

East Yorkshire and Derwent Area Ramblers Association

Minutes of Area Council Meeting held via Zoom on 20th August 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Sam Borman (Acting chair), Tony Corrigan, Stephen Down, Cathryn Ferris, John Motley, Kate Plumb, Tony Tew, Marian Thomas (secretary), Karen Van Eck, Louise Corson

Apologies: Peter Ayling, Peter Godfrey, Steve Lack, Ian Reavil



AC 22/24 Acting Chair's Welcome and Apologies

Temporary acting chair & treasurer SB welcomed members to the on-line meeting; apologies were recorded.

AC 23/24 Minutes of Previous Meetings

A) Minutes of the previous Area Council meeting of 21 May 2024 were accepted without amendment.
Proposed: Stephen Down, Seconded: Karen Van Eck

B) Minutes of the short budget meeting 23rd July 2024 were accepted without amendment.
Proposed: Marian Thomas, Seconded: Karen Van Eck

C) Matters arising not dealt with elsewhere: secretary MT said she had not followed up on action AC 14/24 by writing to York, Ryedale & Scarborough Groups to determine if there was any volunteer prepared to act as a footpath liaison officer with North Yorkshire Council. Also action AC 18/24 needed to be followed up, SD had reported that although he had contacted groups about drawing up for the website a useful list of suitable places for car parking at the start of walks, he had received no response from any group.

AC 24/24 Reports from Area Officers and Groups

A) Treasurer's Report: SB presented a summary of the accounts from Oct 2023 to 05 August 2024; he said the balance of well over £8,000 was too high and he would not be asking for any more funds from Central Office this year, which would reduce the outstanding balance to the recommended level. The accounts were unanimously approved. Proposer: Kate Plump, Seconder: Stephen Down.

B) Membership Officer: KVE said that Area membership was currently 1,513 - back to where it was in September 2023. She reported that she had recently posted out Area newsletters to 190 members who had not registered an e-mail address; of these 40 were married couples, this was probably because they had only registered one e-mail address between them. KVE said she would raise this issue with the Ramblers help desk, although part of the problem might be due to headquarters not giving members the right level of choice as newsletters are considered to be a marketing communication.

C) Webmaster: SD said he has recently received updates on Walk Leaders Check List and the Area Generic Risk Assessments, which he would add to the website and any reference to Assemble would be deleted.

D) Footpath Officer for East Yorkshire: TC said he was currently dealing with an issue in North Yorkshire with JM, chair of Ryedale Group. TC stated that they had logged an objection to the request to extinguish a footpath in Terrington. The matter was on-going.

C) Group Reports

Written reports from most groups had been previously circulated;

Beverley Group: KVE reported that the group had a full programme of walks for the summer.

Howden & Goole Group: MT said that due to a dire lack of walk leaders (currently only one) the group might close at the end of the year, but she would endeavour to keep it going for as long as possible; the group did have a treasurer, chair & secretary.

Hull & Holderness Group: SL had reported that they had a new member who wanted to bring a toddler in a pushchair on walks, but there were very few accessible routes. This issue was discussed but it was agreed that groups can't be expected to accommodate pushchairs on walks, as it is difficult to find suitable routes and it changes the whole nature of the walk.

Pocklington Group: KP said the group had participated in two local promotional events and although they did not result in a flood of new members, they did raise the profile of the group.

KP reported there was useful information on the Area website that members don't know how to use; Martin Hill gave a talk to Pocklington Group members about using the Area mapping facility, OS maps and memory maps as well as exporting GPX files for mapping walks. It might be useful if comprehensive instructions on the use of these files went on the Area website or there was a talk for all Area members.

Ryedale Group: JM said the group was continuing to maintain a regular programme of successful Sunday walks including two recent joint walks & socials with Scarborough Group.

Scarborough Group: CF said the group had a full Sunday walks programme and a flourishing programme of social events.

York Group: TT reported that one new walk leader has completed the new Walk Leaders on-line training module. The group is encouraging experienced walk leaders to also do the course.

AC 25/24 Feedback on New Walk Leaders Training & Finding information on Ramblers website

There is now an Area generic risk assessment, so that risk assessments for individual walks no longer need to be completed. Several members of the York Group committee had tried out the on-line walk leaders training module for themselves, some found it contained useful information for experienced walk leaders too, others said it was just common sense. Updating new members details cannot be done by group officers, only by Ramblers CO staff, by sending a request to Ramblers.zendesk.com.

