

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2020**

Minutes

This meeting was conducted on Zoom due to the Covid-19 lockdown preventing physical meetings.

Present: Jim Norris Area Chair, Judith Anson Area Secretary, Neil Stafford Area Treasurer, Steve Parkhouse Area ROW Secretary, Sue Jones Area Countryside Officer, Chris Thompson Area Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer, Rod Fillingham Area Membership Secretary, Alex Staniforth Area Press & Publicity Officer, Jenny Fillingham Council Member, James McGill Council Member, Joyce Pedersen Newark, David & Barbara Dobson Nottingham, Alan Wilson Rushcliffe, Sue Rick Mansfield & Sherwood, Dave Johnson Southwell, Maggie Langley Notts & Derbys, John Young Vale of Belvoir, Heather Ingram One Step Walkers, Allan Rogers Robin Hood Way Flexi-Group

1. Apologies the following Groups did not participate in the Zoom meeting but had sent in votes – Retford, Ravenshead & Hucknall, Worksop, Broxtowe, Gedling, Collingham

2. Report – Jim reported on the sad death of Barry Cordery who members would remember as the representative of Broxtowe for many years.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (21st July 2020)

Approved

Proposed: Chris Thompson

Seconded: John Young

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4.1 **Minute 3.8 Central Mailing System** – it had been agreed to contact Central Office suggesting that a central mailing system be set up rather than Areas and Groups using commercial systems such as Mailchimp as these might not comply with GDPR. As a similar motion had been presented to General Council and it was agreed not to pursue this at the present time.

5. Area Officers Reports

5.1 **Chair Appendix I**

Jim thanked Allan Rogers for his many years of service on Area Council and welcomed Sue Jones who had been co-opted as Area Countryside Officer. Thanks to national pressure from Ramblers, walks were now allowed with up to 30 people under the rules for outdoor sports. Jim's report set out the challenges to the ROW network, the Area ROW structure and Officers. Members were asked to send their views on the Area ROW structure to Jim and a detailed paper would be submitted to January's Council. Although detail on the Agriculture Bill was limited, the changes to planning legislation and the criminalisation of trespass were of particular concern. Area was working with Central Office on these issues but individuals could submit their own views on the Planning for the Future White Paper and contact their MP to ask that ROW be protected. The 2026 deadline for Lost Way claims was becoming critical.

5.2 **Secretary Appendix II**

Judith stated the 2021 AGM would need to be held on Zoom and asked Area Council to support this. In addition, it was proposed a letter be sent to all members who had not given their email address to Ramblers to inform them of the AGM and asking them to provide their email address to receive future editions of the Notts Walker. In answer to a question, Judith confirmed that hard copies of the AGM papers had not been sent out for several years and this had been supported by CO. Obtaining email addresses would also benefit Groups who would be able to contact these members in future. Although the precise costs would need to be calculated it was thought to be roughly £350 and the exact cost would be presented to the January Area Council..

Proposed:

That the 2021 AGM be held on Zoom

Proposed Judith Anson

Seconded Rod Fillingham

Vote: 22 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions, Carried

That a letter be sent to all members without an email address at a cost of approximately £350.

Proposed Judith Anson

Seconded Neil Stafford

Vote: 21 for, 1 against, 0 abstentions Carried

5.3 **Treasurer** *Appendix III*

Neil confirmed Area had purchased a Zoom licence as meetings could not be held at Bilsthorpe until restrictions were removed. This would be used for all meetings of Area Officers, ROW Committee, etc and the cost was set against the annual room hire costs of £90. Retrospective approval was sought from Area Council for this purchase at a cost of £143.88. In answer to a question, Neil confirmed Groups could also purchase a Zoom licence from their budget.

Proposed:

That retrospective approval be given for the purchase of a Zoom annual licence at a cost of £143.88

Proposed Neil Stafford

Seconded Alex Staniforth

Vote: 22 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions Carried

Neil thanked all Group Treasurers for submitting their returns on time and for the extra work caused by cancellations of holidays and social events.

Council received papers about the membership recruitment and retention initiative from the Rushcliffe Group working with the Vale of Belvoir and Walking for Health. The cost was £500 and £250 had been contributed by Rushcliffe Borough Council and £125 by Rushcliffe Group. Area was asked to contribute the remaining £125. At the July Area Council a budget of £425 had been agreed to support Group initiatives for the recruitment of new members and Neil proposed the £125 be taken from there.

Proposed:

That £125 be granted to Rushcliffe Group for the Membership Recruitment and Retention Initiative

Proposed Neil Stafford

Seconded Jim Norris

Vote: 22 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions Carried

Alan Wilson, Chair of Rushcliffe thanked Area Council for their support.

5.4 **Rights of Way Secretary** *Appendix IV& IVa*

Steve explained the legal obligations of NCC to process ROW claims and the action Area could take including referring the matter to the Ombudsman. Jim added that ROW claims were taking too long and asked Area Council to authorise the Chair and Rights of Way Secretary to take action at the appropriate time as necessary. The action would be reported to the Area Council meeting following the action but would not be delayed to obtain permission on each action. In answer to a question, Jim clarified that this referred to all rights of way.

Proposed:

That the Chair and ROW Secretary be authorised to take action as necessary on ROW claims that had been delayed

Proposed Steve Parkhouse

Seconded Alan Wilson

Vote: 20 for, 1 against, 1 abstention Carried

5.5 **Countryside Officer** *Appendix V*

The key issues for Ramblers were the White Paper "Planning for the Future", Notts Minerals Local Plan criminalising trespass and the Agriculture Bill. The NFU and CLA were lobbying for legislative change to allow farmers to quickly and temporarily divert ROW where livestock were grazing to protect the public from harm – this included pheasants. Ramblers was following this up nationally. Council thanked Sue for her first report.

5.6 **Membership Secretary** *Appendix VI*

Report noted and that national membership figures had risen slightly.

5.7 **Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer** *Appendix VII*

Report noted.

5.8 **Communications Subcommittee** *Appendix VIII*

Sue was thanked for the Facebook page. Maggie reported the Notts & Derbys Group was hoping to set up Instagram and Twitter accounts.

5.9 **Press & Publicity Officer** *Appendix IX*

Alex explained the work on adding self-guided walks to the website. There was an issue about the use of OS mapping and Alex would follow up with CO whether it could be used on the website. Ravenshead & Hucknall had printed a compendium of local walks and all the Group members had received a copy. Groups asked if they could have a copy to include walks in their programme. Judith asked Groups to contact the Group direct at randhramblers@hotmail.co.uk The Notts Wolds Way had used Open Street Mapping.

6. Group Reports

The following comments were made:

Mansfield & Sherwood reported their membership had increased.

Newark had also had new members who were enjoying their walking.

One Step Walkers had a walker test positive for Covid-19; all walkers on that walk had been notified; the Group's registration systems had worked well. Area had been notified and Jim thanked the Group for how it had been handled.

Notts & Derbys Walkers had also had a walker test positive. Maggie thanked all the volunteers organising the walks who had to make regular changes due to rule changes while also working full time. The Group used Eventbrite for booking onto walks; it was free and useful for track and trace.

Southwell had been able to organise walks but the rules had made it complicated. Jim commended all Groups for organising walk programmes.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at 7.30 PM on Tuesday, 19th January and it was assumed this would also be on Zoom.