

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 16TH JULY 2019 AT 7.30 PM AT BILSTHORPE

Minutes

Present Jim Norris (Area Chair), James McGill (Area vice-chair), Judith Anson (Area Secretary & Membership Secretary), Steve Parkhouse (Minutes Secretary, Newsletter Editor & ROW Secretary), Barbara Dobson & David Dobson (Nottingham), Allan Rogers (ROW Secretary), Alex Staniforth (Area Press & Publicity, Mansfield & Sherwood), Chris Thompson (Area Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer), Alan Wilson & Jeremy Pratt (Rushcliffe), Keith Ross, Janet Ross & Julie Duncan (Worksop), Susan Rick (Mansfield & Sherwood), Ruth White & David Garside (Retford), John Young & Dave Hobson (Vale of Belvoir)

1. Apologies

Alex Staniforth (Area Press & Publicity Officer), Heather Ingram (One Step Walkers), Barrie Evison (Southwell), Trevor Griffiths (Rushcliffe)

2. Death of David Hunt

Members were informed of the death of David Hunt. Chris Thompson spoke about David who had been highly qualified, liked, well respected, jovial and had borne his serious illnesses quietly. Despite this and having many other interests, David had devoted his time to Ramblers. David had been Ramblers National Treasurer before becoming Area Chair. Judith added that a tribute to David, written by James, was leading the Area website. Council held a minute's silence.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (16th April 2019)

Approved. Proposed: Alan Wilson, Seconded: Allan Rogers

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 4.1 **Trent Hills (Minute 5.4)** – the timetable of action had been agreed in April but NCC had not referred it to the Planning Inspectorate. The advice from CO was the matter could not be referred to the Ombudsman until the complaints process had been exhausted. NCC had indicated they were referring the matter to Legal Services, which supported Highways. On Steve's last visit to NCC to consult files, he had not been admitted and been left in the reception area. Janet Ross suggested if NCC missed agreed deadlines, the NCC Portfolio holder should be written to with a copy to the CEO. Steve was concerned about who prepared the statement of case and that the case was constantly being delayed. Alan Wilson added that Ramblers should follow the NCC complaints procedure, but not against the Council officer involved. It was agreed that a complaint should be made, using NCC procedure, about the lack of action on Trent Hills. Jim and Steve would work on this.

Proposed: Brian Dobson Seconded: Janet Ross

- 4.2 **Memorial to Des Whicher (Minute 5.12)** – Council received a paper *Appendix II.1* asking for Minute 5.12 of 16th April 2019 to be set aside as it was in contravention of Treasurer's Guidance. Council agreed the minute be set aside.

Proposed: Janet Ross Seconded: Alan Wilson

If Area Council received a future request to contribute towards a memorial bench for Des Whicher, the matter would be discussed again.

4.2 Publicity Material (Minute 5.9) – response given in Appendix II.

5. Area Officers Reports

- Chair Appendix I** – Jim asked the minutes record the appreciation of Council for the work carried out to make the CEO visit on 6th June a success. An immediate problem was the lack of an Area Treasurer and CO would be sending out an advert to all Notts members asking for someone to volunteer. Volunteers in Groups did not have spare capacity to help and this could encourage others to come forward.
- Secretary Appendix II** – If a Group did not come forward to host the 2020 Area AGM, Area Officers would need to manage this. As not all Groups were present, it was agreed Judith would contact all Groups asking for a Group to volunteer or two Groups could work together. This email would list those Groups that had hosted the AGM over the last 10 years. **Post Meeting Note:** Vale of Belvoir has come forward to arrange the Area AGM.
- Treasurer Appendix III** – Jeremy encouraged Group Treasurers to contact him if they had queries or required advice on the Ramblers Annual Return Form (Short). Council was asked to decide on the following:
ROW Committee Budget – to hold a budget of £300 per quarter to cover expenses for ROW claims, establishing who owns land, etc. If additional funding was required, a request would be brought to Council. Members agreed £300 for the ROW Committee
Proposed: Alan Wilson Seconded: David Dobson
Peak & Northern Footpath Society – Area have supported the PNFS for many years. The annual subscription is £22.50. Members queried what PNFS actually did and while Council voted to approve the annual subscription, members requested that they be provided with additional information before a future renewal.
Proposed: Chris Thompson Seconded: Alan Wilson
Campaign for the Protection of Rural England – Area had been a member for many years. Jim had attended the CPRE AGM to represent Area and felt there was no other organisation with equal legal expertise. Ramblers Central Office encouraged Areas to join as the information provided to assist with ROW claims was extensive. The annual subscription was £36. Council members questioned whether Areas should be paying a separate subscription or whether Ramblers should have a corporate membership from CO. A question was also raised on whether the subscription was in line with Ramblers charitable objectives. It was agreed the 2019/20 subscription be paid by Area but CO be asked whether corporate membership was available.
Proposed: Steve Parkhouse Seconded: Jim Norris
- Rights of Way Secretaries Appendix IV** – no questions
- Countryside Officer Appendix V** – no questions
- Membership Secretary Appendix VI** - no questions
- Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer Appendix VII**
Chris had invited members of a working party on the ‘Mayflower Pilgrim Ramblers Trail’ to give a presentation. The key points:

