



Nottinghamshire Area Ramblers



Annual Report 2024 - 25

Covering the period 1st October 2024 – 30th September 2025



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Front page photos:

Sherwood Forest

Trent Clapper Gate

Both photos by Dave Hobson, Vale of Belvoir Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After a poor summer and much rainfall in 2024, the brighter and drier weather in 2025 was a welcome relief to walkers and walk leaders alike. What was less welcome, as evidenced in many Group reports, was the introduction of new rules for volunteers who wish to lead walks. Nevertheless Group committees demonstrated their resolve to support and encourage their walk leaders to complete the required process to comply with the new Ramblers rules.

Despite these challenges our Groups continue to offer a wide range of walks, holidays, and social activities, as well as their involvement in footpath protection activities. This year that task has also included helping the Trent Rivers Trust in surveying the long distance footpath, the Trent Valley Way.

Unfortunately the Area team has a number of vacancies within its structure. As well as imposing a significant additional workload on the current officers, the absence of volunteers has limited our ability to defend all the threats to our Right of Way network. It has also inhibited our ability to promote Nottinghamshire Area Ramblers in order to grow our membership. If you are interested in any of the vacant volunteer roles and want to find out more, then please contact the Area Secretary.

The threat to both our footpath network and countryside landscapes has been exacerbated by the number of applications for green energy infrastructure (solar panels and batteries) in Nottinghamshire. In the area north of Newark there have been three Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects submitted. With no national plan, developers have been attracted to our county due to the availability of grid infrastructure to support their schemes. If all these proposals go ahead they will destroy large areas of our countryside, as well as losing many thousands of acres of good food-producing farmland.

As well as trying to defend our countryside, much time has been spent on reviewing and commenting on proposals from the Ramblers Board of Trustees to change the governance of our charity. An early draft of the proposals sought to change Group constitutions, and abolish Areas. As well as its demotivating effect, the consultations on this draft demonstrated an alarming lack of understanding of how our volunteer led organisation actually operates.

AREA OFFICERS' REPORTS

1. AREA CHAIR (Alex Ellis)

It has been quite a busy year for us all. We have had the Walking Leader training programme which was sprung on us. My thanks go out to all groups who, at short notice put training sessions together..

We were then informed about the pre-consultations sessions for The Governance Review again at short notice to put together how we felt about changes within the Ramblers Association including doing away with Areas and how Hubs would work. A lot of time and effort went into these reports from Groups and Area Officers. My thanks for your efforts and what a waste of your time as volunteers. The Ramblers Board decided it push it back for now so we need to be prepared as this will not be going away.

Area Officers do many jobs for you all within Ramblers including helping to keep our paths open, looking at documents as in planning permissions, working along side District Councils and the County Council. The list is endless so my thanks go out to our Rights of Way Sub-Committee team for their hard work.

In my role as Chair, I have been working with Groups and will continue to walk and talk with many more of the Groups and attend your social events.

One other piece of good news. Mansfield & Sherwood Group was nominated for The Green Heroes Award for their contributions to a cleaner Mansfield with the emphasis on environmental and sustainability issues. There was an exhibition in Mansfield Library. Well done to the Litter Pickers Team which our previous Chair Sue Rick started. First pick was on the 8th April 2022 to test the equipment and do a risk assessment. The wheel came off and we did not notice it so it was a back track to find it.

On that note I thank you all again for your commitment to Ramblers and without volunteers it could not function.



2. AREA SECRETARY (Judith Anson)

The **2025 Area AGM** was organised by Newark and Collingham Groups on Sunday 2nd February in Collingham. The key note speaker was Erin McDaid, Head of Communications & Marketing at the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. This was an excellent day and thanks to everyone from the two Groups for making all the arrangements and organising good weather. There was a minute's silence in memory of Sue Rick. Alex Ellis came forward as Area Chair to fill the key vacancy but there were no nominations for Countryside Officer, Publicity Officer, Newsletter Editor (non-elected) or Minutes Secretary.

Everyone is reminded that all **Officers** stand down at our AGM and if any member is interested in taking a post they should contact me. Role descriptions and nomination forms are on the website. To maintain Nottinghamshire as a vibrant Area we need volunteers willing to help. The roles of Rights of Way Protection Officer and Rights of Way Maintenance & Improvement Officer remain vacant and members interested in protecting ROW in Nottinghamshire are asked to come forward.

At the **last AGM** I reported on errors created by the closure of Ramblers data system called Assemble and the migration of data. After 7 months and numerous emails, I finally had a response after I told them I had included this in my Annual Report to the AGM. Following several apologies and a 'phone call, this was eventually resolved. Contractors now undertake much of the work previously done by staff.

Area Council has had another busy year. In January I reported on the changes to staff at Central Office which reduced the number of staff working in the Rights of Way Team. The Regional Engagement Team, set up following a General Council resolution has been disbanded and the staff moved to roles with different titles. It was expected that Cluster Meetings (of 'Area 'leaders') would also be removed but some have continued.

April Area Council discussed the report on Ramblers General Council attended by myself and Neil Stafford. There was a discussion on the governance review and Motions. The July meeting focussed on both walk leader training and on governance. The new requirements are for walk leaders to self-certify that they have led 12 Ramblers walks over the last 3 years or have a Mountain Training qualification. If not, they need to complete the on-line training by December 2025. Thelma Ward of the Worksop Group led a session to share ideas on how to ensure Groups retained walk leaders and helped them to undertake the training. October's Area Council was brought forward to discuss the governance issues and meet the deadline to respond on the consultation.

Paddy Tipping, Area President has been working with Claire Ward, **the East Midlands Mayor** who has been walking a loop of the East Midlands. This can be seen at.

www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/the-mayor/the-loop/

Ramblers were involved in the South Clifton to Besthorpe section.

