

# East Yorkshire and Derwent Area Ramblers Association

## Minutes of Area Council Meeting held virtually via Zoom at 7.30 pm on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Present:** Stephen Down [Acting Chair], Peter Ayling, Sam Borman, Richard Bramall, Tony Corrigan, Tom Halstead, Martin Hill, Steve Lack, Joe Neal, Jane Preston, Ian Reavill, Geoff Richardson, Sean Sedman, Marian Thomas, Anne Thornton, Phil Trafford,

**Apologies:** Matthew Harrison, Penny Hudson, Ann Laing, Karen Travis, Ulla Vaereth,

### AC 20/20 Chairman's Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

SD thanked members for joining this virtual AC meeting, replacing the planned meeting at Fimber Village Hall, unable to occur due to Coronavirus restrictions. It was pleasing to see sixteen members signing on for the session. Apologies were recorded.

### AC 21/20 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

**a. Minutes** of the previous meeting [26th May 2020] were accepted without amendment.

Proposed/Seconded: **IR/PA**

**b.** There were no matters arising.

### AC 22/20 Appointment to Vacant Posts

The roles of Area Chairman, Vice Chairman and Publicity Officer remain vacant. PA reported he had approached a suitable candidate for Chairman but unfortunately the individual was unavailable having just committed to other matters.

SD stated in addition to being Area Secretary he had undertaken the role of Acting Chairman initially as a stop gap initiative, until the vacancy was filled. Unfortunately this situation has continued unresolved for 2½ years.

He informed members that if a chair is elected at the AGM in January 2021, he is willing to carry on as secretary for one more year to help the transition and handover. If a chair is not elected at the AGM then at that point he will be standing down as secretary and taking a break from Area Council.

PA on behalf of the meeting complimented and thanked SD for his commitment to the roles.

**ACTION:** Group Committees to canvass and consider potential candidates for the roles of Area Chair or Area Secretary.

### AC 23/20 Urgent Countryside, Footpath and Access Issues

Nil.

### AC 24/20 Restarting Walks

SD outlined Ramblers advice and guidelines issued to areas and groups for resumption of led walks. Important elements included Cov-19 protection compliance requirements, risk assessments, leaders being registered on the 'Assemble' database, a maximum number of walkers and keeping a record of participants.

Following a thorough discussion by members, matters highlighted included: -

1. Group resumption of led walks is a gradual process, perhaps reflecting attitude and awareness of members.
2. Several 'bubble' groups of 6 members developed following HM Gov's guidelines on gatherings. These private group walks have continued since resumption of official led walks.

3. Numbers on led walks, previously well attended, have not been significant and nowhere close to a maximum of 30.
4. Most published walks have included a booking system and a specified maximum number.
5. GR thought it could be helpful if the 'bubble cohorts' published their walks on GWEM, notwithstanding they would already be fully booked. It would advertise that walks had resumed and hopefully encourage others to plan and publish led walks. These unofficial small groups may be reluctant to do this as it would involve risk assessments, keeping registers etc. GR gave a brief explanation of the process for publishing walks on GWEM [Group Walks & Events Manager] and encouraged groups to identify further GWEM editors.
6. A considered and flexible approach is necessary when organising group walks, taking cognisance of members' safety, public perceptions and environmental factors.
7. There is no obligation to restart led walks and Groups are left to decide how they wish to progress led walks. Ramblers CO guidance remains that programmes of three to six months should not be planned, nor printed walks programmes distributed.

**ACTION:** Groups to follow Ramblers online guidelines for led walks.

### AC 25/20 General Council 2020

SD advised that the postponed annual general meeting of the General Council of the Ramblers will now take place on Tuesday 15 September 2020 from 5pm to 6pm.

In the current circumstances, and given ongoing social distancing requirements, it is not possible for the AGM to be held in person and therefore the meeting will take place as a small, closed meeting which will be streamed to members online. A member's proxy votes can be cast ahead of the meeting.

TH and SD are our delegates. Our Area's proposed Climate Change motion, with a shorter form of wording is included for discussion.

**ACTION:** Noted.

### AC 26/20 Highway Code Consultation

SL addressed the meeting on HM Government's Highways Code consultation document, highlighting a need for clarification concerning pedestrian groups walking along roads without pavement/footpath.

Rule 5 states a large group of walkers should keep to the left. Rule 2 directs walking on the right in single file but it being safer to cross over to the left, well before a right hand bend to face oncoming traffic.

