

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AREA RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 16TH JANUARY 2024

Minutes

Present Sue Rick (Area Chair and Mansfield & Sherwood), Adrian Amer (Vice-Chair), Judith Anson (Area Secretary), Neil Stafford (Area Treasurer), Tony Norcross (Minutes Secretary), Chris Thompson (Area Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer), Martyn Gill (Mansfield & Sherwood), Mike Stock (Rushcliffe), Jim Norris (Gedling), James McGill (Newark), Yinka Soetan (One Step Walkers), Paul Fenton and John Young (Vale of Belvoir) and Dave Johnson (Southwell)

- 1 Apologies: Alex Ellis (Groups Officer), Diana Munro (Membership Secretary and
Workshop), Linda Honey (Nottingham), Keith Jacobs (Broxtowe), Dave Johnson (Robin
Hood Way Flexi Group), Joyce Pedersen (Newark), Brian Tuffnell (Area Webmaster and
Mansfield & Sherwood), Keith & Janet Ross (Workshop)
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meetings
- 2.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 17th October were approved as a correct record.
Proposed: Mike Stock Seconded: Dave Johnson (Southwell)
- 2.2 Minutes of the Special meeting held on 21st November were approved as a correct
record
Proposed: John Young Seconded: Neil Stafford
- 3 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
None
- 4 Area Officers Reports
- 4.1 **Area Chair** Appendix I
There were no questions.
- 4.2 **Secretary** Appendix II
Extraordinary General Council – members were concerned about the money spent on
the EGC as the purpose was unclear. The strategy could have been discussed at the
April GC. To stay within budget one Group had decided to reduce the sum paid to walk
leaders for recces and there was concern about how subscriptions were being used.
Very little of the additional national funding was received by Groups and money should
be spent in the interests of Ramblers members. Judith was asked to raise this with
Central Office.
Nottinghamshire Routes & Rides 3 – Judith had discussed this with Neil Lewis but a
response had not been received.
Group Achievements for AGM – Sue Rick was preparing display boards for the AGM and
asked all Groups to contribute details of their achievements over the last year with
photographs. Sue referred to examples given in Groups reports.
Notts County Show 17th May – Groups were asked to volunteer to attend the Show and
support the Area team. This was good PR for Ramblers.
Area Website – www.nottsarearamblers.org.uk the new Webmaster asked Groups to
comment on the changed website and let him have ideas
(webmaster@nottsarearamblers.org.uk)
opening up trips and events – Dave Johnson (RHW) had suggested a section in future
Group reports and on the website where Groups were asking for others to attend coach

trips or holidays to increase attendance. Members thought this was a good idea and asked Judith to consider how this could be implemented.

Venue for future meetings – Dave Johnson (RHW) had also suggested a change of venue for Council meetings. Dave suggested The White Post (the A614 roundabout Farnsfield) which had an upstairs room with access to bar, drinks and food. Members asked Judith to establish possible costs, car parking and availability of wifi. This would be discussed at the April Council.

Tony Norcross – Tony was standing down at the AGM and was thanked for his service as Minutes Secretary.

4.3 **Treasurer** Appendix III

Neil highlighted the need for data security. When this had previously been raised there had been a suggestion the Central Office would provide a data repository. In the absence of a central solution, Neil would raise this at the Cluster meeting to see if other Areas had set up a system. There would be cost implications and this would return to Council for a decision.

4.4 **Rights of Way Secretary** Appendix IVa & IVb

Paul Fenton spoke to Appendix IVb Guidance to Developers on Solar Energy. This had been created by the Rights of Way Committee as there was no Central Office guidance on paths affected by solar developments. A version of the document had been adopted by Ramblers and appeared on Assemble as guidance to volunteers. District Coordinators used the document to reply to applications and would discuss it with developers at an early stage if possible. Members discussed the document and the following comments were made:

- the police insisted on CCTV around solar farms because of theft but the cameras should be angled inwards so walkers were not under surveillance
- there was currently no national Ramblers policy on solar arrays and battery farms as the documents had been removed
- the only information was on Assemble and therefore available only to volunteers, not members or the public
- rural locations were being chosen by developers as there would be fewer objections
- whether applications should be objected to was different to requesting mitigation as set out in the guidance
- there was a need to review the number of applications in a particular location and their impact, rather than just consider a single application.

Council was asked to vote on accepting the guidance to be used by the ROW Committee with the addition of the comment on inward facing cameras.

For: 13 Against: 0 Abstain: 1

The document was accepted. Paul and the Rights of Way Committee were thanked for producing the guidance.

4.5 **Countryside Officer** – Jim Norris would be standing at the AGM for Countryside Officer and had attended a meeting of the D2N2 Walking and Cycling Alliance to represent Nottinghamshire Ramblers. A new East Midlands Combined Authority will be established with an elected Mayor and the election is 2nd May. The D2N2 Alliance is a group of national and regional cycling and walking organisations active in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire. Jim reported from the meeting that although the intention was to work up questions for the mayoral candidates, the Labour Party candidate was present. The next step was to write up the proposals from the first meeting and Jim would circulate information.

4.6 **Membership Secretary** – the Ravenshead & Hucknall members had eventually been returned to the Not in Group section following their erroneous transfer by Central Office in May.

4.7 **Tourism & Heritage Paths Officer** – Chris reported the Notts Guided Walks Programme was asking Groups to provide walks in 2024 to be included in the booklet. These should be 5 – 7 miles and provided free publicity for Groups. James Macgill confirmed Newark had sent in a walk.

5. Group Reports

One Step Walkers – Yinka commented that Ramblers members were often also members of the National Trust and there were recruitment opportunities. Adrian and Neil added there was also the Woodland Trust and the Notts Wildlife Trust and both were represented at the Notts County Show. Links could be established.

Mansfield & Sherwood – James asked about the litter picking organised by the Group. Sue Rick explained a grant for £200 had been obtained from a local councillor to purchase equipment. A problem area was identified each time and arrangements made with the Council to collect the full bags. Ramblers wore HiVis vests with Ramblers on the back. James suggested an article be written for the website as others would be interested.

Robin Hood Way Flexi- Group – report was read out by Judith.

6. Leading Group Walks

The 36 page consultation document had not been well received with over 900 responses being made. Central Office was holding discussion sessions for all Groups to explain how the guidance would be amended. This could form the discussion topic for the April meeting.

7. Publicity Leaflets

Adrian had visited Newark Tourist Office to ask about Ramblers and the staff would be willing to include leaflets about Ramblers. Rushcliffe put their leaflets in libraries and Mansfield & Sherwood distributed their walk programme locally. Southwell printed their programme for distribution. Paul was the editor for a local newsletter and would be able to include a small piece on Ramblers.

8. Date and Venue of Next Meeting 16th April 2024

Yinka asked that consideration be given to future meetings being hybrid so members could join remotely.

The next meeting will be held at Bilsthorpe.at **7.15PM** on Tuesday, 16th April 2024.