The **Nottinghamshire County Show** was held on 10th May. Mansfield & Sherwood and Collingham Group members attended the Show together with Area Officers and the Robin Hood Way Association. There was a lot of interest from the public and those attending felt it was a success.

From July onwards, the main focus of Area Officer time has been on the **Governance proposals**. These have been worked on over several years by Central Office and the Board. The first round of consultation began in July with the final version to be voted on at an Extraordinary General Council in December. Ramblers was created as a representative democracy and to change the structure (called the Memorandum & Articles and Standing

Orders) 75% of General Council delegates must vote in favour. Groups and their members have been involved in the consultations and I am very grateful to them for responding to the complicated documents. Volunteer time is precious and finite. Regrettably this does not appear to be understood by the Ramblers Board. The consultation process was long and complicated and I have not detailed here all the various iterations the proposals went through for brevity. There were Zoom sessions with General Council (GC) delegates and Area Officers and after each session the proposals were changed.

There were 4 main changes proposed: 1. move to one member one vote which would remove General Council (GC) and the constitutions on which Ramblers was set up which allow the Board to be held to account. There would be an on line AGM which all members could attend with Trustees elected in advance. This would not be decision making. 2. Annual gatherings would be held to discuss Ramblers issues and the Board could consider any issues raised. 3. The number of Trustees would be reduced to 12. 4. Groups would be the key organising unit with the removal of Areas. Those running the Groups would not be elected but chosen at a gathering.

There was little mention of rights of way, protection of the countryside and campaigning work. The proposals changed Ramblers which would, in effect, become a new organisation. The democratic structure enshrined in the creation of Ramblers to ensure it was a bottom-up organisation controlled by members was removed. Decisions would be made in future by staff and the Board, to be implemented by Groups. In Nottinghamshire there were mixed views. Some Groups were in favour of the simplified structure which reduced formality and the constitution. Others were concerned about the forced change at a time of Groups already being under pressure to keep their walk leaders. There were also comments about how an organisation could function effectively with no accountability to members through a formal election process.

The second consultation suggested the rights of way work currently led by Areas might be managed by self-selected members who could form a Hub although the legitimacy and accountability of these was unclear. The work of unpaid volunteers, particularly the Area Treasurers would apparently move to paid staff. It was clear from the next Zoom session these proposals were not workable in the current form and the proposals to change Areas and Groups were removed. The draft revised Articles and Standing Orders were also put on hold. Nottinghamshire Groups discussed the reduced proposals at the October Area Council and were uncertain about the value of what is being proposed.

It was clear the 75% required at the Extraordinary GC would not be achieved and the Board cancelled the Extraordinary GC. This was replaced by a Conference, attended by the same people, and still in London to discuss the proposals. The cost of this must be considerable in addition to the time wasted by volunteers. The next stage is for General Council in April to consider further proposals which will be circulated for consultation.

Regrettably this has been another **difficult and challenging year** for the Officers. Until the proposals to remove Areas were taken off the table, all development work was paused and plans made to dismantle Area which also wasted time. I am very grateful that Officers are working well outside their job role to keep Area functioning. New people are required if Area is to continue its rights of way and countryside protection roles. In addition to the Group walks, this is the key function of Ramblers and our countryside is under increasing threat. Please do come forward to help with this.

Thank-you to Mansfield & Sherwood Group for hosting this AGM.

3. AREA RIGHTS OF WAY SECRETARY & COUNTRYSIDE OFFICER (Judith Anson)

I have been Acting in these roles. I am grateful for the support of Neil Stafford and to members of the Rights of Way Committee.

Our countryside and rights of way are under threat from housing, solar/battery installations, mineral extraction and new developments. Ramblers is a consultee on planning applications and other developments and the ROW Committee try to respond to all proposals. This takes volunteer time, particularly on the research, and we would like more people to be involved to protect our rights of way and your access to the countryside. This is something anyone can become involved in from their computer or out in the field. There is no special knowledge required. You need to know where to look, who to ask, be able to find information on websites and read a map. There is plenty of support from other members and it is important that we work as a team, sharing knowledge.

Rights of Way Sub-Committee

This is a formal Sub-Committee of Area Council. While it has some delegated authority for items that are time sensitive (e.g. planning applications), all policy issues must be decided by Area Council. A revised structure was agreed in April. In order to give direct involvement to Groups, the District Coordinator role was removed. Recognising the workload and skills required, the role of Rights of Way Secretary was split into two: Area Footpath Maintenance and Improvement Officer, and Area Rights of Way Protection Officer. I would ask members to come forward to take these roles and the descriptions are on the website.

The ROW Committee is chaired by Alex Ellis, the Area Chair. Group Footpath Secretaries are fully involved in responding to applications and with specific issues. I would like to thank everyone for their contribution to the work of the Sub-Committee.

Work in Year

There is a selection below of some of the activities during the year. In addition, planning applications have been responded to as has correspondence from Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) including consultations (land owner deposits, path orders, DMMOs, etc). Planning Inspectorate (PINS) cases, information from Central Office and reports of ROW problems have also been part of the work.

Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) – Quarterly meetings are held with Neil Lewis, Countryside Access Team Manager. A new system of reporting problems with rights of way has been introduced and Ramblers carried out early testing. There are some teething problems with the system and these are under discussion. NCC has recruited new staff to work on the backlog of Definitive Map Modification Order applications (DMMOs), which has resulted in noticeable progress.

