogers reported there had been problems with the path watch reports being made centrally and causing problems locally.

Michael thanked members for contributing to a lively discussion and he would take the comments back to Central Office. Jim thanked those present for their questions and the informed dialogue.

12. CLOSING REMARKS FROM AREA CHAIR

Jim commented on the good attendance and the number of Groups represented. Nottinghamshire was fortunate in the vibrancy of its Groups which contributed to the Area's success. Jim thanked all individuals for their attendance and the Vale of Belvoir Group again for their work in ensuring the AGM was a success.

13. DATE OF NEXT AREA AGM SUNDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2021

The next Area Annual General Meeting would be held on Sunday, 7th February 2021 organised by the Nottingham Group. Jim thanked David Dobson of the Nottingham Group.

APPENDIX I

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SUNDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY 2020

ATTENDANCE LIST

Aldrich	B	Newark
Aldrich	C	Newark
Anson	Judith	Area Secretary
Bacon	Brian	Worksop
Bramley	Stephen	Mansfield & Sherwood
Chambers	John	Broxtowe
Coxon	Keith	Rushcliffe
Coxon	Clare	Rushcliffe
Dobson	Barbara	Nottingham
Dobson	David	Nottingham
Duesbury	Pam	Rushcliffe
Fenton	Paul	Vale of Belvoir
Fillingham	Jenny	Gedling
Fillingham	Rod	Robin Hood Way
Hind	Mary	Mansfield & Sherwood
Hobson	Elaine	Vale of Belvoir
Hobson	Dave	Vale of Belvoir
Johnson	A	Vale of Belvoir
Johnson	John	Vale of Belvoir
Jones	<i>Barbara</i>	<i>Vale of Belvoir</i>
Loftus	Eileen	Rushcliffe
Lord	<i>Richard</i>	<i>Mansfield & Sherwood</i>
Maloney	Dianne	Gedling
Marette	Cynthia	Rushcliffe
Martin	Ken	Newark
McGill	James	Area Vice Chair & Newark
Mellor	Chris	Newark
Mellor	Roger	Newark
Mitchell	Brenda	Vale of Belvoir
Munro	Diana	Worksop
Munro	Tom	Worksop
Norris	Jim	Area Chair
Owen	Gill	Rushcliffe
Parkhouse	Steve	RoW Secretary
Parkinson	Gail	Vale of Belvoir
Pederson	Joyce	Newark
Penny	Michael	Ramblers Treasurer & BOT Member
Pratt	Jeremy	Rushcliffe
Pritchett	Liz	Gedling
Rick	Susan	Mansfield & Sherwood

Rogers	Allan	Area ROW Secretary & Robin Hood Way
Rogers	Kath	Ravenshead & Hucknall
Ross	Janet	Worksop
Ross	Keith	Worksop
Simcoe	Diane	Ramblers Area Support Officer
Stafford	Neil	Area Treasurer
Staniforth	Alex	Mansfield & Sherwood and Area
Staniforth	Marion	Mansfield & Sherwood
Stock	Mike	Rushcliffe
Swales	Rita	Mansfield & Sherwood
Thompson	Chris	Area Tourism & Heritage Officer
Tilsley	Jan	Vale of Belvoir
Tipping	Paddy	Area President
Tuffnell	Brian	Mansfield & Sherwood
Turner	Dave	Newark
Turner	Isobel	Newark
Vooght	Rodney	Vale of Belvoir
Wilkinson	Carol	Newark
Williams	Maggie	Vale of Belvoir
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, 2ND FEBRUARY 2020

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

PRESIDENT**Paddy Tipping**

The following Area Officers were elected:

AREA CHAIR

Nominator: Allan Rogers

Jim Norris

Seconded: Steve Parkhouse

AREA VICE CHAIR**Vacant****SECRETARY**

Nominator: Alex Staniforth

Judith Anson

Seconded: Jim Norris

TREASURER

Nominator: Alan Wilson

Neil Stafford

Seconded: Rob Turner

RIGHTS OF WAY SECRETARY

Nominator: Steve Parkhouse

Nominator: Allan Rogers

Job Share:**Allan Rogers**

Seconded: Kath Rogers

Steve Parkhouse

Seconded: Judith Anson

**TOURISM & HERITAGE PATHS
OFFICER**

Nominator: Nigel Sarsfield

Chris Thompson

Seconded: Jeremy Pratt

COUNTRYSIDE OFFICER**Vacant****MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Nominator: Jim Norris

Rod Fillingham

Seconded: Steve Parkhouse

PRESS & PUBLICITY OFFICER

Nominator: Jenny Fillingham

Alex Staniforth

Seconded: Rod Fillingham

GROUPS OFFICER**Vacant****AREA WEBMASTER**

Nominator: Sue Rick

Chris Taylor

Seconded: Alex Staniforth

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Nominator: Jim Norris

Steve Parkhouse

Seconded: Chris Thompson

MINUTES SECRETARY

Vacant

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Nominator: Anne Raymond

James McGill

Seconded: Carol Wilkinson

Nominator: Tom Munro

Jenny Fillingham

Seconded: Paddy Tipping