

East Yorkshire and Derwent Area Ramblers Association

Minutes of Area Council Meeting held via Zoom at 7.30 pm on 6th May 2025

Present: Sam Borman SB (acting chair), Tony Corrigan (TC), Stephen Down (SD), Peter Godfrey (PG), Tom Halstead (TH), John Motley (JM), Kate Plumb KP), Ian Reavill (IR), Michelle Smith (MS), Marian Thomas (MT)

Apologies: Steve Lack, Joe Neal, Karen Van Eck (KVE)



AC 08/25 Acting Chair's Welcome and Apologies

Temporary Acting Chair & Treasurer SB welcomed members to the on-line meeting; apologies were recorded.

AC 09/25 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes of the previous Area Council meeting of 25th February 2025 were unanimously accepted without amendment. There were no matters arising not dealt with elsewhere.

AC 10/25 Reports from Area Officers and Groups

A) Treasurer's Report: SB had circulated the accounts from Oct 2024 to 22nd April 2025, they showed a healthy balance of £8,474.66. The main Area expenditure of £711.66 was the cost of meetings including the AGM and the cost of the recce for Area camp. JM explained that there had been two separate recces with 3 walk leaders. However, there were currently 23 members booked for Area Camp, so it was cost effective. SB commented that there is still plenty of budgeted funds to be paid to groups.

Accounts unanimous approved: Proposer: Marian Thomas, Seconder: Tony Corrigan.

B) Access Report: TH said he had received no further news either about the possible designation of the Yorkshire Wolds as an AONB or on the East Yorkshire Coast path.

Regarding his attempt to renew permissive access to Fairy & Whay Dales, TH reported that although he had received a positive response from the Birdsall Estates for this to be renewed, this matter had not been progressed by North Yorkshire Countryside Access Service, in spite of TH providing the NYCC access officer Andrew Hunter with details of his correspondence with Lord Middleton. TH said this was most disappointing because the walk is amongst the most popular in his open access publication. TC said he would phone Andrew Hunter tomorrow and TH stated that he would also re- send his e-mail about the matter to Andrew Hunter.

East Yorkshire Coast Path: TC said he had attended a JLAF meeting where ERYC Countryside Access Officer, Edith Denton, involved with the project said things were going well and hopefully the route could be open by early June. TC said he had walked much of the path in sections from The Deep to Easington and it was enjoyable, with only a small section along the A63 not so good.

E) Group Reports

Reports from most groups had been previously circulated;

EY&D Area Monday Walks: PG said there had been a reduction in the number of walk leaders from 18 down to about 8, due mostly to joint problems. He had recently contacted Ramblers Central Office to enquire if a volunteer could lead a walk without being a registered walk leader, provided that a registered walk leader was present during the walk. However, the response was as expected- a Ramblers Walk must be led by a registered walk leader, to ensure that they are covered by insurance to lead that particular walk.

Howden & Goole Group: MT said that sadly she felt that the time had come to dissolve the group, the number of members had dropped to 45, she was still the only walk leader, there were only about 7 members who regularly walked with the group and although recent joint walks with Hull & Holderness Group were

well attended by members from other groups, there were only about 3 from the H&G group present. SB asked how do we go about dissolving a group? MT should first contact Diane Simcoe (Community Development officer for North of England), but for a quick response Ann Laing might be able to help as she was involved with the closure of the Driffeld Group. MT was thanked for her efforts to keep the H&G Group going.

Midlife Hikers: MS said that things were going well, since the last report the group had led a further 11 walks and organised a social event. It is very encouraging; the group has tapped into an age range that was not being catered for by other walking groups. The group now had a full programme of walks for May and June with 14 registered walk leaders with another 7 pending. However, many of these are ex GYBO members so they have put in place a year long strategy to encourage newer members to consider walk leading encouraged by training and support. The gender mix of the group is currently 80% female, so the committee has launched a paid Facebook advertising campaign specifically targeting men.

Pocklington Group: KP said that the walking programme continues to be popular, with 20-30 walkers on a Wednesday and Sunday walk numbers are in the high teens.

Ryedale Group: JM stated that the group continued to have a successful programme of well attended Sunday walks and has recently organised some joint walks with the Scarborough Group.