Solar & Battery Sites – these are a major issue for the ROW network and will have an adverse impact on our enjoyment of the countryside. We have responded on most applications where ROW are involved but lack the volunteer time to respond to them all. The Area guidance on green energy applications was revised by Area Council to focus on the impact on the countryside, loss of views and the cumulative impact, in addition to the actual rights of way. Our principle is that no right of way can be extinguished although a diversion may be agreed, and that permissive paths are a sweetener, not a replacement. Mitigation is no longer accepted e.g. one developer offered a new path which would be just round the solar panels. The **Great North Road Solar** application has been responded to after detailed work by the ROW team. This will be decided in 2026. Together with the surrounding solar applications, this would result in large parts of the countryside round Newark and the Trent valley being covered in a sea of solar panels. We attended the **Kelham Solar & Battery** Public Inquiry as the applicant had appealed against the refusal

by Newark & Sherwood Council. A Planning Inquiry will also be held about the **Solar Farm at Wysall** (Bunny Old Wood) where Rushcliffe Council has refused it. We have objected to the **Foxholes Solar** application at North Muskham. **Knapthorpe & Muskham** Solar applications were both allowed by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal. This site included a DMMO submitted in 2011 and the Planning Inspector stated “—It transpired that the application was made in 2011 to the order making authority and has been delayed substantially with no immediate prospect of any order being confirmed in the near future. The weight I can attach to this application is therefore very limited”. There is a danger this will set a precedent for other sites where DMMOs have been submitted. Advice from Ramblers Central Office Paths Team was that the legal position was unclear. The DMMO could be rejected when it came up for consideration and if it was approved the developer could ask for a diversion. All we can do is point out the presence of DMMOs across development sites and hope the Planning Inspector includes it in their decision.

A52 Nottingham Ring Road – the Public Inquiry was held in July on proposals for the Nottingham Knight Island and the Wheatcroft junctions. A press report has said the schemes were approved but the final Planning Inspector Report is awaited.

Carlton Hill/Ethel Avenue – this was a very long standing DMMO application made by Chris Thompson which was approved by the Planning Inspectorate and a diversion order issued in October 2024. The landowner refused to clear the blocked path and enforcement action was taken by the County Council.

Conjure Alders – this ROW (Bothamsall BW6 and Haughton BW6) on the Robin Hood Way is a popular walk for many Groups but had been badly affected by flooding – an increasing issue since the closure of the pits and water no longer being pumped away. A diversion was agreed so the ROW can be navigated safely.

Waterside Bridge and permissive path – while the bridge is now in place, the path on the north bank is a permissive path and not a dedicated right of way. Following legal advice from Ramblers Central Office Paddy Tipping is leading a Ramblers team in discussions with Nottingham City Council to ensure the path is designated as a ROW.

Planning Applications – the team has responded to planning applications and objected where rights of way would be adversely affected. There have been some notable successes.

At **Farnsfield**, an application to build two properties at Station Lane was refused as the proposed access was BW29. This was a narrow lane with no footway. Thanks to Christine Statham for investigating this.

At **Harby**, an application to vary the conditions of an agreed development, to remove the requirement for a footway on Station Road was refused. Thanks to Frank Lomas for investigating this one.

At **Flintham** an application to build 14 properties to the east of the village which would have had an adverse impact on Flintham FP4 was refused. Thanks to Dave Johnson for responding to this one.

Trent Valley Way (TVW) – there have been meetings with the Trent Rivers Trust and Nottinghamshire County Council to agree the definitive route of the TVW through Nottinghamshire. This is part of the work by the Trent Rivers Trust on the whole of the River Trent. The Trust also asked us to survey this route. Rushcliffe Group undertook a pilot survey of the section of the route in their patch using new software. Following the success of this the Groups on the rest of the route (Southwell, Newark, Collingham and Retford assisted by Worksop) are completing the survey.

4. AREA MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Diana Munro)

	GROUP	01.10.24	30.09.25	Net gain/loss	Affiliates
NE01	Newark	180	177	-3	6
NE02	Nottingham	329	314	-15	3
NE03	Retford	88	90	2	0
NE05	Worksop	69	67	-2	1
NE07	Rushcliffe	307	298	-9	2
NE08	Broxtowe	189	194	5	0
NE09	Gedling	164	153	-11	0
NE10	Mansfield & Sherwood	167	162	-5	1
NE11	Southwell	83	81	-2	1
NE14	Collingham	56	41	-15	0
NE15	Vale of Belvoir	93	89	-4	2
NE50	Notts Derbys Walking Group	138	164	26	5
NE51	One Step Walkers	206	215	9	14
NE70	Robin Hood Way	3	7	4	2
NE96	Not in a group	148	155	7	0
	AREA TOTAL	2,220	2,207	-13	37
	NATIONAL TOTAL	105,721	108,387		

The number of new members electing not to join a group continues to grow – five years ago this number was around 50. The reasons for this are unclear, although some of you may have some thoughts on this. This is very frustrating for groups who are keen to grow their membership and would like to encourage these ‘not in group’ members to join their groups and get involved with their activities. I’ve checked the online application process on the Ramblers website which does highlight the benefits of being in a group and it is very easy to change groups, although it seems odd that areas are listed alongside groups in the drop down list.

	Notts Area	National
2015	2,235	107,369
2016	2,202	105,990
2017	2,203	104,694
2018	2,228	102,818
2019	2,234	102,038
2020	2,215	98,717
2021	2,382	101,130
2022	2,334	105,183
2023	2,265	104,487
2024	2,220	105,721

It is heartening to note the increase in the total national membership number, which is now the highest it has been in 10 years!

5. AREA TREASURER (Neil Stafford)

The annual accounts are presented below, with Income and Expenditure categorised in accordance with the Ramblers guidelines.

Main Funds		
Receipts	2024-25	2023-24
Ramblers Central	5,764.00	6,882.00
From Group		
Donations		
Total receipts	5,764.00.00	6,882.00
Expenditure		
Group Funding	3,864.00	2,507.00
Newsletters/publicity	248.41	800.00
Campaigns/casework	339.14	325.45
Meetings (inc. AGM)	865.08	1,220.27
Admin	20.70	46.15
Other		
Total payments	5,337.33	4,898.87
Surplus/(deficit)	426.67	1,983.13

There has been no income or expenditure in the Restricted or Self-funded categories in the either 2023-24, or 2024-25 financial year.

