

East Yorkshire and Derwent Area Ramblers Association

Minutes of Area Council Meeting held via Zoom at 7.30 pm on 24th August 2021

Present: Roy Hunt, [Chair], Peter Ayling, Sam Borman, Tony Corrigan, Roger Crowther, Tom Halstead, Steve Lack, Ann Laing, David Nunns, Kate Plumb, Ian Reavill, Geoff Richardson, Marian Thomas.

Apologies: Richard Bramall, Matthew Harrison, Joe Neal,



AC 22/21 Chairman's Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

RH introducing himself on returning as chairman, welcomed members to this on line AC meeting. He thanked MT for bringing him up to date on Area and Group matters. PA was also thanked for stepping in to the role of Chairman on a temporary basis. Apologies were recorded.

AC 23/21 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting [25th May 2021] were accepted without amendment.

a) Matters Arising

AC 9/21 - Terry Strickland – PA informed members he had written a letter of condolence to Terry's wife who has replied thanking Ramblers.

AC 20/21a - 'Slow Ways' - RC questioned whether the project had developed to any extent. IR who has monitored the initiative reported little progress has been seen in the York area and MT added some 'Slow Way' routes in Howden area involved road walking on minor roads.

Action: Noted

AC 24/21 Personal Statement – Roy Hunt

RH briefly informed the meeting he was pleased to return to the Area Committee and was speedily trying to catch up with changes that have occurred at local and national level since he was last a member of area council. As Chairman, his main initial objective will be to work collaboratively with groups for rebuilding and developing further our walking programmes. Referring to his circulated personal statement RH flagged up some of his concerns as: membership retention, Ramblers 'Assemble' computer system, walk risk assessments and interaction with Central Office.

Action: Noted

AC 25/21 Reports from Officers and Groups

a. Finance

i Area Treasurer's Report

SB summarised his report advising Area's finances were sufficient to meet any expenditure incurred for the remainder of the year. No further drawing down of finance from CO would be necessary. SB answered a couple of questions on specific items.

Proposed/Seconded: SB/TC - Members accepted the report.

ii Budget Bid Submission for 2021/2022

SB elaborated on his itemised budget bid for submission to CO. He explained a requirement for reserves not to be excessive. When considered with projected expenditure and assumptions for the coming year he

advised a reduced bid would be appropriate. There would still be sufficient finances to fund unexpected events and support groups seeking project funding.

SB answered several questions relating to specific budget items and the meeting discussed use of funds and general expenditure issues. Some members expressed concern that it was proposed to return a large proportion of our budget to CO. SB was thanked for his Area report and budget bid profile.

Proposed/Seconded: SB/PA – bid approved by members [12 for and 1 against]

b. Membership Report

AL updated her report with active membership numbers at 24th August 2021 being 1558, including 21 new members. It was explained that Insight Hub membership figures produced by CO now distinguish between new members and those simply returning after lapsing in renewal.

ACTION: - Report noted

c. Group Reports

Reports from Groups were noted. Additionally:-

SL shared his group's experience in using Facebook, pointing out the pros and cons.

IR mentioned York Coach Ramble in September adding take up to date has been slow. [TC will put it on Area website].

Members discussed the pandemic impact on Group walk programmes and Area's walk programme for longer term planning.

- As the Covid crisis remains it will be some time before a truly 'before and after' comparative analysis can determine the impact on Ramblers walks.
- However, arrangements for and structure of group walks has adapted in line with changing advice from HM Government and Ramblers CO.
- HM guidance for 'outdoor groups of 6' attracted members to form cohorts in relative safety.
- When resumption of led walks [with increased numbers] occurred many members and Leaders were comfortable in their mini groups, not having the bureaucracy of registers, on line booking and risk assessments. This may influence them in leading or not future walks.
- An on line only published programme has driven more members to use the web site facility.
- It has also provided flexibility for Leaders to customise a walk i.e. set a group maximum number, possibly influenced by locality, parking conditions or avoidance of large numbers.
- As outdoor restrictions have been removed, albeit Covid threats remain, groups can plan a programme of walks. Exact details will be influenced by wishes of a Walk Leader
- Whether published programme periods i.e. 6 months should resume is debatable. Should the main medium for publication be the website, then Walks Secretaries could create a rolling paper based system and upload to the website at set intervals e.g. monthly or 3 months.

Chairman RH has canvassed views of groups by way of a questionnaire to assess the pandemic impact and identify issues to be addressed. His report of emerging findings is not yet complete.

Action: When available, report to be circulated to Groups and an agenda item for discussion at AC meeting 30th November.

d. Printing an Area Walks Booklet

Speaking to his circulated report, SB summarised proposals to cease printing the walks booklet. In moving to a web based medium advantages outweighed disadvantages but a service would still be necessary for those members without an internet facility.

