Draft- to be ratified

East Yorkshire and Derwent Area Ramblers Association

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 24th January at the Beverley Minster Parish Hall

Present: Sam Borman (Acting Chair), Sarah Anderson, Peter Ayling, Carole Ainewy, Adit, Norman Barclay, Josephine Bell, Wendy Borman, Ian Buxton, Thomas Beaulah, Rachel Carlin, Tony Corrigan, Donna Dosdale, Wayne Dosdale, Jenny Devonshire, Jim Doyle, Rosie Dyball, Cathryn Ferris, Peter Godfrey, Harry Hartley, Ann Harper, Janet Johnson, Steve Lack, June Lawe, Rik Leedale, Ged Leach, John Medland, Gary Malcolm, Denise Morris, Joe Neal, Amy Newlove, David Nunns, Enid Nunns, Chris Prince, Elaine Prince, Ginny Oates, Ian Reavill, Tom Rhodes, Karen Reynolds, Jeff Reynolds, Penny Royle, Jane Roach, Peter Sanderson, Wendy Smith, Jackie Small, Elaine Tague, Claire Tayne, Marian Thomas (Secretary), Colin Van Eck, Karen Van Eck, Michael Woodhouse, Jane Weatherstan, Lucy Robinson (Trustee & guest speaker) (53).

Apologies: Stephen Down, Tom Halstead, John Motley, Ann Laing, Margaret Forest, Graham Batty, Nicola Batty, Cathy Hughes, Duncan Grant, Ann Harper, Bob Deeley, Kwai White.

AGM 1/26 Acting Chair's welcome

Treasurer and acting chair Sam Borman (SB) welcomed members to the meeting, apologies were noted.

AGM 2/26 Minutes of the 2025 AGM

The minutes were accepted without amendment, there were no matters arising not dealt with elsewhere. **Proposed:** Karen Van Eck, **Seconded:** Sarah Anderson. Approved unanimously

AGM 3/26 Annual report 2024 – 2025

SB thanked Groups and Area Officers for their contributions to the Annual report. He then went through the Annual Report page by page, asking Area Officers and Group secretaries/chairs if they wished to give any updates to their reports and if members had any questions.

SB said that the initial item was a report by the Area Secretary instead of the Chair as would be expected; the position of Area chair had been vacant for two years now, after the resignation of Roy Hunt in January 2024. SB had agreed to chair Area Council meetings on a temporary basis, since having a chairperson was a mandatory requirement for an area to function.

Access Report: in the absence of Tom Halstead (TH) , secretary MT updated the meeting about the Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB) designation project. She said that in January 2025 TH had made a submission on behalf of our Area , strongly in favour of the Yorkshire Wolds becoming a AONB. In the earlier survey stages in 2022, our area had made a big impact and had led to the region under consideration being extended, although disappointingly the lovely dales south of Market Weighton are excluded . The final report to the Secretary of State is expected this summer, it is very likely that the designation of the Yorkshire Wolds as a AONB will go ahead.

Membership: Ged Leach (Pocklington chair) said that since the closure of the Howden & Goole Group at the end of September, 52 of H&G Group members have been transferred to Pocklington Group, so that his group now has a membership of 200.

Area Website: SB said this was a great facility, which he used all the time. In the absence of webmaster Stephen Down (SD), secretary MT reported that SD was happy to continue as webmaster and keep the website ticking along but lacks the time needed for a more thorough overhaul and update of the site.

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Area News: the newsletter had been re-vitalised under the new editor Gary Malcolm (GM). Gary said he was planning a spring newsletter and would start work by the end of February and asked for news items. It was agreed putting the newsletter on a social media platform was acceptable. GM said that it currently cost £700 per year to post printed copies for 2 editions to members who claim not to have an e-mail address or do not wish to receive e-mails from the Ramblers. Tony Corrigan said that many members who ticked the box not receive e-mails do infact have an e-mail address but do not wish to be inundated with marketing information from national Ramblers. He said if central office could find a way for members to sign up to local information only, this number would decrease.

Area Camp: this was also successfully revived in 2025 and is being planned again for 26th-29th June 2026 in Swaledale. It was stated members don't have to camp to attend, there are lots of different types of accommodation available.

Midlife Hikers: there were no members of the group present but SB said the group, which was only formed at the beginning of 2025, is flourishing with 90 plus members. It was formed as a flexi-group, which means it does not have a chair, treasurer; or committee. It does not have a budget but some limited allocation of funds from the Area treasurer; the Midlife Hikers may in time choose to become a fully functioning group.

Monday Area Walks Group: this a sub-group of our Area, it does not have a budget, chair or committee, since all it's members belong to other groups and any walk leaders expenses are paid from their groups' budget.

AGM 4/26 Financial Statement for accounts ending 30th September 2025

Treasurer SB said that income & expenditure had not changed much from last year, the Area ended the financial year with a healthy budget of £7,585.46, which was a decrease in our reserves of £879.86 at the start of the year. However CO guidance states that the reserve figure should be maintained at a range of between 40-100% of annual expenditure; as our estimated espenditure for next year is £2,380, our reserves are well above this. SB has solved this problem by not claiming any money for area expenditure for this financial year, only for group expenditure. No questions were asked and the Treasurer's report and financial statement were accepted.