In accordance with Ramblers financial directives, the accounts have been subject to Independent Examination, the signed certificate is shown below. The certificate shows the end of year funds in each of the three categories.

Summary of financial year for Independent Examiner

Summary	Restricted	Main	Self-funded	Total
Total receipts	-	5,764.00	-	5,764.00
Total payments	-	5,337.33	-	5,337.33
Closing cash balance	3,497.61	6,807.35	-45.13	10,259.83
Net assets/liabilities (funds)	3,497.61	6,807.35	-45.13	10,259.83

Having carried out procedures in accordance with the Area and Group independent examination guidelines, I consider the " NE "accounts to give a fair representation of the Area's/Group's financial activities for the year to 30 September 2025.

Signed:

A. Bolton

Date:

22 October 2025

Name of examiner:

Andrew Bolton

(Alternatively, if you do not wish to print off this sheet please send in a signed copy of your own Area/Group accounts to GB office)

Although Central Office has now withdrawn its 2021 Restricted Funds directive in relation to Don't Lose Your Way (DLYW) funds, these continue to be shown as such in our Area accounts as most of the funds are retained for the Trent Hills claim.

At the end of the financial year the Area Main funds stood at £6,807.35, with Restricted Funds at £3,497.61.

The accounts show two broad functions:

- The costs of running Area
- The distribution of funds to Groups

Costs of Running Area

Points to note:

- Area submitted and received approval for a Budget of £1,900 (£4,375 in 23-24) which is included in the Receipts from CO.
- Campaigns/Casework includes £127.51 for a RoW training day held at Pleasley in November.
- Newsletters / publicity includes £194 for attending the County Show at Newark in May, and £52 for printing a new batch of 300 Area leaflets
- Meetings includes £155.88 for the 12-month Zoom licence, this is the first increase (£12) since Area first purchased a Zoom licence, in 2020

Membership Recruitment Initiatives

Area continues to hold £500 to support Group membership recruitment initiatives. Groups are welcome to submit proposals for consideration.

Budget for Financial Year 2025-26

As Area reserves are high in relation to our forecast expenditure in 2025-26, only £600 in funding was requested for the next financial year.

I am delighted to report that this Budget and that of all our Groups has been approved by Central Office.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all the Group Treasurers for their work in ensuring that the budget and annual returns were submitted to Central Office on time.



6. AREA TOURISM AND HERITAGE PATHS OFFICER (Chris Thompson)

Opening of Trent Vale Trail 28th June 2025

The Trent Vale Trail, a transformative rural connectivity project led by volunteer-run charity Friends of Trent Vale Trail (FoTVT), is now complete. More than £700,000 has been raised by the charity to make the 15-mile trail, linking Newark to the villages of Winthorpe, Collingham, Besthorpe, Girton, and South Clifton possible.

The project's focus was to enhance access to work, social, and leisure opportunities for residents by connecting rural communities through a safe, and environmentally sustainable active travel route. A total of twelve volunteers of the FoTVT led the project, working to raise the money to develop the trail for the benefit of local communities. They worked with landowners and key partners, such as the Newark Sustrans Volunteers, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, Ramblers Notts Area, Gusto Homes, Girton Sailing Club, local councils, and other local community groups and organisations.

Newark and Sherwood District Council awarded £287,000 in funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund, as well as the Newark and Sherwood Community Grant Scheme across recent years. In addition, The Garfield Weston Foundation provided funding for construction of the last section. The trail is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all, including walkers, cyclists, equestrians, and users of mobility aids.

The latest phase of works included surface upgrades; diversions and extensions of public footpaths to complete the route; and the installation of fencing and gates to accommodate landowner requirements and ensure safe passage. Claire Penny, portfolio holder for Sustainable Economic Development at the District Council, said: "We are pleased to support the Friends of Trent Vale Trail in completing this fantastic project through UK Government funding. The trail not only promotes active travel and wellbeing but also strengthens the social and economic fabric of our rural communities through improved connectivity. This investment reflects our commitment to sustainable economic development and inclusive access for all."

John Ford, of Friends of Trent Vale Trail, said: "The FoTVT trustees and volunteers are excited that our vision of safe active travel between Newark and South Clifton has been delivered. The group have worked hard to secure the funding to complete the Trent Vale Trail. The FoTVT team includes walking, cycling and horse-riding expertise and they have worked hard to make the trail accessible to residents and visitors of all ages and abilities." Work is now in hand to produce walking leaflets. Please take the opportunity to link onto this route, and particularly the last section from Girton to South Clifton

Erection of a Pedestrian across the River Trent at Colwick

We are delighted to report that a new Pedestrian Bridge over the River Trent is currently being erected at Colwick in Nottingham City going over to West Bridgford near the Nottingham Rugby sports ground. The bridge will be erected in November and will be opened to the public in Spring/early summer 2026. This will provide many access opportunities on both side of the River Trent including the opportunity of walking/Cycling into Nottingham West Bridgford.

However, the plans by Nottingham City Council are to make path on the Nottingham side of the river permissive and not a right of way. This is included in the Rights of Way report.

Report on Robin Hood Way 40th Anniversary event Thursday 29th May 2025

This event was held from Sherwood Forest Country Park walking from Sherwood Visitors Car park. Twenty-three walkers attended the event. Sadly, Paddy Tipping was unable to attend to lead the walk but forwarded a message. "The Robin Hood Way highlighted an important Nottinghamshire heritage link by promoting some of Nottinghamshire's most attractive countryside including much of the finest parts of Sherwood Forest and linking many of the finest tourist Nottinghamshire heritage sites. Delighted that the trail is 40 years and long may it welcome walkers to Nottinghamshire".