Area Camp: planned for 27th-30th June, there are 23 members confirmed.

York Group: All the groups are thriving. The group has organised a coach ramble to Kettlewell on 29th June, there was still spaces on the coach and it will be advertised on the York Ramblers website soon.

AC 11/25 Feedback from General Council 5th April

MT had produced a detailed summary of the General Council meeting on 5th April at NEC Birmingham. She said that the Ramblers had a successful year following their refreshed strategy of prioritising communities with the least access to outdoors to enable them to enjoy the benefits of walking in nature. There had been community-based activities including "Well Being Walks", working with Scouts and "Out There" which consists of activity programmes for young people. They have also saved blocked rights of way by legal action in Norfolk and several other places. However there was an operating deficit of £1million in 2023/24, although the deficit was partly due to using funds in line with the refreshed strategy, the Ramblers currently had reserves of £7.4 million but were seeking diversification of income and cutting costs including making some staff redundant.

MT said the Governance Review was discussed, B of T want to update the organisation and running of Areas and are focused on making General Council more democratic- perhaps "one member one vote", with the suggestion that General Council might be on-line; the key aim is to engage with more Ramblers' members. Chair of B of T Lucy Robinson made it clear that she wanted the review to be completed this year and that might involve calling an EGM later in the year.

AC 12/25 Area Newsletter

Gary Malcolm (GM) had taken over the role of Area Newsletter editor and had produced a spring edition of the Area Newsletter. This had been e-mailed to the members who had provided an e-mail address (1200); 220 copies had been printed last week but could not be posted as there was no access to the address labels because the membership officer was on holiday in New Zealand. GM had submitted written comments to be discussed at the meeting. He asked whether another member of Area Council could have access to members addresses via the membership database "Insight Hub". However, it is realised that this is not possible for data security reasons, but KVE had e-mailed the list of members with no e-mail addresses to MT, whose husband was subsequently able to print off the address labels, which were then posted to MG for newsletter distribution.

GM also asked Area Council to discuss costs of newsletter printing and postage- if there were two issues per year, the cost of printing and postage for members with no e-mail address would amount to around £800. He

asked Area Council if this was value for money or could the money be better spent elsewhere? It was unanimously agreed that we should fund the printing and postage of newsletters as many of these members were older and no longer able to walk but still supported the Ramblers via their membership fees.

MT mentioned that Central Office were looking at ways of saving money and the autumn 2024 edition of "Walk Magazine" was digital only to trial whether this could be a permanent arrangement to save on printing and postage costs. AC agreed that this would be very unpopular with members, also there were so many adverts in the magazine, it should almost pay for itself. If CO make the decision to produce the magazine as a digital version only, then AC should strongly object and point out that they will lose members.

AC 13/25 East Yorkshire Walking Festival 6th -14th September 2025

Martin Hill (Pocklington Group) had e-mailed a reminder that walks were needed for the East Yorkshire Annual Walking festival taking place from Saturday 6th September to Sunday 14th September inclusive. Several groups had already put forward walks, but it would be marvellous if all groups offered to lead at least one walk- especially Hull & Holderness and Beverley Groups. Walks along the coastal path would be most appreciated. MH said that the deadline for walks was 31st May, e-mail: mph@btinternet.com he would co-ordinate with EYRC.

AC 14/25 Any Other Business

A) Footpath Maintenance Day with Inn Travel Employees. TC said Inn Travel, a company specialising in led walks, regularly sent their employees on community project days. Recently 6 employees had joined Pocklington's footpath maintenance team at Millington Wood. Assisting in installing sleeper benches, handrail repairs and the infilling of steps with gravel; the day had worked very well. Feedback received from Inn Travel was very positive.

B) Area AGM: SB asked secretary MT which group was next in line to host the Area AGM, since Howden & Goole Group would have been disbanded by January 2026. She replied it was the turn of Beverley Group and she would contact the secretary, Joe Neal.

AC 15/25 Future meeting dates

Area Council Meetings- on Tuesdays commencing 7.30pm

29th July 2025 via Zoom includes budget planning for 2026

25th November 2025 via Zoom

January 2026 - Area AGM- To be announced