Committee members agreed walkers have become reliant upon and familiar with the website throughout the pandemic for walks information. Increasing use of smart phones has enabled instant access to Ramblers information. Comment was made that some members would wish to retain printed booklets, possibly for possibly for reasons of convenience or nostalgia. It was also noted that when Area's Annual Report moved from post to on line there were only two requests for a printed version. It was agreed members should be informed by email/letter of the reasons for proposed changes.

Actions:

- I. RH/AL - Letter to be prepared for circulation [email/post] to all members ASAP
- II. MT - Item on 30th Nov agenda for further discussion and decision
- III. SB - Subject to II - Motion for Area AGM [22nd Jan 2022] agenda

NB: Should the proposal be agreed, preamble 'Guidance Notes for Led Walks' in the booklet would be displayed on line next to the walks programmes.

AC 26/21 Group AGMs, Area and preparation AGM Annual Report

At present Ramblers CO guidance is for meetings, including AGMs to be on line. Members discussed the feasibility of physical and hybrid meetings. A final decision on the format of Area AGM to be deferred to 30th November AC meeting.

A guest speaker for Area's AGM is required and RH suggested Malcolm Hodgson – National Trails Manager for The Yorkshire Wolds Way and Cleveland Way.

MT stated officer and group reports for the Annual Report are required by 30th November 2021 at the latest.

Actions:-

- I. IR on behalf of York Group, hosts for the Area AGM [22nd January, 2022] to identify suitable premises for a physical meeting and provisionally book.
- II. RH to contact Malcolm Hodgson [NB: Malcolm was guest speaker at AGM 26th January 2019 at Beverley].
- III. Officers and Group Secretaries to comply with submission deadline for annual report submissions.

AC 27/21 Replacement Webmaster Needed

RH informed the meeting that Ramblers 'Area Support Offer' is to help in recruiting a webmaster. TC advised a similar offer was made in 2019 without success.

Action: - Noted

AC 28/21 Nomination for new Area President Needed

PA [Area President] informed the meeting of his intention to retire from the position in January 2022 after nine years in the role.

Action: in the absence of formal Area guidance, AC members to send possible nominations to MT for consultation with the Chairman and Treasurer on how best to progress.

AC 29/21 Urgent Countryside, Footpath and Access Issues

- a) Environment report
- b) Footpath update [East Yorkshire]
- c) Access report

Actions: - All reports noted

AC 30/21 Yorkshire Wolds Way 40th Anniversary 2022

Is in October 2022 but it is hoped events will occur across a year. It was also noted that the Yorkshire Wolds is being considered for AONB status

Action: Deferred for discussion at AC meeting of 30th November 2021

AC 31/21

Replacement Ramblers representation is needed for the following organisations: -

- I. Trans - Pennine Steering Group Committee
- II. Joint Advisory Committee to the Howardian Hills AONB

Actions: -

A brief item by below to MT by 10th September for an entry in next Area News seeking volunteers.

- I. David Nunns re TPT
- II. P Hudson re Howardian Hills AONB

AC 32/21 Cluster Group

RH informed the meeting of the formation of a Ramblers Cluster Group. This will link Ramblers Areas in Yorkshire and the North East. Attended by Area Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurers it is intended for discussion of pertinent issues.

Action: - Noted

AC 33/21 Area News

It is intended to publish editions of the Area News in late September and early January.

Action: - Items for inclusion in next edition to reach MT by **10th September at the latest.**

AC 34/21 Bid for Geopark in East Yorkshire

A Ramblers Ryedale member was approached at Driffield Show by Richard Myerscough seeking Ramblers support for a Geopark in East Yorkshire.

Action: - Noted pending any official communication.

NB: Mr Myerscough is chairman of a group called 'Towards a Geopark for East Yorkshire' who believe this area's rich geological and archaeological sites, along with its biodiversity and strong heritage, could earn the prestigious international status.

AC 35/21 Any other business

- I. PA updated the meeting on completion of his archiving duties commenced in 2012 when AC formed an archives sub-committee. The third deposition in Beverley Treasure House was on 23rd July 2021.

Action: - AC still need to determine which, if any papers or electronic records should be deposited in future and who will be appointed to supervise the process.

- II. TC informed members he would be standing down from Area Council and sub committees at the January AGM. As only one AC meeting is scheduled in the intervening period he was following good

practice for succession planning by giving early notification. As Ramblers 2026 DLYW co - ordinator for East Yorkshire, his time will be committed to that project and continuing with Pocklington Group's rights of way path maintenance team.

Action: - Noted

AC 36/21 Future meeting dates

Area Council - on Tuesdays commencing 7.30pm

30th November 2021: **via Zoom**

NB: 2020/2021 AGM will be at York on Saturday 22nd January 2022 at 2:00pm. Should Covid necessary precautions prevent a physical meeting, it will take place as a virtual AGM. Further information will be published after 30th November AC meeting.