The Celebration Walk was a 5 mile walk around Sherwood Forest Country Park taking in Birklands, Budby South Forest, Centre Tree, Major Oak passing many former grand oak trees and returning to Sherwood Visitors Centre. Sadly, time did not allow us to visit St Mary's Church. Please note a walk leaflet is available and this route is now the Robin Hood 40th Anniversary Walk.

We were delighted to have welcomed walkers from several Rambling groups including the Nottingham Wayfarers Rambling club who were responsible for setting up the Robin Hood Way in 1985.

All the walkers who attended were given some very tasty fruit cake. Thank you, Rod & Jenny, for organising that.

Thank you for everyone who was involved in any way for your support and for the personal assistance from Robin Hood who gave his time to lead the walk. A successful and memorable occasion

Notts Guided Walks Programme 2025

We firstly thank all groups and members who kindly forwarded walks for the 2025 Notts Guided Walks programme. As reported last year we went into partnership with Walk Notts with the intention of reducing the amount of administration to put the walk programme together. Sadly, this did not work with no brochure being available and details of the walks being amalgamated into the Walk Notts website with no separate link. The Walks could no longer be accessed. I would like to apologise for the inconvenience this caused. Thanks to Neil Stafford we were able to put together a Notts Guided Walks programme starting in early July which was published on the Ramblers Notts Area website.

At the time of writing, work has begun to produce a 2026 Notts Guided Walks programme. Please can you forward your walks for the programme by end of January 2026. Thank you very much. Email Chris Thompson on Nottsrow15@outlook.com

We are aiming to produce both a website edition and a brochure (the latter is subject to obtaining grant funding). We are in the process of resolving our differences with Walk Notts with the aim of seeing away to work together in the future.

Groups and members to assist writing up a leaflet of circular Walks

We have asked previously if groups and members would assist by writing up circular walks to fully promote Nottinghamshire as a walking County. To achieve that we would very much welcome support from Groups and members to assist. Support will be available including adding a map of the walk, adding information/history of places visited on the walk or typing up the full walk from handwritten notes and any other information you require.

We hope that this year to add some new self-guided walks to our Area Website. We are asking our groups/members for the support to this project. Please contact us in the first instance with the walk you intend to write up so we can confirm we do not duplicate the walks. With the walk completed this would then be forwarded to the Area Committee for adoption and approval. Please email tourismheritage@nottsarearamblers.org.uk for any assistance.

Press & Publicity Officer

For several years now Ramblers Notts Area have tried to appoint a Press & Publicity Officer. Sadly, it has not been possible to fill that especially key role. I appeal for a member to come forward. The Tourism & Heritage Path Officer and Press & Publicity Officer can effectively work together to promote Nottinghamshire as a walking County. This would include producing leaflets and articles of tourist and heritage interest.

Please speak to the Area Secretary if you require any further information of the press & Publicity role. Thank you very much.

Finally, A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May you have many enjoyable walks in 2025/26.



7. AREA COMMUNICATIONS SUB-GROUP (Judith Anson)

It has not been possible to reconstitute the Communications Sub-Group given the issues within year and the vacant posts. Promoting Nottinghamshire Area Ramblers helps Groups recruit new members and demonstrates our role in protecting the countryside and rights of way.

Notts Area Website www.nottsarearamblers.org.uk

Brian Tuffnell, Area Webmaster reports that at the beginning of the year, our website enjoyed strong visitor numbers, supported by a range of engaging articles and content. However, activity gradually declined as fewer items of interest were available to post, which coincided with a drop in traffic. To keep the site fresh and appealing, I would greatly appreciate any contributions - articles, stories, or other items of interest that could be shared with our audience.

Share your favourite walk with your Ramblers friends

We all have a favourite Nottinghamshire walk. It may include a significant landmark, or a stunning viewpoint. Why not share it by having it posted on the self-guided walks section of our website. We are not asking you to write it all up. Simply send us a map (to info@nottsarearamblers.org.uk) with an outline of the route, the start location and points of interest, and we'll do the rest.

Notts Walker

We are seeking a new Editor but this will not be an elected Officer post and there is no requirement to attend Area Council. Please contact me if you have a creative flair and want to take our newsletter into the next phase.

Facebook (Brian Tuffnell)

Our **Facebook** page is also steadily gaining views and followers, albeit at a slower pace since we don't use advertising to promote it. Even so, I believe it remains a valuable platform worth maintaining. As with the website, I would welcome any ideas or content that could help us continue to grow and connect with people – webmaster@nottsarearamblers.org.uk

Nottinghamshire County Show

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Nottinghamshire County Show at Newark was a great success. I would like to thank everyone who helped putting up and taking down the stand and those Groups who attended to talk to the public about Ramblers and the importance of rights of way. The Show is 9th May in 2026.



GROUP ANNUAL REPORTS

8. Broxtowe Group (Keith Jacobs)

Broxtowe were able to maintain a full programme of walks this year with very few cancellations and attendance on walks has perhaps risen over the year. Our Sunday walks are generally longer and perhaps more demanding and we are certainly looking out for more leaders for these walks. Wednesday walks are perhaps more varied with a few more leisurely walks presented.

The new system for walk entry has worked out well for us, with leaders valuing the opportunity to add more detail about walks and to be able to make alterations, re-arrangements and so on. Our esteemed walks co-ordinator has still been overseeing this and completing the publication of walks. Sadly, he has made known his intention of standing down after our AGM.

As always, we are anxious to recruit new walk leaders and we will provide some practical instruction in map reading as well as support with completing the required online training.

Membership shows a slight increase over the year and we are certainly considering ways in which we might encourage new members to join. In this regard, we are hoping to fill our vacant publicity position on our committee.