AC 26/24 Proposal to Form a New 40s & 50s Group

Louise Corson, a member of Get Your Books On (GYBO) was invited to the meeting to introduce this topic. She said that GYBO was formed 20 years ago as a Rambler's group for young people in their 20s and 30s; twenty years on there are an increasing number of GYBO members in their 40s and 50s, weakening the core purpose of the group which is to provide an opportunity for young people to walk and socialise with their peers. In addition, potential new Ramblers members in their 40s and 50s are put off from joining because there isn't a group that meets their needs. GYBO currently has about 130 members; there has been an influx of younger members recently and the feeling is that they are being held back by the older members who have been with the group for a long time.

There is now a group of current GYBO members in their 40s and 50s ready to commit to establishing and maintaining a new Ramblers Group in the East Yorkshire & Derwent Area. They feel that splitting GYBO in two will benefit both age ranges. The current GYBO Committee are aware of this proposal and are supportive, but recognise the risk to the continuity of GYBO if several of their experienced & more active walk leaders leave. To help with the transition, the new group are individually committed to leading one walk for GYBO during 2025 and to be on hand to offer advice and support if needed. The new group would be a flexi-group (no constitution or budget), the budget for the group would be £100 per year, plus an extra £100 to set up, the money would be held by the Area Treasurer and the payment of expenses would be authorised by him. The group would go live from January 2025.

Proposer: Stephen Down, Seconder: Karen Van Eck. All were in favour.

Next Steps: setting up this new group does not need to be approved at the Area AGM. The regional engagement officer for the north of England, Diane Simcoe, must now complete the group registration form, activate it and assign those members of GYBO wishing to join, to the new group. To go live in January 2025, the new group will need to plan a programme of walks & also some social events, have a web presence on the Ramblers' main website and on social media.

AC 27/24 Update on Walking East Yorkshire Festival Sat.14th to Sun.22nd September

KP said that this year the festival was shorter than in previous years, however bookings were going well and there had been publicity in local newspapers. Group officers were asked to remind their members about the festival; Ramblers members did not need to pre-book walks led by our walk leaders, unless there was transport or food involved.

AC 28/24 Group AGMs & Preparation of Area Annual Report

Secretary MT reminded all groups that they needed to hold their AGMs in November. They would not need to write their yearly report until after their AGM had taken place as she was not starting work on the Annual Report until the beginning of December.

AC 29/24 Area AGM 1st February -do we need an additional speaker in addition to a Ramblers Trustee?

SB said that it was a good idea to invite a Ramblers Trustee to speak and answer questions. KP said that Pocklington group as hosts were hoping that the AGM would be pacey and informal; whilst a second speaker would be interesting, it would make for a much longer meeting. KP was in favour of having just one speaker and all were in agreement.

AC 30/24 Area officer Positions Vacant

There are two critical Area officer positions vacant- Area Chair and also North Yorkshire Rights of Way Liaison officer. Persuading members to volunteer for these roles is only likely to be successful with personal contact and encouragement.

AC 31/24 Any Other Business

A) Notes from Howardian Hills National Landscape (formerly AONB) Joint Advisory Board- meeting 1/07/24- from Chris Helliwell Notes from the meeting had been previously circulated to AC members; there was no further comment.

B) Letter from Neil Andrews, Ramblers Campaign officer, encouraging members to write to their local MP in support a new Access to Nature Bill to break down barriers to accessible urban green spaces. SB stated that it was up to members who personally supported this campaign to write to their MP.

C) David Nunns forward an e-mail to secretary MT about the on-line Trans Pennine Trail Annual Members meeting on 3rd October. In 2021 David said he wanted to stand down as TPT representative for our Area, but no one had been found to replace him. MT volunteered to attend the on-line meeting.

AC 32/24 Future meeting dates

26th November 2024 via Zoom, acting chair SB said he would be staying in a hotel in Spain and may not be able to access the meeting. SD volunteered to chair the meeting, if needed.

2pm Saturday 1st February 2025 Area AGM, at Bishop Wilton Village Hall hosted by Pocklington Group