Proposed: Marian Thomas, **Seconded:** Karen Van Eck, **Vote:** Carried unanimously

AGM 5/26 Election of officers

***i.*Area President**: SB said that the main role of the President was to chair the AGM- the position was currently vacant and there had been no nominations. Peter Ayling said the Area President also had other functions representing the Area at events and writing letters of condolence.

ii. Area Chair: this post remained vacant, there had been no nominations. SB said he was prepared to continue as acting chair on a temporary basis by chairing meetings, but in the absence of a chair a lot of work that should be done is not being done. SB said he would be prepared to stand again as acting chair on a temporary basis.
Proposed: Marian Thomas, **Seconded:** Peter Ayling

iii. Area Treasurer: Sam Borman said he was happy to stand again as Area treasurer.
Proposed: Karen Van Eck **Seconded:** Ginny Oates.

iv. Area secretary: Marian Thomas said she was prepared to stand again as Area secretary
Proposed: Sam Borman, **Seconded:** Karen Van Eck

V. Election of other Area Council Officers

For the following committee positions the current incumbents had agreed to continue in post, no further nominations had been received. They were therefore elected en bloc.

Access Officer: Tom Halstead
Minutes Secretary: Marian Thomas
Webmaster: Stephen Down
Footpath Officer for East Yorkshire & Hull: Tony Corrigan agreed to stand for a further year.
Membership Secretary: Karen Van Eck
Area News Editor: Gary Malclom

Proposed: Peter Ayling, **Seconded:** Steve Lack

***VI. Vacant* Posts -**
A) Rights of Way Officer for North Yorkshire remains unfilled.
B) Area Environment Officer – No nominations had been received for this important post and it remains vacant

AGM 6/26 Appointment of Independent Examiner

Sam Borman thanked Emily Hunt for her assistance and stated that she was happy to continue in the role. **Proposed:** Sam Borman **Seconded:** Steve Lack Vote: Carried unanimously

AGM 7/26 Appointment of 2 Delegates to General Council at Birmingham NEC, 25th April

SB stated that our Area can send two voting delegates to Ramblers General Council, scheduled as a one-day event at Birmingham NEC on 25th April, this was an important meeting as the proposal for the reform of general council would be voted on at this session. Stephen Down expressed an interest in attending if family commitments allowed, Marian Thomas said she was free to attend if needed, since it was important to make sure that our Area was represented. Tom Halstead (who now lives in Sutton Coldfield) would also be available to attend again if no one else wished to use the place. The names of our 2 representatives did not need to be decided until our next Area Council meeting on 24th February.

AGM 8/26 Motions for General Council

None

AGM 9/26 Any other business

There was no other business, SB thanked the hosts Beverley Group for organising the AGM venue, the excellent refreshments and leading the morning walk.

AGM 10/26 Guest Speaker Lucy Robinson- Chair of the Board of Trustees

Lucy Robinson (LR) thanked volunteers for leading the many walks for the Ramblers and for their footpath work. She said since 2023 much of the work the Board of Trustees had been concerned with a review of how the Ramblers is governed, it was felt that the current format General Council is outdated and inflexible. General Council (GC) itself had found the current system undemocratic, with about 2 representatives from each Area (in total about 100 people attend GC to represent all members in England, Wales & Scotland) making decisions for the 100,000 members. A working group was set up to find a more democratic approach and to enable engagement with more members ; several aspects were recommended, all areas and groups were then canvassed for their opinions.

One member, one vote although rejected in the past this was now a viable option because most members have access to a computer, also the development of on-line video conferencing would make it possible for the AGM to be accessible to all members. Votes for trustees would need to be made on-line with the results being announced at the AGM.

Review of composition of Board of Trustees in order to improve, strengthen & develop a higher performing board. It is recommended that the composition of the Board of Trustees is reduced to a maximum of 12, this number is approved by the Chairity Commission. Six trustees would be elected by members, 2 members – the chair and treasurer would be selected by the Board based on their abilities & skills, subject to ratification by members at the AGM. There would also be the option for the Board to appoint up to 4 additional trustees following a formal assessment of the candidates skills & capabilities (i.e. safe guarding skills) to ensure the Board had a diverse mix and breadth of skills and experience that it needs.

Regional Forums replacing General Council: these would be held annually for members, attended by trustees and key staff to enable formal discussion & debate on key issues and engagement with the Board. They would replace the current motions process. There would also be workshops for knowledge sharing between Groups and Areas. There would be six one day forums-four in England, one in Scotland and one in Wales. One place would be guaranteed for every group. The outcome of the forum discussions would be collated and discussed on the first Board meeting following the final forum. It had been decided that every 3 years there would be a national forum.

The functioning of Areas and Groups had been examined because some Areas are failing due to lack of volunteers in key roles. The idea of morphing Areas into networking hubs but with no governance role had been considered, however because there was much diversity of opinion on what would work best, it was decided to postpone this debate for the time being.

The reforms to membership voting, composition fo the Board and replacing the motion process with 6 forums will voted on at General Council in April 2026. There was a question about the additional cost of these governance reforms; LR said there would be little additional cost associated with on-line voting for trustees, as this can be done quite cheaply. However there would be additional cost associated with having 6 regional one day forums rather than one national General Council, but as regional forums would be more local, traveling costs would be reduced travel and no overnight accommodation would be required.

A question was asked about viewing the national Ramblers Annual Report and the accounts. LR said all this information was readily available on the Ramblers website www.ramblers.org.uk

Changes in the walk leaders training policy: from early February all walk leaders are required to complete the two on-line training modules or have led 12 walks in the last 3 years. The on-line training is not onerous and experienced walk leaders find it a useful reminder. LR said this change in walk leaders training requirements was not due to insurance demands but to the Ramblers being a responsible organisation making sure that all walk leaders had undergone some formal training.

Concern was express by a footpath volunteer about a health & safety consultation on footpath maintainance work parties, this was prescriptive document requiring risk assessments and a first aid training for some; the member feared that this approach would reduce the number of Ramblers footpath volunteers. LR noted his concern.

Finally SB thanked Trustee Lucy Robinson for coming to our AGM and for her presentation, very useful contribution to the meeting and her openness and honesty in answering questions.