Finances have remained stable. Though we will be spending something this year on walk leader training as well as the usual expenses.

Visits around the country: the Isle of Wight last Autumn and the Lakes in Spring, a river trip on the Trent in Summer and a long weekend in Malvern this Autumn, have been well supported and much enjoyed by all.



9. Collingham Group (Chris Adams)

This year has been a successful one in terms of walking - we have continued to organise a Sunday walk twice a month and a midweek, shorter walk some months. Because of our location we walk in the three counties Notts. Lincs. and Leicestershire with our most distant walk being at Anderby Creek on the coast and the highest being at Tealby in the Lincolnshire Wolds. Our December walks included mince pies and mulled wine. We had an excellent New Year's lunch at the pub in Bassingham in January and had our usual Summer lunch in August at the Bowls Club in Collingham, a chance to catch up with old friends.

We have made some small positive steps this year ensuring that all active members now carry the new format emergency contact card, a Whatsapp is up and running and three of our committee members are working on ways to reach out more effectively to potential recruits via a Facebook page. Meanwhile we continue to advertise ourselves in two local publications.

We were pleased we could organise two walks to complement the Area AGM in Collingham in February. We attended the Community Fair in Collingham in the Spring and were represented at the Notts. County Show in Newark in May.

We have a new treasurer and an independent examiner has been appointed. We spent some money on first aid kits so there is one available on every walk and we are ensuring that hi-viz gilets are available if there is any road walking.

As has been the case for some years now we are worried by declining numbers. Despite our best efforts to recruit there has been quite a drop since last year. When I joined the group some 17 years ago a turnout of 20+ was the norm but now sometimes we are in single figures. We do often get members from other groups joining us now that our walks are up on the website and we make them very welcome - some members have brought along their teenage grandchildren and that has been great fun.

We are aware of the Ramblers training programs for walk leaders and will do our best to fulfil them. Proposals emanating from Ramblers nationally for reorganisation locally have met with little enthusiasm from our group. We continue to be financially sound with few outgoings.

10. Gedling Group (Jonathan Ankers)

Group membership continues to struggle to be maintained. There is a critical shortage of walk leaders and the Group is heavily dependent upon walks organised by a very small number of members. This problem, following Covid, was made worse by extra insurance responsibilities placed on prospective leaders. Now, the requirement for walk leader training will make the situation even worse. The average age of the Group members continues to rise, and will be a contributory factor to the decline in walk participation and leaders. Health, among other issues, will lead to significant vacancies on the committee for the coming year.

Heather Darwent organised very enjoyable coach trips; to Beverley in May and Bridlington in August. Walks were led, in each case, by Chairman Stephen Dobbs. John Crofts led a more unusual bus trip to Loughborough. The walk included hearing the carillon of bells. Chris Thompson's programme of themed Nottinghamshire walks was also included in our offering.

New members are still being attracted, but unfortunately these are more than matched by others leaving for various reasons. The result is a slow decline in membership over the years. Competition from walking groups outside the Ramblers Association is a significant factor. Membership has declined from 163 to 153 over the last year.

11. Mansfield and Sherwood Group (Brian Tuffnell)

Walks & Social events

Our year began with a coach holiday to Ilfracombe, where everyone enjoyed four memorable walks. The highlight of the festive season was our BIG Christmas party, a wonderful success complete with live music from two talented artists.

February brought another visit to the local Hospital Troupe pantomime, supporting charities with laughter and cheer. In March, a group ventured to the Elan Valley for a holiday filled with excellent walks led by the centre, while our theatre outing that month took us to see *Cabaret*.

April saw us joining Julie's delightful Easter Egg Hunt walk, and May was packed with variety: helping at the Nottinghamshire Show, attending a fascinating glass-blowing demonstration, and taking a coach trip to Liverpool.

July offered a guided tour that proved both engaging and informative, followed in September by an equally interesting visit to the Clipstone Headstocks. Autumn brought one of our most successful outings—a walk to the East Markham Apple Festival. Along the way, we explored the historic lock-up in Tuxford and enjoyed a visit to the Walks of Life Museum.

AGM

We had a very successful AGM with two walks on offer walk prior to the meeting followed by a fuddle, which had plenty on offer. The meeting was well attended as usual, and all committee members were re-elected except one who has decided not to continue this year.

Committee Meetings

We have continued to have open Committee meetings where any member can come along and learn about what's involved with running the group.

Publicity

Our Facebook site is thriving, effectively advertising our walks and sharing our achievements. Support continues to grow, occasionally bringing in new walkers. We also regularly update the local papers and newsletters with our achievements and litter-picking efforts.

Walk Leaders

This year has once again seen us recruit new walk leaders.

Membership

Our current membership stands at 161 and although we have lost members over the year, we continue to attract new members.

Litter Picking

Our litter picking team continue to have a monthly litter picking walks.

12. Newark Group (Brigid Murphy)

It has been another successful year for Newark Ramblers. Membership numbers have remained healthy at around 180. In the year to September, 32 walk leaders between them led 143 Ramblers walks in Nottinghamshire and the surrounding counties, in addition to which some of our members lead wellbeing walks in a number of locations every week.

The group is also active socially, and has continued regular meals out as well as a ceilidh, a “sports day” evening, a garden party and a theatre outing.

Most of our walk leaders have either completed the new national on-line training or have self-certified that they have led 12 Ramblers walks in the last three years, and a group session to cover the training has been organised for late January for those who have expressed an interest. Some of our members have indicated that they would like to take part in light footpath maintenance work, and we are currently exploring with Central Office if and how this could be organised.

13. Nottingham Group (Linda Honey)

We have had another very successful year. We have 309 registered members. Our monthly coaches maintain a high attendance of around 36 on average. Our twice monthly Wednesday local walks attract over 30 walkers each month, divided into two ability groups. We average seven to ten miles on these walks. We also have a once a month stroll group that has walks of around five to six miles, and these average approximately 12 walkers each time. In addition, we have a monthly Sunday local walk, attracting approximately 12 - 18 walkers, each time.