- the anniversary was in 2020, a number of the pilgrims had been from Bassetlaw and a large number of visitors were anticipated
- a long distance path had been identified linking Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire and Lincolnshire; circular walks were also being planned; a guidebook would be published
- the 110 mile route map was shown to Council; it started from Retford then over the Trent into Lincolnshire where the majority of the trail went to Boston; there was no known route in Lincs so assumptions had been made; most sections of the proposed trail had been walked by volunteers
- the proposed circular walks were all in Notts
- Guide Book - Chris Latimer had written historical sections giving the story of the Pilgrims and what happened after they left Boston
- this was part of a national commemoration of the Pilgrims for which £500,000 had been granted to specific projects (but not this proposed trail)
- the project was ready for implementation

Council members were asked for questions with answers from Chris Thompson or the working party members:

- **Q.** were Lincolnshire Area Ramblers involved as the majority of the route was in Lincs? **A.** Lincs Area Ramblers had been contacted in May 2018. They had no objection but would not be participating in the creation of the route or the Guidebook. The majority of the route in Lincs used established ROWs.
- **Q.** the continued management of the route, storage of books, book sales, etc required considerable organisation and this should be within a separate organisation such as the Robin Hood Way to Guided Walks Programme **A.** This would take considerable time to organise and the book and route needed to be ready for the 2020 anniversary so the organisation, etc needed to be managed by Notts Area Ramblers. Chris had been working with the Chief Executive of the Pilgrim Routes - none of the £500,000 funding was available although the working party believed the route to be the best of the projects.
- **Q.** what was Council being asked to do? **A.** Funding was required to publish the book, establish signs on the route, publicity, etc. Chris wanted Council to agree to him approaching Central Office for funding but then explained he had already arranged a meeting with the Area Support Officer. **Q.** Jim asked why the Chair and Secretary had not been notified of the meeting. **A.** Chris replied he thought CO had notified them. Chris also wanted CO to tell Lincs Area Ramblers that they should support the project.

Judith and Jeremy stated their view that a separate organisation should be created to request funding from various sources, including Ramblers, to publish the book, manage the book sales and to ensure the future of the path. This could not be managed by Notts Area Ramblers Officers. Chris commented that he had published 3 books in the past. Chris stated the next step would be for CO staff to report back to Judith as Area Secretary on Ramblers view on the trail. A report would be made to the October Area Council.

5.9 **Press & Publicity Officer** *Appendix IX* - no questions

- 5.10 **Policy on Memorials** *Appendix X* this would be discussed at the October Council and members were asked to send in the views of their Group. Immediate comments were: that criteria should be established for a memorial; that it should be up to Groups, rather than Area creating a policy; was a policy necessary for £25?

6. Group Reports *Appendix XI*

Rushcliffe had recently visited Tissington Hall where the party had been met by the owner. Alan Wilson recommended the Hall to other Groups.

7. Discussion Topic – Press & Publicity

Jim apologised to members but it was not possible to have the discussion session as the meeting had over run. It was agreed this would be the discussion topic for October.

8. Nottinghamshire Wolds Way

Alan Wilson reported that extensions to the Wolds Way were being considered to improve public transport links and he had been in contact with Notts County Council. The proposals were to extend the route at the west end so that it starts at the Clifton Park and Ride tram terminus and continues through Gotham via Barton Moor, then across Gotham Moor to the current start point at Bunny. At the east the walk was being extended a couple of miles north from Cropwell Butler to Bingham market place. Alan would keep Council informed.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 15th October 2019 at 7.30 pm