Discussed by members it was agreed that Rule 5 was more appropriate for movement of parades, marches, carnivals and other events needing to take up a large portion of the carriageway. Walkers, whether alone or part of a led group would be in single file, therefore needing to comply with Rule 2 and not Rule 5.

SL proposed Area should address this issue to Ramblers CO for clarification and confirmation of the above by them in consultation with HM Government Department of Transport.

Proposed/Seconded: **SL/PA**

**ACTION:** Agreed unanimously. SL to write to Ramblers CO.

### AC 27/20 England Tree Strategy Consultation

Members had received a copy of the consultation document and Ramblers CO draft response. PA provided a brief overview of the strategy aims and some of the important issues to be considered. He encouraged

members to complete Ramblers online questionnaire and offered to submit a response on behalf of Area in liaison with other members of Area's Environmental Committee.

**ACTION:** PA to submit an Area response. Individual AC members to consider completing the online questionnaire.

## **AC 28/20 Group and Area AGMs**

Covid-19 precautions and guidance relating to gatherings and social distancing will impact upon Group AGMs due to be held during November and possible Area AGM in January 2021. SD advised members that Ramblers CO were planning to circulate guidance in the forthcoming week.

**ACTION:** Noted.

## **AC 29/20 Reports from Officers and Groups**

### **A. Finance – Area Treasurer's Report**

*i.* SB presented his financial report for the period ending 17th August 2020, adding that the agreement to forgo Q4 finance allocation from CO did not materialise as CO had not made contact. Thus balances continue to be in an overly healthy position but will be adjusted in the 2020/21 budget allocation bid.

*ii.* SB outlined to the meeting the proposed budget bid, highlighting several expenditure assumptions that may be impacted upon by Covid-19 and Ramblers return to full business. Members were advised that Area's current balance and reserves were such that the budget bid would be accordingly reduced.

After discussing details, members thanked SB for the reports and agreed the proposed budget bid.

Proposed/Seconded: **SB/IR**

### **B. Membership Report**

AL's report was noted. In the twelve months ending 17th August 2020 membership numbers had fallen by 41 [1529 to 1488]. Notwithstanding curtailment of activities, 26 new members had joined since 1st May 2020.

**ACTION:** - Noted.

### **C. Coastal Access**

TH informed the meeting that the section from Easington to Filey Brigg had been approved by The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The news has been published on York Group and Area websites. Links to Natural England's various reports are: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coastal-access-section-52-notice-for-easington-to-filey-brigg>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-from-easington-to-filey-brigg-comment-on-proposals>

The S of S welcomed Ramblers representation and thanked them for their input during development of proposals.

**ACTION:** - Noted.

## **D. Group Reports**

Reports from Howden & Goole, Pocklington and York Groups plus affiliated group Hull CHA Rambling Club had been previously circulated.

**ACTION:** - Noted.

## **AC 30/20 Correspondence**

From ML, a member of the public 'Regarding Nun's Walk, Nunburnholme to Warter. I wondered if you have any information about this footpath. It is shown on earlier maps as a footpath but yesterday when talking to a villager I discovered it was 'legally closed' in the 1970s. This means that the only way to walk from Nunburnholme to Warter is by a road which I know is not the best or safest route. I am hoping the RA might be able to investigate'.

**ACTION:** - Noted. TC has sent a response to the enquirer and is awaiting a reply.

From Mike Jackson – 'Visited Wharram Percy and saw the sorry state of Wilf Turner's bench. Could something be done to repair or remove the bench?'

TC had been at the location recently and confirmed the seat was beyond repair. Information is Ryedale Group organised the funding and placement of the seat.

**ACTION:** - JP will liaise with colleague Ryedale Group committee members to resolve the matter.

## **AC 31/20 Any Other Business**

*i.* PA updated the meeting on the A63 Castle Street Hull major roadworks scheme i.e. consideration of a judicial review into The Secretary of State's determination concerning a pedestrian cross over. On behalf of the Environment Committee he had sent a briefing note to Ramblers CO seeking opinion on the feasibility of a judicial review. Ramblers CO advice after due consideration was that they did not consider it to be a viable prospect.

**ACTION:** - Noted

*ii.* PA informed the meeting he had received a letter from Ann Holt offering a Ramblers banner that was from the opening of the Yorkshire Wolds Way in 1982 and wondered if Area would like it. After discussion it was thought that ERYC archives may agree to receive it.

**ACTION:** - PA to discuss with ERYC Archives.

## **AC 32/20 - Future Meeting Dates**

**Area Council Meetings 2020.** Provisional dates, all Tuesdays starting at 7:30pm: -

24<sup>th</sup> November: - Wetwang