We have a Christmas meal planned for the Wednesday walkers at the Victoria in Beeston and two separate Christmas meals for the different coach walks, in Matlock.

We now have 24 walk leaders registered on the new walk leaders rulings. And a few more who have said they will do it. We have sadly lost several walk leaders who have been put off by the new regime.

We are extremely concerned about the governance review changes, which seem impossible to wholly comprehend! We are glad they are being delayed, at least. I feel the delay has probably been due to an unforeseen legal loophole that has caused them a problem. I would like to think it is delayed because they have taken note of their discontented membership. However we rather doubt that this is the case.

14. Notts and Derby Walking Group

No report received

15. One Step Walkers Group (Neil Sherratt)

2025 has been another great year for the Club, with a great selection of walks to suit all abilities as well as social evenings and weekends away. This is the second year we have seen a slight increase in our membership; we now have 212 members and 15 affiliated members. We are looking forward to 2026 when we will continue to provide an excellent variety of walks and hopefully continue to attract new members to our group.

Group Walk Leaders

In 2025 we have undertaken 117 group walks totalling just under 1,251 walking miles. We have provided midweek walks, Tuesday evening walks, and walks on every Sunday and most Saturdays.

This year 33 of our members have led walks for us, on behalf of the Committee and all our members I would like to say a massive thank you. A special thank you to those members who have led many walks for us, our top contributing Walk Leader this last year, Paul Adcock, has led 13 walks, closely followed by Andrew Yeoman, Sue Ecob, Jenny Thompson, Dot Sherratt (& myself). And a special thank you to four of our members who have led five walks each: Andrew & Lesley, Jenny Thompson, John Herbert and Steve Perkins. And a massive thank you to the remaining 10 walk leaders, many of whom have led their first walk for us this year. Thank you for your time and effort, providing many great walks for your fellow walkers and thereby keeping our walking group going. Please, please, please, keep up the great work. Without walk leaders we do not have a walks programme to offer.

To all our members, please make 2026 the year you commit to leading a walk. If you could lead one or two walks for us, this will make a great difference. Support is available - just contact one of our walk coordinators who will, help and advise you to plan and lead a walk for the group.

Group Walk Coordinators

To facilitate the walks being on the website, our 'Walk Coordinators' have tirelessly asked, pleaded, coerced and press-ganged people into leading walks, and have then uploaded them onto our website. Massive thanks to Sue Ecob, John Herbert and Dot Sherratt (who has recently joined as Saturday walks coordinator). And for 2026 we look forward to welcoming Julie Archer as the Tuesday Evening Walks coordinator.

For the majority of 2025 the magnificent Sue Ecob has single handedly coordinated Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday evening walks. Many, many thanks Sue, your continued commitment and support is very much appreciated.

Day	No of Walks	Walk Coordinator
Midweek Walks	15	John Herbert
Tuesday Evening	10	Sue Ecob
Saturday Walks	39	Sue Ecob / Dot Sherratt
Sunday Walks	53	Sue Ecob

Membership

Encouragingly, for the second year running, we have had another slight increase in our group membership. We now have 212 members and 15 affiliated members. I would like to thank Kara Rimmer for all the work she has undertaken as the Membership Secretary, we are very grateful for the time and effort you dedicate to the role.

Club Accounts

The unaccounted-for balance in the Club account as of 18/11/25 was £630. For the 2025-2026 year we have secured an annual funding allowance from the Ramblers of £327. This sum will assist in the running of the group and our ongoing expenses. Many thanks to Dave Croft, our longest standing Committee member, for his continued work through the year and many thanks for again standing for re-election as the group treasurer.

Socials & Holidays

This year the Group have offered 18 social events and 4 holiday events. Our social events have included theatre visits, meals out and our annual Summer Picnic. This year's Summer Picnic was held in Alstonefield Village Hall where 33 members shared their signature dishes and chose to do one of three walks during the day. The numbers attending the Summer Picnic have declined slightly in recent years, to better understand the reasons for this, we have recently sent out a simple survey to our members, seeking their views as to how we can improve the event for 2026. We will be analysing the feedback to see how we can improve.

There have been four holidays this year, massive thanks to the Group Members who have organised these, we have visited the Cotswolds, North Yorkshire Moors, Norfolk and the Malvern's.

Looking towards 2026, currently we have a weekend away to the South Coast which very quickly became fully booked. We understand that other holiday events may be in the pipeline, but if you would like to organise a weekend away or a social event in the coming year, it would be very much appreciated by our members. Just contact our Socials and Holidays coordinator who will help with getting the event on our events calendar and advise with best practice to structure and coordinate the event.

Group Newsletter & Publicity

Many thanks to Andy Kind, who has over the past year, composed and sent out our Group newsletters. Andy has completed three years in this role and will be standing down at the end of the current year. Many thanks Andy for your dedication to the role it has been greatly appreciated.

And a big thank you to our Social Media coordinator Ros Chester for her work promoting our walking group through our social media accounts. Our success in maintaining and increasing our membership is in no small part down to Ros's Social Media work promoting our Group. Many thanks Ros.

Webmaster/ IT support

A huge thank you to our webmaster Darren Williams who provides all our I.T. support free of charge. Darren operates his own I.T. business and very kindly provides a top-quality professional service for us. We are extremely grateful for his time, assistance and generosity.

For 2026 Darren is planning an upgrade to our website, providing a more secure environment for our data and better functionality. Many thanks Darren for your help and support.

Area Representative

The Area Ramblers group provides support for our Group as well as dealing with local and national issues. Through Yinka attending these meetings we have been able to obtain clarification on issues, as well feeding back to our group issues raised by other Ramblers Groups and issues raised at National Ramblers meetings. Many thanks Yinka Soetan for your time and support attending the Area Ramblers meetings.

Group Secretary

Behind the scenes, for the past three years, we have had Hilary Hughes as our Walking Group Secretary. Your organisation, excellent communication, and reliability have helped to keep the walking group running smoothly. We're extremely grateful for the time and energy you have put into the role. A huge thank you Hilly for three years of outstanding work.

We'd also like to thank Terri Johnson who has come forward and volunteered to take on the Group Secretary role after our AGM. We look forward to welcoming you onboard Terri and look forward to the year ahead.

Summary

As a result of the continued commitment, support and work of the committee, we have had a successful year with a fantastic selection of varied walks. Our social events and holidays calendar is looking healthy. Our walks are well-attended, and we feel we are supporting our members and the Ramblers' objectives.

In the coming year we will continue to focus on providing a great selection of walks, recruitment of new walk leaders and consolidating our membership numbers.

Finally, a massive thank you to the Committee and Group Members who volunteer their time to help us all enjoy the walking and social events that we have provided throughout the year

16. Retford Group

No report received



17. Rushcliffe Group (Julie Lloyd)

We have enjoyed another successful and enjoyable year.

We have seen committed and dedicated committee members retire and we thank them, our existing team and our new recruits for all the work they have completed this year.

We have attended training sessions to improve our knowledge and keep our volunteers safe and mastered changes to the online walks manager. Our registered Walk Leaders are completing the training required to maintain their status with National Ramblers and all should have completed by the end of the year.

We have recruited new Walk Leaders and have completed a full programme of walks. Sunday (53) and mid-week (18), holiday (11). We have continued with our booking system and continue to encourage car sharing where possible.

Holidays included:

- a spring weekend in Sedbergh, enjoyed by 35 of our members;
- a weekend in Dovedale enjoyed by 21 of our members.

Social events included:

- A Christmas Lunch at Ashmores in Radcliffe, preceded by our usual short walk to work up an appetite;
- A Walk Leaders Skittle Evening

We keep in touch with our members via a quarterly newsletter providing reports on various activities, helpful advice such as reporting issues when on walks, reinforcing guidance from Central Office, notice of events and training and general chit-chat.

We have experienced a slight dip in membership in 2025 but are still attracting new members. To date we have a total of 301 active members.

18. Southwell Group

No report received

19. Vale of Belvoir Group (Angela Turner)

We had a successful, 30th anniversary, year with a walk every Sunday, a series of evening strolls in the summer, a weekend away and several social events. Instead of a Christmas dinner we opted for an enjoyable post-Christmas lunch at The Duck at Woolsthorpe. In the summer, we had a picnic lunch with tea and cakes in the garden of two of our members, to which we invited some of our past members. At the end of July, we also had our popular and enjoyable annual skittles event.

We had a very enjoyable and fun weekend away, based at HF's Peverill of the Peak Hotel at Thorpe in the White Peak in Derbyshire. The area's proximity to Nottingham facilitated receiving the six walks on offer and meant some members could just come for the day. Nineteen members in total joined the walks.

We try to prepare three-month walk programmes a couple of months in advance but getting walk leaders is a continuing issue, in part because members often have other commitments. In addition, for various reasons, some walk leaders have left the group this year, while the Ramblers requirement for walk leader training has also reduced the number

currently available and willing to lead walks. Seven members have qualified by experience and another seven have done the online training. It seems likely that this requirement has affected some members' willingness to be a walk leader.

Our blog continues to be an invaluable and well used resource, providing details of walks, which can be updated as needed to keep members informed of any changes, as well as a very useful record of previous walks.

There have been several changes to our committee this year, with a new Treasurer elected at the last AGM, and a Secretary and Chair taking over during the year.

20. Worksop (Diana Munro)

Our membership continues to hover around the 70 mark, which includes some affiliated members. We have been very pleased to welcome several new members this year, but sadly the numbers leaving for various reasons has matched the numbers joining. We are always so pleased to welcome new members, especially ones that join us on our walks! Our walk reports on Facebook, complete with lovely photos taken by our members, are enjoyed by over 400 followers, including we hope potential new members. We also promote our group by putting flyers and copies of our programmes in various public places.

Our group has put on 44 walks since the beginning of our current programme and most walks have been well attended. I was sorry to miss quite a few walks this year, including a coach trip to Quarry Bank, due to having a hip replacement in June but I am very pleased to say that the group continued perfectly well without me. We have a very strong core of about 30 walkers, including 17 fully trained registered walk leaders. Everyone is very supportive of one another and if ever a leader can't manage to lead their walk for whatever reasons, another leader quickly steps in. It is pleasing to note that most leaders have become skilled at using the Ramblers App to register walkers, despite the App not always cooperating due to technical problems.

Our leaders are already planning next year's walks and work will be begin on collating them into our usual varied walk programme in the new year, with final publication in March. We aim to put on a walk most Sundays throughout the year and alternate Thursdays.

This year's Worksop Ramblers Getaway was three days' walking in the Hadrian's Wall country, based in Haltwhistle, in September. 26 of us thoroughly enjoyed the walks organised, reccied and lead by two of our members – Bob and Thelma – they already know how much we appreciate them!

At the time of writing, we are looking forward to our annual Christmas lunch in December.

22. Robin Hood Way FlexiGroup

No report received.

End of Report

Report photos:

Except where stated, photos by Dave Hobson, Vale of Belvoir Group

P3 – Folly Castle & Folly Forts , Newstead Abbey

P10 – Ornamental Bridge, Clumber Park

P13 – Queen's Sconce, Newark

P14 – Newark County Show 2025 – Brian Tuffnell

P15 – Beeston Weir

P22 – Hexgreave Park